



INDIA
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Statement by

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At

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Agenda 3(a): Data and indicators for the 2030 Agenda
For Sustainable Development**

General Assembly

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Chairman and Distinguished Colleagues,

It is an honour and privilege for me to participate in the 49th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission and to share India's views on agenda item 3(a). We wish to thank the Co-Chairs, Members and Observers of Inter-Agency and Expert Group for Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDG) for the effort and time that they have put in for bringing out the Draft Guidelines on data flow for the SDGs. I am sure that this will help the International Agencies, Custodian Agencies and National Governments to work together for a smooth data flow on the global indicators. I would also like to thank the United Nations Statistical Division for its excellent support to this process.

Mr Chairman,

In the 47th Session Commission endorsed the IAEG-SDG proposal for grouping of indicators into Tier I, II and III and the framework facilitated technical refinements and improvements to ensure that the global indicators reflects progress of countries on SDGs. We are glad that IAEG-SDGs have further elaborated the definitions of Tier classification to clearly bring out the requirements for Tier reclassification/upgradation based on the new definitions and data sources.

The SDG indicator list adopted by the 48th Session and later by UN General Assembly has about 68 Tier III indicators even after two years of evolution of SDGs. The IAEG-SDGs report indicates that the process of Tier upgradation is slow and it will take a few years before all Tier III indicators get upgraded to Tier II or Tier I and in the interregnum, several targets may go unmonitored. There is a need for the IAEG-SDGs and the Custodian Agencies to expedite their work in a time bound manner so that countries can initiate work to align their statistical data systems for producing corresponding indicators.

Mr Chairman,

During the 48th UNSC Session, India had conveyed its concern regarding some International Agencies giving incomplete information on some of the indicators and the availability of internationally established standard methodology. We highlighted the example of indicator 2.1.2 relating to Food Insecurity Experience Scale (FIES) which was initially classified as Tier I. This issue was also taken up in the IAEG-SDG deliberations and it has now been classified as Tier II, even though many member countries still consider the indicator has no internationally established methodology for compiling data. This will have implications on the credibility of information being made available in the meta-data with regard to internationally established and agreed methodology. IAEG-SDGs member countries need to be more vigilant about such indicators and we call upon reclassification of this indicator to Tier III as the Custodian Agencies could not present an internationally accepted methodology. The IAEG-SDGs consultation process is a technical exercise and therefore, we would suggest that IAEG-SDGs should also follow the principle of "consensus" as being followed for the Commission decisions. Cases where there are significant differences among members of the IAEG-SDGs in terms of methodology may be considered for international consultation before a decision is taken.

Mr Chairman,

We also express our reservation on pilot surveys and estimates being used for country report without consulting or involving the concerned National Statistical Office (NSO). India welcomes and supports the Revised Guidelines on Data Flow as it has adequately addressed these issues and we are of the opinion that a country's estimate/pilot data should be published after full consultation with concerned NSO.

Mr Chairman,

I also want to draw your attention to the fact that the indicators alone will not be enough to assess the targets. Indicators are only one component of assessing the implementation/progress on target. Many indicators address the targets only partially. Based on the indicator framework, there is a need to develop an evaluation framework for the SDGs. Such an evaluation system can be based on the indicators and also include other aspects in assessment of targets. We, therefore, call upon the Commission to request the IAEG-SDGs to work towards a comprehensive evaluation framework for SDG targets.

Thank you Chair.
