

**Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue: From Millennium Development Goals to the UN
Development Agenda beyond 2015**

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It is my distinct honor to participate in this Asia-Pacific Ministerial Dialogue co-organized by the UNESCAP and the Royal Thai Government.

Let me first of all congratulate the Royal Thai Government and UNESCAP for this timely initiative. The region of Asia-Pacific has a crucial stake in the discussions for a Post-2015 Development Agenda and it is important that the region's priorities are adequately reflected in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

As we near the date for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, the discussions on a global development agenda for the post-2015 period have begun in right earnest. India attaches great importance to these discussions.

We are appreciative of the effort that has gone into the report of the UN Secretary General's High Level Panel on Post-2015 Development Agenda. We see the report of the Panel not as a template but as an input into an inter-Governmental process which will delineate the post-2015 development agenda. It is one of the beginning steps, not the end of the journey to arrive at this agenda. It is important that the agenda itself is arrived at in a transparent and fully inclusive setting through intergovernmental negotiations under the United Nations. We hope that this process will be launched at the 68th session of the UNGA later this year.

A lot of thinking seems to have gone into 'How has the world changed in the last two decades, and how this needs to be reflected in the new agenda'. We feel that **it is equally important to ask the question 'How the world has not changed?'** The "changed world" argument conveniently overlooks the vast socio-economic and developmental challenges confronting the developing countries. Poverty, deprivation, hunger, sanitation, malnutrition, gender inequality, education, health etc still remain and pose significant

burdens on the countries of the South. It would be a mistake to overlook these in the name of a changing world. As we move to craft an agenda for the post-2015 period, it is incumbent upon us to keep these human development objectives at its core.

Given the twin objectives of poverty eradication and thrust towards development, it is clear that the 'development' agenda must remain '**growth-focused**' aiming to spur and support robust economic growth in developing countries, which is important for employment generation and social inclusion.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda must focus on the unsustainable consumption and production patterns and wastage of food and resources. The Post-2015 Development Agenda must be based on the outcome of the Rio+20 Conference and it must also fully respect the Rio principles in particular the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. Consequently, the **post-2015 framework should be universal in application** so as to create a more equitable set of responsibilities and obligations.

It is important to bear in mind that that Post-2015 Development Agenda is an agenda for development. Therefore, it must first and foremost, promote rapid and sustained economic growth in developing countries. Poverty eradication is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and in particular, Asia Pacific, where 2/3 of the world's poor live in abject poverty. Poverty eradication, therefore, is the central and overarching goal of the post-2015 development agenda. The agenda must also address the lack of universal energy access in developing countries through all sources of energy. We must ensure that issues of fundamental concern and priority, particularly for developing countries, like access to education, universal health coverage and full and productive employment for all are meaningfully addressed in the new development agenda beyond 2015.

Empowerment of women and gender equality remains a key priority not just for our Asia-Pacific region but beyond. We cannot make much progress in our tasks unless their full and effective participation in policies, programmes and decision making is achieved.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda must also provide an ambitious and robust framework on means of implementation for developing countries. Mobilization of international resources including ODA, transfer of technology and capacity building will have to be supplemented by an effort to forge a supportive global economic environment, including a reform of the global economic governance that is conducive to development. It is important

the Post-2015 Development Agenda must preserve the policy space and national priorities of developing countries to pursue sustainable development.

It is **important not to over-emphasize the role of South-South Cooperation** or to place onerous expectations from it. It is relevant to recall that South-South Cooperation operates under its own unique circumstances and is governed by certain important principles, which were endorsed by the international community in the Nairobi Outcome Document of the High Level UN Conference on South-South Cooperation of 2009. South-South Cooperation is a **partnership among equals** and **entirely voluntary** in nature. Consequently, it is also important to **distinguish between South-South Cooperation and North-South Flows**. The two cannot be placed at the same pedestal nor can the same yardsticks be applied to evaluate the two. South-South can supplement, not supplant North-South flows.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda is a monumental opportunity. An opportunity to learn from and build on the MDG agenda; an opportunity to not just re-focus global attention on the most pressing problems of the day but to craft a meaningful response to those problems in a spirit of multilateralism; and above all an opportunity to craft an ambitious, equitable and comprehensive agenda for global development and cooperation for the coming decade and more.

We are confident that the views and priorities of the Asia-Pacific region articulated through this conference would be an important input into the process for arriving at the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Thank you.
