



UNECE Regional Conference on Monitoring and Accountability for the Post-2015 Agenda

Opening session
Geneva, 15 September 2014

Intervention by H.E. Ambassador Michael Gerber, Special Envoy for Global
Sustainable Development, Switzerland

Ministers,
Mr. Executive Secretary,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to open this UNECE conference on monitoring and accountability. I am particularly honored to act as a chair during this important event.

When talking about the Post-2015 Agenda, the first thing that comes to our mind are generally the Sustainable Development Goals. The SDGs, which will be at the core of the new agenda and the normative guideline to achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development, were also the main subject of the intergovernmental preparation process so far. The Open Working Group on SDGs, where my country was represented together with France and Germany, approved two month ago an ambitious proposal for SDGs and targets. The adoption of this report was preceded by 13 sessions over 18 month and intensive discussions, including a final negotiation session which lasted 29 hours!

Looking back, it was well worth the effort. Although there might be contents that could be improved, we consider the report of the Open Working Group on SDGs the best possible outcome, balancing the interests of all member states.

As we all know, the formulation of the SDGs constitutes only one part of the post-2015 agenda. Equally important elements of the post-2015 agenda – in particular the question of financing sustainable development and how the implementation of the SDGs will be monitored and reviewed – had so far been mainly discussed by experts and specialists.

In one year, the new post-2015 agenda will be adopted in New York – and it is time that the discussion about the monitoring and accountability of the Post-2015 development agenda takes a step forward. This conference – ladies and gentlemen – is therefore very timely. To ensure that the SDGs are implemented, we need an effective review mechanism and ensure accountability.

It is my ambition that this regional conference, the third of five such conferences mandated by UN secretary general Ban Ki-moon, will serve to push forward the debate on a monitoring and accountability framework for the post-2015 agenda. I am confident that the discussions in the four panels – all composed of excellent representatives from governments, international and non-governmental organizations as well as the private sector – will deliver the important messages from our region so that we can make a concrete contribution to the global discussion.

Before giving the floor to the other speakers, I would like to thank UNECE for the organization of this event.

I am looking forward to constructive discussions and thank you for your attention.