

# REPORT

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# Post-2015 agenda on development

French position  
paper prepared  
with civil society

Directorate-General  
of Global Affairs,  
Development  
and Partnerships





**POST-2015 AGENDA ON DEVELOPMENT :  
FRENCH POSITION PAPER PREPARED  
WITH CIVIL SOCIETY**

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**Post-2015 Agenda on development: French  
position paper prepared with civil society**

I am proud to introduce this document presenting the French position on the post-2015 development agenda. This contribution is the result of an intense work with civil society initiated during the “National Conference on Development and International Solidarity”. Over sixty French NGOs participated into this broad consultation that allowed a thorough dialogue between civil society and government. The richness of this document reflects this exemplary process.

The definition of the post-2015 development agenda is a top priority for France. The challenge is huge: to define common goals that will guarantee a life of dignity for 9 billion people on a planet with limited resources and accelerated climate change. These two challenges cannot be separated anymore. We need to integrate sustainability imperatives in order to succeed in the fight against poverty and vice versa. There will be no progress in the field of food security and the fight against infant mortality if we fail to limit global warming that threatens agricultural production in many developing countries. That is why France considers the convergence of the revision of the Millennium Development Goals and the definition of Sustainable development goals in a single agenda in 2015 as the basis for reflection.

This convergence involves thinking of new sustainable development goals while capitalizing on the achievements of the MDGs. The Millennium Development Goals have allowed unprecedented international mobilization and spectacular progress. Thanks to this, since 2000, 600 million women and men were lifted out of poverty and 43 million children were able to go to school. However, we know that despite this progress we will not complete the MDGs by 2015. In the fight against poverty or for the access to social services such as education and health, we will have to keep our commitments beyond 2015 to enable everyone to live decently.

This is why France promotes a human rights-based approach to development. Sexual and reproductive rights, nutrition, water and sanitation, health, education or housing rights are universal human rights. They provide a decent life for all. Their violation is both the cause and consequence of poverty. We will fight for these rights rejecting discriminations of any kind, and particularly gender-based discriminations.

Finally, we want this agenda to be universal. This means that the goals will have to apply to all countries, while respecting local realities and different levels of development. This new agenda requires a global mobilization because a sustainable world cannot be built without ecological transition in the north and sustainable development in the south. We will have to innovate both in the north and the south to create new modes of production and consumption that will provide a decent life to 9 billion human beings while preserving our planet.

I would like to acknowledge once again the exemplary exercise of dialogue which resulted in the production of this document. Thanks to the French civil society mobilization, I will promote this vision of a more united world in the international fora where negotiations have begun around this future agenda. Today we embark in a great adventure: a common agenda for sustainable and shared prosperity. This agenda is ambitious. It is imperative.

Pascal Canfin, Minister Delegate attached to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, with  
responsibility for Development

## Contents

### **I. Capitalizing on the lessons of the Millennium Development Goals**

### **II. Towards a comprehensive universal sustainable development agenda**

#### A. A renewed vision in the light of the global prospects until 2030

1. Place all aspects of sustainability at the heart of the agenda
2. Go beyond basic social needs: a more comprehensive view of development factors
3. Promote a rights-based approach

#### B. A truly universal scope

1. Goals relevant for all countries...
2. ...but differentiated
3. An inclusive comprehensive partnership using diversified financing

### **III. Selecting the priorities of the future agenda: appraisal of French reflection**

1. Food and nutrition security
2. Universal access to drinking water and sanitation
3. Quality lifelong education for all
4. Gender equality
5. Health for all
6. Decent work for all
7. A decent, sustainable and connected living environment for all
8. Sustainable energy for all
9. A sustainable environment for all
10. Multi-level democratic governance for sustainable development



The formulation of the international development agenda which will succeed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015 is a key process for our future. While the progress made in combating poverty since 2000 is unprecedented, disparities persist between regions. This progress is also compromised by global challenges that have become exacerbated by demographic growth, such as increased inequality, conflict and fragile situations, severe deterioration of ecosystems, constant depletion of limited natural resources and climate change. Like the increasing frequency of global crises, be they economic, financial, social or environmental, these imbalances highlight the limits of our current growth models, damage the prospects for human development and call for a collective response. The adoption in 2015 of a unique and universal agenda equal to these issues will be essential if we are to have a hope of ensuring a decent life for the 9 billion people living on our planet by 2050.

France is engaged in the formulation of this new agenda at the highest level. The Minister Delegate for Development, Pascal Canfin, sits personally on the Open Working Group tasked in June 2012 by the Rio+20 Conference to define the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The French-Swiss-German team within this group developed excellent cooperation. France is also represented within the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, also provided by the Rio+20 Conference, by the administrator, Anthony Requin, Head of the Multilateral Affairs and Development Department at the Directorate-General of the Treasury. Mr Jean-Michel Severino, former Director General of the *Agence française de développement* (AFD, French Development Agency), sat on the High-Level Panel, whose work on the post-2015 agenda, submitted on 30 May 2013, makes an excellent contribution to the report that the United Nations Secretary-General will present to the Member States on 25 September. Laurence Tubiana, Director of the French Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI), co-chairs the Sustainable Development Solutions Network with Jeffrey Sachs. The Network's proposals will also enrich the United Nations Secretary-General's report. France also strongly supported the consultation process of unprecedented scale conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), co-sponsoring the Global Thematic Consultation on Environmental Sustainability with Costa Rica. Nicolas Hulot, special envoy of the French Presidency for the protection of the planet, participated in the conference which was dedicated to it.

The involvement of civil society in drawing up the future agenda is fundamental. Its relevance and impact depend on this. France wants to define its position on the post-2015 agenda in the framework of a wide consultation, launched by the National Conference on Development and International Solidarity in October 2012. This document is the fruit of this collective reflection which has continued since then in the framework of regular meetings with French civil society and on thematic platforms (on health, education, food security, etc.) bringing together ministry experts, the *Agence française de développement* and non-State actors. It is also based on the results of the consultations of the UNDP Programme and the UN Millennium Campaign, as well as on the work and seminars of French think-tanks including the Centre for Study and Research for International Development (FERDI) and the Institute of Sustainable Development and International Relations (IDDRI).

This first French position paper is based on the Millennium Declaration, the strengths and weaknesses of the MDGs, and on the Rio+20 Outcome Document, to renew our vision of development, taking into account the shifts in the international context since 2000 and the global prospects ahead of 2030 and 2050. In a world experiencing strong demographic growth, grappling with challenges which undermine the improvement of our living conditions and where challenges linked to conflict and fragile situations have proved to be major obstacles to development and the achievement of the MDGs, it is essential to include a cross-cutting peace and security aspect as an integral part of fully-inclusive sustainable development. French stakeholders consider that the future agenda should aim to guarantee an inclusive society founded on human rights and on the thriving of individual capabilities, as well as a decent and sustainable living environment, while making globalization a positive force for our societies and our planet.

With this in mind, this document aims to prepare the formulation of a post-2015 agenda which is unique and universal, so applicable to all countries, and that includes the economic, environmental and social aspects of sustainable development while taking account of the specific challenges of countries experiencing conflict or emerging from crises (see criteria on page 5). A dozen issues have been identified as a first basis for France's reflection, which will continue in 2014 and 2015.

At the close of the National Conference on Development and International Solidarity, the President of the French Republic set the course for French policy: economic development, security and environmental protection. The Conference debate and thematic platforms identified about ten issues which could be included in the future agenda. The list below forms a basis for French discussions which must continue in order to formulate these proposals in greater detail and define France's priorities while meeting the aims set by the President of the Republic.

## **I. Capitalize on the lessons of the Millennium Development Goals**

Since 2000, the MDGs have contributed to an unprecedented acceleration of poverty reduction worldwide. They have played a major role in mobilizing development stakeholders. Being simple, clear, measureable and symbolic, they spurred on the efforts of donors, helped assess the progress made internationally, and contributed to raising awareness and mobilizing public opinion. They gave civil societies in every country a reference framework to monitor policies. The United Nations 2012 MDGs report<sup>1</sup> highlighted that certain targets of MDGs 1 and 7 will be achieved by 2015 (reducing by half of the proportion of the global population living on less than \$1 per day, improving the living conditions of 100 million slum-dwellers and dividing the number of people without access to drinking water by two), and recorded substantial progress on the others.

That said, progress remains contrasted depending on goals, countries and, within them, regions and populations. Numerous targets, concerning combating hunger, reducing infant and maternal mortality, and access to sanitation will not be achieved by 2015. A billion people still live on less than \$1.25 per day, close to 870 million suffer from hunger, and 400 million remain deprived of access to basic social services. Sub-Saharan Africa is particularly far from achieving the goals on poverty, malnutrition and maternal and infant mortality, as are fragile and conflict-ridden States<sup>2</sup>.

This assessment makes two observations for the formulation of the next agenda: it is essential to pursue the efforts that have been made on the challenges set by the MDGs and which remain to be overcome, and to analyse the strengths and weaknesses of these goals, particularly regarding the priority needs of disadvantaged populations.

The adoption of the Millennium Declaration and the MDGs was the conclusion of a process to reaffirm the importance of a comprehensive approach to human development and the place of the United Nations in the development debate after twenty years of structural adjustments brought by the Washington Consensus. This paradigm shift was clarified in the course of the major United Nations conferences of the 1990s, including the 1986 Declaration on the Right to Development, 1990 New York World Summit for Children, 1992 Rio Conference on Environment and Development, 1993 Vienna World Conference on Human Rights, 1994 Cairo International Conference on Population and Development, 1995 Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women, and the 2000 Dakar World Education Forum. The Millennium Declaration thus made combating poverty once more the central goal of development policies and restored a much wider approach to its structural factors. This comprehensive approach remains fully relevant, but could be better reflected in the future goals than it was in the MDGs.

The Busan Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (2011) recalls that "Nowhere are our development goals more urgent than in fragile and conflict-affected states." The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, which was endorsed in Busan, promises a **cross-cutting and integrated approach** bringing together political, security and development actions and focuses on appropriate internal processes for emerging from fragility, including the use of political dialogue. The Report of the High-Level Panel on the Post-2015 Development Agenda (May 2013) sets out two main goals: "**ensure good governance and effective institutions**" (Goal 10) and "**ensure stable and peaceful societies**" (Goal 11) and cross-cutting

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Secretary-General, "Millennium Development Goals Report 2012", 2 July 2012.

<sup>2</sup> See the World Development Report 2011 by the World Bank, "Conflict, Security and Development"; The New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, formulated by the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding (IDPS) (Busan, 2011); annual reports from the International Network on Conflict and Fragility (INCAF) on Resource Flows to Fragile and Conflict-Affected States.

themes (peace, human rights, gender and equality through the goals) in line with the approach for an all-inclusive universal agenda which leaves no one behind<sup>3</sup>, recognizing the importance of a rights-based agenda enabling inclusive and sustainable development.

The MDGs focus on access to basic social services, which are needed for individuals to thrive and for development. Issues which were insufficiently covered by the MDGs have since been highlighted: the need for inclusive development and the multiple aspects of poverty, preservation of the environment, sustainability of modes of production and consumption, the importance of higher education and vocational training, necessary measures so that the private sector, both national and international, can contribute to sustainable development, migration and governance. A rights-based approach should be strengthened, taking account of governance issues, rule of law and aspects linked to peace and security in the future agenda. MDG assessment reports highlight today that the progress made could be undone if some of these issues are not better taken into account in the future agenda.

The MDGs tend to create threshold effects as they are relative (e.g. reduce extreme poverty by half or infant mortality by two thirds). These relative goals may have led to policies focused on populations close to the poverty line and which can move above it quickly, to the detriment of those the furthest below it. The preference of the 1950s for universal and absolute objectives, such as the pure and simple elimination of poverty, needs to be re-adopted.

The MDGs remain too quantitative, to the detriment of the multidimensional approach to poverty which is promoted by the Millennium Declaration. They notably emphasized the challenge of access to essential services without taking into account their quality, which is particularly problematic for targets on education and drinking water.

The simplicity and limited number of MDGs contributed a great deal to their mobilizing power and should be conserved. However, their structure in thematic contains, of which the health MDGs are emblematic, also made it difficult to have a comprehensive overview of the factors needed for their accomplishment and led to a certain fragmentation of initiatives and even effects contrary to the desired goals.

The follow-up of the MDGs lastly recalled the importance of statistical capacities, whose weakness makes it difficult to assess levels at the beginning and measure progress. Building these capacities and publishing the data produced in a more open form (eg. the G8 Open Data Charter) will be essential to allow more effective, transparent and inclusive follow-up of the post-2015 agenda.

The MDGs are part of a donor/recipient dynamic, as shown by MDG 8 (*“Develop a global partnership for development”*), which focuses on the assistance of donors without sufficiently taking into account ownership by recipient States and the diversification of stakeholders, implementing procedures of instruments and sources of financing. The first aim of the OECD report<sup>4</sup> that launched the reflection on the MDGs was to give meaning back to development assistance. The MDGs maintain a North/South approach which does not reflect today's world and which our developing partners wish to move beyond, particularly to no longer be considered as simple “objects” and “recipients” of assistance, but rather as stakeholders in the same capacity as the richer countries.

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<sup>3</sup> Cross-cutting inclusion (transformative shifts from the principle of non-discrimination (“leave no one behind”)) in order to achieve a development method where dignity and human rights are a reality for all and where an agenda can be built around human security. Two other cross-cutting pieces of data are relevant for a human-rights based approach: “Build peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all”, which focuses on personal security – the right to live free from fear, violence and conflict as a fundamental human right and the foundation for building peaceful and prosperous societies, access to justice, freedom from discrimination and a voice in decisions; and calling for a “fundamental shift” by “recognising peace and good governance as a core element of wellbeing, not an optional extra.”

<sup>4</sup> OECD DAC, “Shaping the 21st Century: the Contribution of Development Cooperation”, Paris, 1996.

The MDGs have not, moreover, encouraged the participation of populations in implementing the programmes and policies concerning them. Most have not helped promote operational mechanisms involving persons living in poverty and the most excluded social groups as active partners of development projects. Certain projects and programmes have therefore proven unsuitable, have not succeeded in accomplishing their goals and have not taken advantage of local knowledge.

Essentially, the principle of an agenda determined by a limited number of non-prescriptive goals, accompanied by indicators, is needed. The future agenda should conserve the Millennium Declaration as a political foundation and integrate all the sectors covered by the MDGs, but supplement them in the light of the needs of disadvantaged populations and groups suffering discrimination, as well as the multiple challenges in the coming decades.

## **II. Towards a comprehensive universal sustainable development agenda**

The main stake of the formulation of the post-2015 agenda is to define a vision suited to the developments of the international context and the major challenges to address by 2030 in order to eliminate absolute poverty and guarantee sustainable development for all. For a growing majority of stakeholders, this vision must result from a paradigm shift relative to the MDG approach. This will mean moving from an agenda for developing countries focused on basic social services to universal goals centred on the levers of the transition to a more sustainable and fair world, based on indicators supplementary to GDP and mobilizing a truly comprehensive partnership.

### **A. A renewed vision in the light of the global prospects until 2030**

#### *1- Place all aspects of sustainability at the heart of the agenda*

While millions of people have escaped poverty since 2000, global prospects are not very reassuring. There are many challenges undermining development for all: demographic growth which will increase the world population to more than 8 billion in 2030 and more than 9 billion around 2050, including 60%, and later two thirds, in urban areas; increasing pollution and accelerating climate change; increasing scarcity of natural resources; consecutive exacerbation of competition for global public goods (water, arable land, access to raw materials) and economic models based on capturing resources. Therefore, **eliminating poverty and guaranteeing a decent life for all in 2030 appears impossible without a transition to more sustainable development, consumption and production models and strengthening global governance and respect for rights.**

This is the main message and contribution of the Outcome Document of the June 2012 Rio+20 Conference, which recalls the importance of a **multidimensional approach to sustainable development**. The three pillars of sustainable development – social, economic and environmental – are interdependent and inseparable, to which must be added the peace and security dimension and the aspects linked to governance and human rights in a cross-cutting manner. This integrated vision implies a **convergence upon a single agenda of the MDG revision process launched by the United Nations Secretary-General and working groups on the formulation of sustainable development goals (SDGs) and their financing**, planned by the Rio+20 Conference. While the “development” and “sustainable development” agendas have been distinct, their merging is needed now into an integrated vision capable of guaranteeing a decent life for all, for today and tomorrow. The adoption of two agendas would be counterproductive and needlessly disperse efforts. The inextricable links between the future of our planet and human development prospects now affect an increasing number of States, above all the least developed countries (LDCs), whose development is compromised by climate change, as well as fragile and conflict-affected states and societies.

#### *2- Go beyond basic social needs: a more comprehensive view of development factors*

The MDGs are essentially focused on basic social needs. This vision<sup>5</sup> dates back to the 1970s and does not take on board the results of the major conferences of the 1990s which promoted a “transformative”

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<sup>5</sup> Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, David Hulme, *International Norm Dynamics and ‘the End of Poverty’: Understanding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*, BWPI Working Paper 96, Brooks World Poverty Institute, June 2009.

agenda, tackling all long-term development factors: individual capacities and the structural factors of societal change, which go far beyond basic social needs.

Focusing on only basic social needs is today questioned by many development assistance beneficiaries themselves. These stakeholders call for a more dynamic, comprehensive vision, emphasizing economic and social opportunity and the vectors of long-term development from within (job creation, infrastructure, agricultural extension, diversification and structural transformation of economies), and not on the sole supply of fundamental, essential but minimal needs. The G7+ Group of fragile states also called for a New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States (Busan, 2011), in order to strengthen peace and consolidate the State as the basis for the achievement of MDGs. The post-2015 agenda could thus return to the capability approach developed by Amartya Sen, defining development as a “process of expanding the real freedoms that people enjoy.” This means political and civil freedoms, social, cultural and economic potential, transparent governance and economic life, and protective freedoms (social security and the rule of law).

Lastly, the agenda should focus on the factors of the transition towards sustainable development through a deep change in our modes of production and consumption, the promotion of measures to combat inequality, clearer accountability of actors with regard to the impact of their activities, strengthened collective governance to reduce global imbalances, good management of natural resources, and strengthened resilience of our societies to the economic, financial and natural risks and shocks.

### *3- Promote a rights-based approach*

France supports a **rights-based approach**, which is vital for freedoms to thrive. The right to development, enshrined by the 1986 United Nations Resolution, implies and calls for the full implementation of human rights and freedoms, such as the right to live free from fear, violence and conflict. Sexual and reproductive rights, the right to food, water and sanitation, the right to health and education, and the right to work, a decent salary, to a home or to culture are universal fundamental rights whose violation is both the cause and consequence of poverty. A rights-based approach therefore recalls that fundamental human, political, cultural, social and economic rights cannot be sacrificed. Such an approach, based on the universality of rights and the principle of non-discrimination, must moreover make it possible to strengthen the cross-cutting goal of combating inequality within the future agenda. Increasing inequality is indeed one of the most striking global phenomena of the last decade.

A human rights-based approach remains controversial in the current international debate. France supports the Guiding Principles on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, adopted by the Human Rights Council on 27 September 2012 and “welcomed with satisfaction” by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 December 2012. They affirm for the first time at international level, that the eradication of extreme poverty is a global legal obligation under human rights law. Drawn up in liaison with populations in situations of great poverty, these Guiding Principles take into account the obstacles they encounter to exercise their rights and recommend specific actions to overcome them. France also shares the recommendations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), communicated to the Member States on 6 June 2013 for international human rights law to guide the definition of future goals, targets and indicators for the post-2015 agenda.

It is France’s responsibility to build on achievements, like the 2011 G20 commitment on social protection floors initiated under the French Presidency which was reaffirmed at the Rio+20 Conference, as well as the adoption on 12 December 2012 by the United Nations General Assembly of a resolution on universal health coverage, promoted by the Diplomacy and Health Group, which France launched to promote this agenda in accordance with its priorities. **France is in favour of defining universal floors to ensure that human rights are effectively observed, such as equal access for all to global public goods and economic, social and environmental opportunities.** As recommended by the special procedures mandate holders of the United Nations Human Rights Council, the effective implementation of these universal protection floors requires specific initiatives to combat inequality, discrimination and stigmatization.

## **B. Truly universal scope**

### *1- Goals relevant for all countries...*

**The transition towards a more sustainable, balanced and inclusive development model is a challenge facing every country**, be it developed, emerging or developing. The future United Nations agenda therefore needs to be applicable to all countries, regardless of their level of development. The universal scope of the agenda is also required by the **global nature of the challenges to address** for sustainable development and the need for **collective mobilization**. The impact of economic, food and climate crises as well as conflicts, undermines the improvement of population well-being worldwide. Global imbalances, which structurally compromise sustainable development for all, call for collective, coherent responses at all governance levels, including the formulation of global public policies. A universal agenda is therefore needed.

2- *...but differentiated*

**This universal agenda must not however be prescriptive**, and certainly not offer a uniform model supposedly valid for all countries. **It is vital to adapt to national realities, while respecting universal human rights** – given the heterogeneity of situations and the importance of initiatives by local stakeholders.

This control not only involves the formulation of the universal agenda through the most open, inclusive process possible, but also, probably, its **adaptation at national level by local stakeholders**. For governments, this would mean determining, with civil society and all public and private stakeholders at national and local level, and in liaison with United Nations agencies, the trajectory to achieve the universal goals, clarified through targets and indicators suited to institutional and statistical capabilities. Such a national adaptation would have the merit of addressing four major challenges. It would reduce the lack of ownership of the MDGs. It would avoid their bias to the detriment of countries with a particularly difficult initial situation; while the MDGs were defined as goals to be achieved collectively at global level, they have been used as a comparative benchmark to evaluate local progress, leading to an erroneous assessment of progress whereby African countries judged to be “lagging behind” or “off track” were those who had made the most progress since 1990. Moreover, this national adaptation would avoid attempting a painstaking differentiation of the targets and indicators depending on UN categories, which would not fail to re-open the important but risky debate on their relevance, both technically and politically. Lastly, this option would address the desire expressed by many countries to conserve their political room to manoeuvre and see their national sovereignty strictly respected.

A “basket” of targets and indicators could also be formulated based on a minimum basis of common criteria for each goal at international level in order to allow States and their civil society to choose the most relevant with respect to their priorities and their situations, whilst preserving an international follow-up framework. We would therefore have a national framework made up of goals for which each country would implement its own specific means.

3- *An inclusive comprehensive partnership using diversified financing*

As it needs to be more comprehensive and universal, the **future agenda should be relevant for all development stakeholders**, beyond traditional donors: emerging countries as well as territorial communities, civil society, foundations and private stakeholders. The role of the latter should be governed by guiding principles in order to promote the coherence of their practice for development, their social and environmental responsibility and their cooperation with other stakeholders.

The follow-up of the agenda, like its formulation, should be done at two levels: that of the United Nations and that of the countries, ensuring that local civil society and the most vulnerable populations are involved, combining peer pressure and the requirement for local accountability. A five-yearly review would allow regular assessment of progress, updating of the agenda if necessary, and continued mobilization of stakeholders. The talks which began at the Busan Forum on a global partnership should be carefully taken into account.

**Building on the Monterrey Consensus, the implementation of the agenda will involve a holistic approach, a full range of useful and available financing for development and the formulation of credible sustainable development financing strategies.**

France would like to underline the importance of better mobilization of internal resources through responsible tax reforms and better use of income from the development of natural resources, greater transparency and accountability from countries which are development partners, combating tax avoidance and the elimination of tax havens, reducing the cost of migrant remittances, increasing these transfers and putting them to better use for investment in developing countries, efficient financial and philanthropic partnerships with companies and NGOs and innovative financing. These cover a series of instruments which lend new resources or innovative solutions to other development problems. France is a pioneer in this area and has, for example, established a financial transaction tax (FTT), 10% of the revenue of which will be dedicated to development starting this year. It continues to advocate for such a tax at European and international level, provided that it is appropriately designed. It has set up other instruments such as the International Finance Facility for Immunisation (IFFIm), the tax on airline tickets and highly-concessional countercyclical loans (PTTCs). In general, it encourages new countries to use existing instruments, and explores the possibility of establishing other mechanisms.

Maximizing these resources which are available to development and their impact by improving management and targeting of the financing instruments in the contexts and sectors where they are most appropriate and developing leverage effects through, for example, guarantee and blending mechanisms will be essential. The improvement and diversification of our public and private development assistance tools mobilized by France will mean that it is even more necessary for France to step up its ongoing actions in the area of research and measuring the results of this development financing. Our approach to development and assistance for fragile and conflict-affected states must also change, as highlighted by the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States. The limits of a purely quantitative approach have been clearly demonstrated, and the quality and effectiveness of our instruments will be crucial.

This comprehensive partnership also implies strengthened global governance to create a favourable framework for sustainable development. Amongst other measures, it appears essential to improve international financial regulation, including to combat the excesses of the financial sector, as well to combat the volatility of agricultural prices, to facilitate the inclusion of the least developed countries in international trade, to adopt an ambitious new agreement in the framework of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) by 2015, and to ensure the coherence of sustainable development policies.

### III. **Selecting the priorities of the future agenda: appraisal of French reflection**

The Rio+20 Outcome Document contributes general points on the criteria to formulate the future goals: their universality and the balanced coverage of the economic, environmental and social pillars of sustainable development.

The MDGs were essentially chosen on the basis of their simplicity and consensual nature, at the risk of weakening the agenda. While France and the European Union need to listen better to their partners, they must also strive, through intense consultations, to rally around goals which remain divisive.

The choice of the future goals could be determined by the following criteria, which should be combined as best as possible:

- (1) **universality**: relevance for all countries, regardless of the level of development;
- (2) **relevance in 20 years**;
- (3) **suitability to combat inequality and for the rights, needs and capacities of the poorest populations and those who suffer discrimination**, such as women, young people, isolated and disconnected populations, and those of fragile and conflict-ridden States;
- (4) **leverage effect for the transition of societies to sustainable development models**;
- (5) **multidimensionality**;
- (6) **measurability**;
- (7) **clarity**, vital for their communication and their use by all stakeholders.

Ultimately, the future agenda should target the factors of an effective transition to sustainable development models. International talks notably identify: the establishment of sustainable modes of production and consumption, the implementation of an energy transition and the promotion of a green and inclusive circular economy, the guarantee of quality education and life-long training for all, respect for rights equality and particularly gender equality, universal access to healthcare, the promotion of decent

work for men and women, social protection system guarantees, connection through sustainable infrastructure and information and communication technology (ICT), technical and social innovation, more democratic and transparent governance, and the taking into account of peace and security issues.

**Particular attention must be paid to issues which channel and boost development and create multiplier effects** and whose improvement facilitates progress on other goals:

- Gender equality, with there being strong correlations between sustainable development and women's education and empowerment, the exercise of sexual and reproductive rights and the reduction of infantile mortality, control of means of production and communication, improved living conditions for the poorest people, food security and respect for the environment.

- Culture: the inclusion of culture in development projects and policies makes them all the more effective and relevant as they take account of the local context and enable better ownership by recipients. Promoting cultural diversity encourages economic innovation and participatory approaches for improving the living environment. Culture also breeds resilience and facilitates change and social inclusion (e.g. when emerging from crises).

The prospect of this paradigm shift worries some of our partners, who see in the widening and universalization of the agenda the risk of diluting efforts and losing sight of the combat to eliminate poverty. But it is inconceivable for the future agenda to deviate from this goal. The most vulnerable are the most in need of a more sustainable approach to development, improved resilience to external shocks, universal access to social services, economic opportunities, energy and a healthy environment. **Priority access of the most vulnerable countries and people to international assistance cannot be undermined.**

In order to combat inequality more effectively, the future agenda should also include disaggregated indicators to ensure that populations who are victims of discrimination and/or vulnerable populations, including women, rural communities, minorities, disabled persons, and those living in extreme poverty, are reached.

The future agenda must also comprise infra-state indicators in order to take account of inequalities and strengthen the role of local and regional authorities in implementing objectives.

In short, the future agenda should aim to:

- (1) ensure that the capabilities of all individuals can thrive;
- (2) ensure an inclusive society and a decent and sustainable living environment for all;
- (3) make globalization a positive force for our societies and the planet.

In the light of these criteria and the stakes identified in the run-up to 2030, the following priorities could be promoted more specifically:

### **1. Food and nutrition security**

Food and nutrition security remains a crucial goal for all countries. Close to 870 million people are underfed and maternal and infant malnutrition is responsible for the death of 3.5-5 million children under five years old every year (more than a third of infant mortality). The food and nutrition issue also affects developed and emerging countries. Close to 18 million Europeans need food aid, while obesity causes 2.5 million deaths per year, close to half of which in developing countries. Because MDG 1 focuses above all on access to food and additionally to nutrition, it does not address adequately these challenges and the comprehensive approach to food security, as defined at the 1996 World Food Summit. The four dimensions of food security then defined should be fully integrated within the future agenda. The new objective could thus address:

- Sustainable availability of food: achieve high and sustainable agricultural productivity by targeting in particular smallholders and favouring sustainable sectors; facilitated and secure access to production factors (land and water as well as credit and inputs); ensure support for agricultural research and agricultural extension to spread ecologically intensive practices, e.g. by taking into account smallholders' needs and traditional know-how; protect the diversity of traditional seed and foster access to seed; improve the storage and conservation conditions to reduce losses after harvest and enhance the resilience of regions affected by chronic food crises, as well as reducing upstream food wastage.



- Improved access to food: reduce the isolation of rural areas; ensure decent income and jobs, particularly in rural areas, by bolstering subsistence farming, paying particular attention to the participation of women in the rural economy and its decision-making processes.

- Good nutrition: improve the quality and safety of water and food, guarantee a diversified diet, control exposure to dangerous concentrations of chemical pollutants; strengthen international and regional public animal and plant health surveillance networks; ensure food education encouraging a diversified diet and recalling the need for equity in the distribution of food (between girls and boys), promote the practice of maternal and infant care and an adequate health environment, and combat nutritional deficiencies, i.e. "hidden hunger" and premature obesity.

- Stabilized food security: strengthen global food and nutrition governance through the establishment of the Global Partnership for Food and Nutrition Security, based on the reformed Committee on World Food Security which plays a central role as an inclusive platform for issues regarding food and nutrition security governance; combat the excessive volatility of food prices; guarantee climate change adaptation policies, combating desertification and degradation of land; secure land tenure, particularly for family farms; combat arable land-grabbing by promoting the implementation of the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.

## **2. Universal access to drinking water and sanitation**

The right to drinking water and sanitation was recognized by the UN General Assembly in July 2010 and was recalled in the Rio+20 Outcome Document. According to the report of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, the goal of access to drinking water was achieved in 2010, as 89% of the world's population (6.1 billion people) then had access to "improved sources of water", whereas the goal was 88%. This figure should rise to 92% by 2015. This success does not however reflect the reality of access to drinking water. The indicator used measures only access to an "improved source of water", not taking into account the quality of the water or the regularity of the service. Geographical disparities remain significant, with 40% of the world's population without access to drinking water living in Africa. Between 2 and 4 billion people worldwide do not have access to drinking water and 2.5 billion do not have sanitation infrastructure. The lack of drinking water and sanitation thus remains one of the primary causes of mortality worldwide, particularly amongst young children.<sup>6</sup> Four targets could be envisaged:

1 – Provide 100% of the population with access to a sustainable and continuous source of good quality, uncontaminated water less than 30 minutes away (travel back and forth and waiting time included), including schools, health centres and public spaces.

2 – Provide 100% of the population with appropriate means of hygiene and access to decent toilets shared between less than 30 people.

3 – Preserve the ecological state of water resources: tend by 2030 towards the elimination of the quantity of pollutants dumped into surface and underground water through the creation of wastewater purification systems and promote the reuse of processed wastewater for agricultural, industrial, collective or economic purposes.

4 – Make a concerted and reasonable use of water resources: ensure reasonable and effective use of water and develop integrated water resources management systems at river basin level (concerted management plans, river basin organizations, legal frameworks) to balance domestic, agricultural and industrial usage and thus ensure the availability of resources. To do this, it is essential to strengthen the role of women in decision-making concerning water management.

## **3. Quality lifelong education for all**

The MDGs and the Education for All (EFA) goals have achieved very considerable progress in access to primary education to guarantee the right to education of all. The number of children worldwide who do

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<sup>6</sup>A 2011 UNICEF/WHO study (WHO, UNICEF, 2011) thus shows that 15-35% of new water sources taken into account carried contaminated water.

not receive schooling fell from 106 million in 1999 to 57.2 million in 2011. However, the number of unschooled children has not fallen in the last three years, particularly concerning isolated or marginalized populations in low-income countries. Despite the progress that has been made, academic failure, the quality of teaching, equal opportunities and access to training and decent work for young people remain challenges for all countries, regardless of their level of development.

The challenges of education should therefore be considered more universally and in context, linking access to quality and reduction of inequality. Education should be an essential lever to achieve the other development goals and ensure the empowerment, thriving and integration of all members of society. The education and training dimension should also be promoted through most of the other goals (peace and citizenship education while respecting cultural and linguistic differences, health, gender equality, environmental protection and management, etc.).

In continuation of the MDGs, the efforts in terms of universal access to education should be pursued to ensure the right to education and training for all:

- Increase equity in the availability, accessibility, acceptability and adaptability of lifelong education and training for all offers. Education policies should be inclusive, particularly for the most fragile populations and girls, and free basic education should be generalized. In this respect, a variety of education and training offers adapted to local context and better integration of the different education stakeholders (central and local government, businesses, parents) in the management of education systems is needed.

- Improve the quality of education and learning achievements. The conditions for quality teaching that addresses the needs of populations should be guaranteed in terms of curriculums, infrastructure, training and teacher status, pupil-teacher ratios and gender equality. The efforts needed to improve education quality should lead in the end to improved learning achievements.

- Recognize and promote diverse lifelong education and training pathways, from young children to higher education. This means ensuring the educational continuum, guaranteeing pathways between the different forms of education and training: formal and informal, academic and vocational. A system to recognize experience should be established to facilitate lifelong training. Vocational training offers should be developed, linked to the needs of society, in liaison with economic and social stakeholders to ensure better integration of young people.

There are challenges:

- A new balance is needed between the economic dimension of the development of human capital (education-training-professional integration), the role of education in the management and protection of the environment, and the social, cultural and humanist goals of education (reducing inequality, empowerment, citizenship).

- New partnerships on the management of public education policies must enable all stakeholders to be involved (central and local government, civil society, businesses, parents and pupils) and to define their roles and responsibilities in the framing and implementation of quality education policies.

- It is essential to develop quantitative and qualitative measurements and targets to report progress in quality, access, equity, gender mainstreaming, learning achievements, professional integration and combating all forms of disparities.

#### 4. Gender equality

Despite the efforts made since 2000, women and girls do not benefit equally from development and are victims of gender discrimination. There is considerable room for progress in terms of gender equality worldwide. MDGs 3 and 5 on women's empowerment and combating maternal mortality are far from being achieved and are threatened by a wave of conservatism which undermines the issue of universal women's rights and their right to control their own bodies. This makes the support of France and the European Union for this issue even more vital. Promoting equality is above all an **ethical and political imperative**. It is also a powerful accelerator for all other development goals. For example, if women had equal access to productive resources, they would produce 20-30% more, which would be enough to save 100-150 million people worldwide from hunger. Gender equality should be a **guiding principle in the new sustainable development goals** and be integrated both as a specific goal and in a cross-cutting manner.

This goal should not only prolong and supplement the previous targets, notably access to education for girls (MDG 3) and the access of young women to methods of contraception (MDG 5). It should also integrate other major issues such as combating violence against women. The goal could target three major issues:

- The effective implementation of rights equality between men and women: full implementation of the fundamental rights of women and girls, including access to justice; a ban on forced and underage marriages (under 18); prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls; guaranteed exercise by women of their sexual and reproductive rights, including the right to abortion, notably to prevent and avoid premature and unwanted pregnancies; and exercise of their political, economic and social rights. The agenda should also call for reform of discriminatory family law.

- Equal opportunities for men and women: guarantee the economic independence of women; their equal access to economic resources (including land, credit and training), as well as pay and professional equality; equal sharing of household responsibilities; women's participation in formal employment.

- Equal participation in political, economic and social representative and decision-making bodies at all levels, which is indispensable for example to effectively achieve the above targets.

**Gender indicators and indicators which can be broken down by gender and age should also be promoted in all other goals.**

## **5. Health for all**

Three of the eight MDGs give health a central place in the development agenda. By setting clear and measurable targets for reducing maternal and infant mortality as well as for the prevalence of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other transmissible diseases including tuberculosis, the health MDGs have helped to successfully mobilize public opinion, the sick, the most vulnerable populations and political leaders. In the last decade, progress in the handling of maternal and infant health and access to treatment for the three pandemics is tangible: The number of deaths under five years old has fallen from 12 million in 1990 to 7 million in 2010; the number of maternal deaths has dropped from 543,000 to 287,000; and close to 9.5 million people now have access to antiretroviral drugs. However, **MDGs 4, 5 and 6, defined in 2000, will remain relevant after 2015**. Regarding MDG 6 alone, for five new HIV contaminations, only two are treated; more than 1.5 million people still die of tuberculosis every year, with an increasing proportion of drug-resistant forms of the disease; and malaria continues to weigh heavily on maternal and infant mortality. The investments and achievements of the last decade could be lost if the mobilization focused on the health MDGs were to peter out.

The progress observed has been unequal, notably because of the weaknesses of certain health systems and limited access to health services for rural and poor populations and those that suffer discrimination. The financial, legal, social, geographical, cultural and political barriers to access to quality healthcare considerably limit the exercise of the rights of the most vulnerable in terms of health. Moreover, in a context of epidemiological transition and globalization, a certain number of health threats have not been taken into account, such as the growing burden of non-transmissible diseases (diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancers, and respiratory disorders), increased pandemic risks, re-emergence of infectious diseases, antibiotic resistance, and health risks linked to pollution and degradation of the environment. Lastly, the insufficient level of public health spending, the excessive payment of healthcare costs by households themselves and the faulty management of healthcare systems make a reflection on the financing of healthcare systems and social protection in the health field necessary. More than 100 million people fall into poverty every year because of direct payment for healthcare.

**Health must therefore continue to represent a priority in the future agenda, although its approach could be clarified and made more ambitious.** To consolidate and supplement the progress made in achieving the health MDGs, development of a quality, integrated health offer close to populations is needed. The economic, social and environmental factors of health need to be better taken into account. Control by women and girls of their sexual rights, improvement and control of their income and their involvement in the management of health services are essential to people's physical, emotional, mental and social well-being.

For all these reasons, France promotes the **goal of universal health coverage (UHC)** in the post-2015 agenda. UHC aims to promote full access, without discrimination, to all health services – including rehabilitation, prevention, promotion and treatment – in the framework of a healthcare continuum that includes sexual and reproductive health, maternal, newborn and infant health, the fight against the three pandemics (HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis) and the prevention of non-transmissible diseases. UHC is a

dynamic goal which applies to all countries, adapting the targets for population coverage, services and health spending. To be truly effective, the transition towards universal health coverage should be based on local and recurrent resources, should limit direct payments at the point of service, and target vulnerable populations as a priority. Moreover, UHC contributes to strengthening health systems by promoting efficiency, sustainable financing, and the quality of care. It thus embodies the principles of equality, equity, universality, efficiency, solidarity, the rights-based approach, and sustainability. Lastly, it is a measurable goal, one of whose indicators could be the level of direct payments amongst health spending, which is already used by the World Bank and the WHO in 188 countries.

A consensus is thus emerging on the relevance of UHC for the post-2015 agenda. The Rio+20 Outcome Document highlighted that UHC is an essential instrument, “enhancing health, social cohesion and sustainable human and economic development.” The resolution on “Foreign Policy and Global Health”, dedicated to UHC and tabled by France on behalf of the Diplomacy & Health Group with the sponsorship of 90 countries, was later adopted on 12 December 2012. France will participate in supporting the deployment of UHC in developing countries in the framework of its technical expertise efforts.

Health was more generally recognized as “a precondition for and an outcome and indicator of all three dimensions of sustainable development” in the Rio+20 Outcome Document. As such, truly sustainable development involves taking into account the impact of sectoral policies on the public health of future generations. Progress in sustainable agriculture, healthy food, access to energy, air, water and soil quality, access to sanitation and hygiene, use of chemicals, etc. are necessary to improve health. Many health challenges result from unsustainable modes of production and consumption in other sectors. **Healthy life expectancy** (HALE), defined as life expectancy adjusted for the invalidity factor, could be used as a cross-cutting indicator of long-term impact, reflecting the progress of sustainability in every sector.

## 6. Decent work for all

There is now a strong consensus for the promotion of employment and decent work, particularly amongst emerging and developing countries. MDG 1, “*Reduce extreme poverty and hunger*” includes target 1B: “*Achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all, including women and young people*” The following indicators are linked to this: growth rate of GDP per person employed; employment-to-population ratio; proportion of employed people living below \$1 (purchasing power parity) per day; and proportion of own-account and contributing family workers in total employment.

The International Labour Organization’s (ILO’s) Decent Work Agenda is centred on four strategic objectives (with gender equality as a cross-cutting objective): creating jobs; guaranteeing rights at work; extending social protection; and promoting social dialogue. It is based on the understanding that work is a source of personal dignity, family stability, peace in the community, democracy and above all economic growth that expands opportunities for productive jobs and enterprise development.

Several texts highlight the vital importance of rights, beginning with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. Recent texts have also reaffirmed the priority given to employment, including the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization, the 2009 Global Jobs Pact, and the 2012 resolution “The youth employment crisis: A call for action”. France supports the priorities of the Decent Work Agenda, including the extension of social protection, in accordance with the Rio+20 Outcome Document and ILO Recommendation 202 on national social protection floors. It also wishes to promote universal ratification and effective implementation of the ILO conventions.

It appears essential to promote job creation and guidance towards employment as well as support for entrepreneurship in the framework of a transition towards a green and inclusive economy. This means following the orientations of the Decent Work Agenda and the Global Jobs Pact and implementing policies which are favourable to the development of jobs and facilitate the transition towards formal employment and decent jobs. Ties between training and the needs of the market should be strengthened and lifelong apprenticeships, in-company training and work/study programmes should be developed, along with active job market policies which target both supply and demand and support employment services. Steps should be taken to promote the employment of the most vulnerable, including young people and senior citizens, the unqualified, long-term unemployed, women and disabled people. A target on the priority given to measures promoting employment, including support for training and the establishment and development of employment services, in national development frameworks, or on resources dedicated to national policy measures promoting employment, could be considered.

Vulnerable populations, such as young people, those with little or no qualifications, the long-term unemployed, women and the disabled, should receive specific attention, through indicators that can be broken down by gender and age. The development of specific actions to promote access to or returning to employment for vulnerable populations and those suffering discrimination should be encouraged. A specific guarantee system for young people, ensuring that they are offered employment, a professional activity or access to higher education, such as the European Youth Guarantee, adopted by the European Council on 27-28 June 2013 to ensure that all young Europeans aged 18-25 receive an offer of a job, training, an apprenticeship or a traineeship within four months of becoming unemployed, is worthy of serious consideration.

The implementation of specialized programmes and activities to protect vulnerable groups, such as migrant workers and those in the informal economy, and to promote respect for rights, even within the informal economy, is also necessary. Targets could be envisaged on actions developed to support action for employment amongst vulnerable populations (which may vary depending on countries and their level of development); on resources as a percentage allotted to job market policies, including for vulnerable populations; and on measures to promote the protection of workers' rights in the informal economy or the transition to formal work. Moreover, agricultural policies should, by supporting family farms, ensure decent income and thus the maintenance and development of employment in rural areas, and thus support the fight against rural exodus and the exponential growth of cities and unemployment. It is also essential to support the establishment of systems enabling a better balance between work and family life for men and women.

The goal of decent work for all, including by guaranteeing inclusive social protection, starting with individual access to national social protection floors, should be fully integrated and strengthened, on the basis of improved and supplemented indicators. France is working jointly with Germany, Switzerland and Sweden on this prospect. It should be noted that corporate social and environmental responsibility and its translation into positive law, as defined in 2011 in the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP) and in the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises also play an important role in helping to implement decent work in all its forms (work which is freely chosen, respect for rights, social protection and social dialogue).

## **7. A decent, sustainable and connected living environment for all**

This issue was tackled only by Target D of MDG 7, which referred only to improving the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers. This imperfect target has been achieved, while the number of people living in slums has increased. The post-2015 agenda should involve a much wider approach to the link between the living environment and sustainable development. Most poor populations currently live in unconnected spaces. Conversely, runaway urban development also raises immense challenges. Today, around 50% of the world's population lives in cities and this proportion will rise to 60% by 2030. Guaranteeing sustainable cities by 2030 was identified as a priority goal by the Rio+20 Conference and should be included in the future agenda. Such an objective could set minimal conditions for a living environment to allow sustainable development in all its economic, social, environmental and also cultural dimensions:

- Connection of all people, through guaranteed service access, to infrastructure and cultural goods: water, sanitation, waste processing, energy, transport, communications including ITC, access to culture and information, education, public health and safety. France has a spearheading role for the implementation of the UN-HABITAT International Guidelines on Decentralization and Access to Basic Services for All.

- Urban planning with sustainability in mind: formulation of strategies to support urban growth and combat social and spatial segregation and urban sprawl; promotion of highly-concentrated and compact urban planning, well-endowed with infrastructure and services, preservation of the environment, promotion of social cohesion and intercultural dialogue, cultural creativity, development of heritage and the fight against violence; support the formulation of policies to develop cultural and environmental heritage which include local residents and enable a combination of architectural quality, promotion of heritage and urban development.

The planning must be "strategic", i.e. it must be used to create a shared vision of the territory, which promotes a balance between the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development, based on broad social consultation. Strategic planning aims to co-produce territorial policies by mobilizing

all territorial actors, starting with the residents, around local and regional authorities, and by adopting an integrated approach through the coordination of sectoral policies. UN-HABITAT is working on the formulation of international guidelines on urban and territorial planning for 2016, and France is this initiative's European spearhead. The participation of all inhabitants in urban planning and management, particularly marginalized populations and those suffering discrimination, is essential, and the creation of participatory budgets should be promoted.

- Universal access to decent, sustainable housing: guaranteed access to decent housing (social housing threshold, housing standards, perhaps regulation of the housing market), rehabilitation of slums or re-housing of their inhabitants (a simple goal of reduction would lead to destructions without provision of alternative housing), guaranteed building energy efficiency, encouragement of sustainable building. UN-HABITAT is drawing up an international strategy for housing ahead of 2025 which should fuel such a target.

- Strengthen the resilience of urban and rural areas to risks and disasters: develop sub-State indicators to measure the resilience of cities and rural areas which take into account inequalities and increase the role of local government; develop and enforce territorial development plans governing building in flood-risk areas, coastal areas subject to erosion, and other areas vulnerable to climate risks. Help cities and rural areas to resist, to assist the people most affected (old people, the disabled, children and women) and to recover quickly from the impact of natural disasters and risks, building the capacities needed in terms of technology, scientific knowledge, techniques and governance, including through ad hoc cooperation and technology transfers provided for by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and an operational function of the Adaptation Committee created in the framework of climate negotiations.

## **8. Sustainable energy for all**

A major issue absent from the MDGs, energy is now a crucial issue in the formulation of the post-2015 agenda and reflection on the SDGs. Energy is a cross-cutting stake, central to economic and environmental issues and human development, which impacts on the accomplishment of all the MDGs. Yet 1.6 billion people do not currently have access to a basic electricity supply, and more than 2.4 billion use biomass to satisfy their cooking needs. Current demographic trends coupled with an economic development model dominated by fossil fuels put unsustainable pressure on our limited natural resources. The energy sector currently represents two thirds of greenhouse gas emissions.

In this context, ensuring access to sustainable energy for all appears to be a top priority, in terms both of development and environmental protection. **The “Sustainable Energy for All” (SE4All) initiative, launched by the United Nations Secretary-General, is an excellent basis for formulation of such a goal, which could aim by 2030 to:**

- provide universal access to modern, reliable, affordable and sustainable energy services (with particular attention paid to the issue of access to energy services in rural and peri-urban areas);

- double the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency;

- double the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

Beyond the initiatives of SE4All, the energy SDG could aim to:

- Encourage transfers and distribution of clean, environmentally friendly technologies (notably through the Technology Mechanism created in the UNFCCC framework);

- Phase out inefficient fossil fuel subsidies;

- Reduce pollution and linked losses in the extractive industries (including gas flaring).

It could also:

- Tackle the nexus issue: Given its cross-cutting nature, the theme of energy should be understood in the context of other subjects relating to the post-2015 agenda (education, food, environment and water). The generation of hydraulic energy for example impacts upon the management of water resources and on ecosystems. Water is used for domestic, agricultural and industrial purposes but also to generate electricity.

It is therefore necessary to promote a balance between these uses and the development of the hydroelectric potential of watercourses. Energy makes it possible to develop the mechanization of agriculture, thus influencing food security, but can also have a negative impact on the latter in the framework of intensive production of certain biofuels for export. It is therefore important that the future SDG should develop qualitative indicators behind mere quantitative commitments in terms of access to energy, renewable energy sources and energy efficiency.

- Integrate a reflection on the investment framework and private sector involvement: The accomplishment of an energy SDG cannot be effective without the implementation of specific measures and proactive policies. While private sector involvement is a major asset to achieve generalized access to electricity, develop renewable energy and improve energy efficiency, major obstacles still need to be overcome to facilitate investment, including through the establishment of appropriate regulatory frameworks and stronger sector governance.

- Promote regional cooperation to strengthen energy security: Improving access to electricity and energy security more generally relies largely on strengthening regional energy integration, which helps compensate for the gap between electricity supply and demand through coordination of electrical systems and pooling of resources. Regional planning of infrastructure helps optimize investments, develop a larger market, and bolster the reliability of the electricity supply through strengthened cross-border exchanges.

## **9. A sustainable environment for all**

The importance of preserving global public goods for sustainable development has been widely demonstrated. The critical stakes highlighted in the United Nations Conventions on Climate Change (UNFCCC), biological diversity (CBD) and combating desertification (UNCCD), various multilateral agreements on the environment, and EU strategies on biodiversity, for example, should be taken into account, even if duplicating existing mechanisms and international commitments is not the aim. Four stakes, which call both for specific measures to be taken and for integration in the other fields of action, both public and private, are fundamental:

- Combating climate change is a cross-cutting necessity for all stakeholders in order to achieve the goal of the international community and limit the average global temperature increase to 2°C. This phenomenon threatens to erase the achievements of half a century of development. Cutting greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the damaging effects of climate change are priorities;

- Protecting natural environments and remarkable ecosystems: seas and oceans and their coastlines (pressure on coral reefs and mangroves), forests (ceasing deforestation, sustainable forestry, and labelling); establishing protected land and sea areas (objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity);

- Preserving ordinary biodiversity, the basis of life, in all environments, including urban areas; sustainable management and equitable sharing of fish stocks and other marine resources; combating illegal fishing, dumping at sea, and acidification; ceasing degradation and fragmentation of habitats; combating desertification and sustainable management of soils ("zero net land degradation"). This framework could build on the goals of the French National Biodiversity Strategy (NBS) 2011-2020.

- Promoting a green and inclusive economy: creation of sustainable modes of consumption and production; taking into account externalities; CSR; harmonized reporting; putting a price on natural capital and ecosystem services; better management of waste (burial) and chemicals; better global resources efficiency (reduced consumption of resources per unit of GDP).

- Furthermore, special attention must be given to preserving landscapes which play an important role in improving living environments and are resources which encourage economic activity.

## **10. Multi-level democratic governance for sustainable development**

There is no point pursuing the objectives without strengthening governance at every level. Based on a strengthened rule of law, reformed public action and a multi-partner approach, democratic governance is a process that is specific to each society and is a crucial condition for the legitimacy and effectiveness of development and sustainable development policies. Reflection on a potential goal dedicated to democratic governance is underway with five focuses:

- The rule of law (civil liberties, transparency, independent justice, public administrations), guaranteeing citizens the effective application of their rights, the possibility to fulfil their duties and make public institutions accountable, aimed at involving civil society in the decision-making process and in monitoring public policies, with particular attention for the poorest people.

- Efficient and participatory local democracy: building local authority capacities, enabling them to exercise their competences in the framework of decentralization (tax decentralization indicators), existence of frameworks for multi-stakeholder consultation at local level (including regarding public service delivery), recognition and support of citizen engagement. Building the capacities of citizens, particularly the poorest, through specific, suitable means (such as access to culture and information, and encouraging participatory and consultative approaches with regard to urban and territorial planning) should allow them to participate in planning, implementing and assessing policies concerning them at all governance levels.

- State finance efficiency: its improvement notably requires relevant management and mobilization of internal resources, fair and equitable taxation (with desirable progression of the level of tax pressure excluding petrol to 18-20% of GDP), efficiency and transparency of public spending circuits (28 “Public Expenditure and Financial Accountability” indicators), and unwavering accountability.

- Bolstering fragile States should be included in one way or another in the future agenda. The New Deal for fragile States, endorsed during the Busan Forum in 2011, and its indicators should be taken into account. It proposed a new paradigm to consolidate peace and strengthen the State as an essential foundation in countries facing conflicts, focused on the five Peace building and State building Goals (legitimate politics, security, justice, economic foundations, revenues and services). In these contexts, the transformation of institutions into legitimate ones is a long, often reversible process.

**Strengthening governance is also essential at global level.** Little progress has been made towards better international regulation and the coherence of development policies called for by MDG 8. The post-2015 agenda could thus include these targets:

- Eliminate international finance’s negative impacts on sustainable development using suitable regulation:

- Bolster the effectiveness and legitimacy of global governance: Creation of a United Nations Environment Organization (UNEO), better civil society involvement (based on the reform of the CFS), etc.

- Ensure greater consideration of social and environmental standards within WTO international trade rules

**Moreover, France promotes the cross-cutting integration of three other key stakes:**

- An inclusive society: increasing inequalities in and between countries is one of the most concerning phenomena of the last decade. Such an issue must naturally be integrated across all the others and followed up using broken down indicators, helping target the most fragile and marginalized populations and those suffering discrimination. The possibility of also making it a full goal remains debated. Such an objective could focus on combating inequalities, monitored using the GINI index, eliminating all discrimination, or the effective integration of minorities. It could also aim to guarantee a secure income to all in old age, disability and death. It seems vital to maintain the MDG 8 target aimed at “a redistribution system and a sustainable and fair tax system”, thanks to tax resources less dependent on extractive industries revenue and a wider tax base, taking into account the ability to contribute to populations. The vital assessment of the social impact of economic policies would also be sensible. Lastly, integrating human security, a reflection of the inclusiveness of a society, is also considered.

- A society which respects and promotes cultural diversity: respecting citizens’ cultural and linguistic identities and promoting cultural involvement ensures social, economic and environmental sustainability. As a lever for resilience (in contexts of emerging from crises, whether political or natural), change and social participation, culture is a source of and catalyst for social and economic innovations. It encourages the ownership of public policies and, through heritage and architectural concerns, helps to improve the living environment.

- Taking into account international migration: despite clearly contributing to progress towards the eight MDGs, internal and international migration is absent from them. However, development goals on migration were clearly defined in the 1994 Cairo Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action.



France's migration and development policy fits into the framework of the Global Approach to Migration and Mobility adopted by the European Council. This approach involves promoting a dialogue and agreements between the EU and Member States on the one hand and immigration origin countries on the other, based on four equally important pillars: legal migration, irregular migration, international protection and asylum, and the development impact of migration. The Global Approach involves coordinating migratory and development policies.

France and its EU partners are thus in favour of cross-cutting integration of the migration issue in the post-2015 agenda. In this perspective, specific targets could be integrated under thematic goals. Concerning health, better coverage of high emigration areas (particularly rural ones) could also be promoted. As regards education, facilitating short training stays is conceivable. On democratic governance, we can work on including migrants in local democracy. France advocates for continued international cooperation on migrant remittances as begun in the G8 and G20 framework, to increase and facilitate financial flows to developing countries and halve average costs by 2014. It also calls for the lifting of certain obstacles to mobility, such as transferring social rights and recognition of qualifications. It would be desirable to initiate comprehensive discussions on this issue.

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