

PARTICIPATION IN 7TH OPEN WORKING GROUP

One of the main outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), held in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012, was the agreement by Member States to launch a process to develop a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs).

Rio+20 did not elaborate specific goals but stated that the SDGs should be limited in number, aspirational and easy to communicate. The goals should address in a balanced way all three dimensions of sustainable development and be coherent with and integrated into the UN development agenda beyond 2015. A 30-member Open Working Group (OWG) of the General Assembly is tasked with preparing a proposal on the SDGs.

The Open Working Group was established on 22nd of January 2013 by decision 67/555 (see [A/67/L.48/rev.1](#)) of the General Assembly. The Member States have decided to use an innovative, constituency-based system of representation that is new to limited membership bodies of the General Assembly. This means that most of the seats in the OWG are shared by several countries. In its first session, the Open Working Group elected two co-chairs. The OWG is co-chaired by Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, Permanent Representative of Hungary, and Mr. Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya.

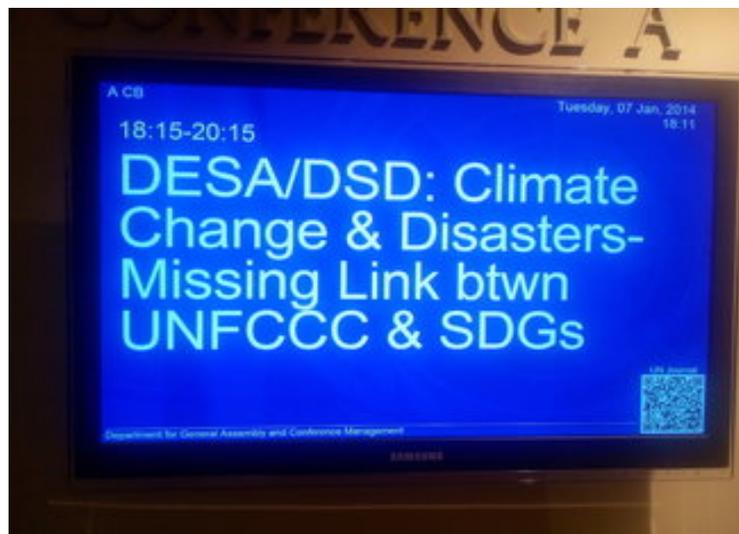
The seventh session of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals will deal with:

- Sustainable cities and human settlements, sustainable transport
- Sustainable consumption and production (including chemicals and waste)
- Climate change and disaster risk reduction

OUR SIDE EVENT

Title: Climate Change and Disaster Reduction: Missing Link between UNFCCC & SDG process

The issues of climate change and disaster have been mainly addressed by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which is the only international convention dealing with climate change and global cooperation in climate stabilization. However, the developments in international



negotiations have been very slow, and till now developed countries and developing countries have had entrenched positions, which has been an impediment in arriving at a commonly shared solution and having another Protocol after the Kyoto Protocol (which laid down legal responsibility of the developed countries to reduce their GHG emission and provide technology and financial assistance to developing and poor countries to develop low carbon growth pathways) expired in 2012. The international community has agreed to have a new agreement in 2015 in Paris.



While the achievements in international negotiations remain extremely limited, the world faces multiple challenges including economic crisis, energy and oil crisis, food crisis and crisis of sustainability and climate change. These need to be addressed without delay by redefining growth and bringing environmental sustainability in the core, addresses economic and social imbalances and disparity.

Today
the

world is on the cusp of a sustainability crisis. Rising emissions have substantially altered the climate and weather systems, enhanced melting of glaciers, rise in sea level, and substantial increase in the number and frequency of extreme climatic events or disasters. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) declared the decade of 2001-2010, as decade of climate extremes.



More than 390,000 people died as a result of disasters related to climate and more than 10 million were affected. Now more than 7% of the world's population is affected by climate extremes, which is projected to rise significantly if reasons (emissions) are not addressed.

Addressing climate change and disaster risk reduction, requires multiple approaches and multiplicity of efforts, and needs to be discussed on platforms other than UNFCCC. OWG provides an excellent opportunity to bring focus on climate change and disasters at the United Nations General Assembly, and lay down basic minimum standards of global cooperation, approaches, objectives and indicators on disasters and important disaster related aspects including food and humanitarian aid, relief and rehabilitation, disaster risk reduction through mitigation.