



**STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS, SOUTH
AFRICA:
HONOURABLE MINISTER EDNA MOLEWA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENTAL ASSEMBLY
ON
27 JUNE 2014**

THEMATIC FOCUS: Ministerial Plenary on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Post 2015 Development Agenda including Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP).

The Executive Director of UNEP,

Distinguished Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to share my country's views on this important thematic area - **SDGs and Post 2015 Development Agenda including sustainable consumption and production.**

South Africa welcomes the ongoing work of the open working group on Sustainable Development Goals (SGDs), in preparation of the report to the upcoming United Nations General Assembly in September this year. We have noted with great interest the ongoing elaboration of proposed **17 goals** and **164**

targets, covering the three dimensions of sustainable development namely economic, social and environmental by the open working group.

South Africa firmly believe that the new development agenda should **galvanize political will and international commitment**, with a focus on the **eradication of poverty** and the pursuit of sustainable, inclusive development. The MDGs demonstrated that international goals, targets and indicators can **galvanize action and political will towards a core set of development priorities**. In this context, South Africa emphasizes that the process of elaborating a new development agenda **should not side-track the countries commitments towards the attainment of the MDGs**.

Ladies and gentlemen, the negotiations on the Post-2015 development agenda should draw lessons from the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by identifying gaps and building on their strengths of the MDGs. The Post 2015 development Agenda provides a unique opportunity on how to provide a **fresh impetus to the Sustainable Development Agenda** and to examine and devise strategies to address key emerging development issues in the coming years.

In this context, the framing of a Post 2015 agenda should promote integration of the three dimension of sustainable development **by ensuring that all three pillars, namely the social, economic and environmental aspirations are embedded within each other**.

South Africa recognises that **natural and environmental capital, services it provide is a foundation that underpins the desired social and economic sustainable development pathway**. Therefore, the environmental dimension of

sustainable development should cut across and underpin social and economic considerations.

The eradication of poverty and hunger, promotion of health, nutrition, education, access to energy, water and sanitation are underpinned by environmental considerations to achieve sustainable development such as climate smart agriculture, sustainable land management, clean air, delivery of clean water and clean energy technology.

South Africa views **poverty eradication, addressing inequality and job creation** as an overarching outcome of sustainable development. Therefore, poverty eradication, inequality and job creation efforts should take “**a multi-dimensional approach**” and must cut across all the relevant thematic areas and sectors.

In the same manner, the goals with a more economic character, **such as sustainable consumption and production, industrialisation and economic growth, decent jobs** – are underpinned by environmental considerations to achieve sustainable development such as **environmentally sound waste and chemicals management**, pollution control, clean technology and environmental education.

Deputy President, as a Board member of the 10 Year Framework on Sustainable Consumption and Production, South Africa calls upon all Member states to support the implementation of this framework. We further, welcome the European Union support for the “Switch Africa Green initiatives” that promote the development of green businesses and eco-entrepreneurship.

South Africa is implementing initiatives that promote sustainable consumption and patterns with particular focus on the solar water heaters; renewable energy, energy efficiency, waste recycle, development of green cities, sustainable transport, clean coal and building retrofit as well as reducing carbon emission.

The consumers and industry, are the key actors of the economy. These role players have to make the changes towards sustainable patterns and behavior. However, the government has an important role to catalyze the consumers and industry towards sustainable consumption and production patterns. The government has to engage, steer, facilitate, encourage, incite, and even regulate consumers and industry where necessary.

Furthermore, there is a need to mobilise the necessary enabling support and cooperation, including technology, finance and capacity building support to ensure means of implementation.

With regard to the proposed goals with a more environmental character, issues of access to natural resources, sustainable consumptive and non-consumptive use of natural resources and the delivery of healthy ecosystem services should be key principles pursued in the design and conceptualization of these SDGs. This approach ensures the balanced integration of all three pillars of sustainable development, where the natural capital and resource base lies at the core of economic prosperity and progressive societies

Thank you – Asante!!