POSITION PAPER

FIATA’s insight on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in preparation for the Secretary-General’s initial input to the Open Working Group

The Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want” resolved to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process on SDGs that is open to all stakeholders with a view to developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the UNGA.

FIATA, the International Federation of Freight Forwarders Associations, seeks to contribute to the process of developing SDGs with emphasis on the logistics and freight forwarding industry. FIATA believes its input can be of great value being one of the oldest and largest transport related interest representatives in the world, with a constituencies comprising freight forwarding, logistics and Customs service providers, where we speak on behalf of some 40,000 enterprises in 164 countries. FIATA’s statutory goals and collective efforts are to improve the standards of the forwarding and logistics industry by working effectively to improve trade facilitation, devise and disseminate good practice and provide appropriate training.

FIATA encourages the UNSG to give priority to logistic connectivity and its impact on international trade especially in domestic economies which are restricted within the confines of their borders through the SDGs to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. UN delegates developing consistent global policy by setting SDGs focussed on logistics connectivity can significantly transform the outlook of our future trade.

Since FIATA works on a global scale, we have the opportunity to explore national policies from a macro view and analyze areas where they have not been able to provide an impact locally. FIATA believes that more in-depth analyses as to the impact of national polices need to be conducted before policies can be enacted to achieve SDGs especially regarding policies which greatly affects logistics as the impact ripples into numerous sectors and regions.

In order to ensure that the SDGs are coherent with and integrated into the UN development agenda beyond 2015, more facilitated inclusion and participation from interested and relevant civil societies and stakeholders need to be involved in the upcoming sustainable development sessions. The impact from increasing the audience base and expanding outside the scope of the usual attendees will generate suggestions and proposals that will add great value to the development of SDGs. It is also highly important to bring the inputs of all stakeholders, civil societies, Member States and other entities, together at one stage before 2015 in order to develop a common framework and assess the feasibility of the set out SDG.

Tracking progress towards achieving SDGs needs to be firmly established in order to measure the effectiveness of the approach taken. FIATA expects SDGs to include indicators that are based on a conceptual indicator framework. This framework and the related indicators have to be based on the experiences made by countries in monitoring sustainable development. There needs to also be support for countries to measure progress.

FIATA also believes there needs be more facilitation in contact key individuals in the United Nations Sustainable Development Committee. Voices of civil societies and other stakeholders are heard when they are able to reach specific individuals with similar goals. Input from civil societies and other stakeholders that are not members of the OWG and are very important and the sustainable development committee need to be more receptive.
There should also be regular information and consultations with other stakeholders and civil societies. This includes the sharing of information about themes and the agenda of OWG meetings beforehand. Meetings should also take place in locations other than New York and consultation should be organized in a way that stakeholders, especially those outside of UN Member States, can give input. This would require good support from a secretariat to facilitate the information flow and the consultations.

A global partnership agreement for enhancing SDG must be put forwarded and adopted not only by UN Member States but also civil societies and other relevant stakeholders. The framework of the agreement must allow for even input and a balanced scale for all parties involved. The partnership must have well defined goals and a collective focus to achieve sustainable outcome not simply locally. The partnership must have a clear framework of (mutual) accountability and transparency both towards a domestic constituency as well as at the international level.

With the complexity of regulations being established throughout the logistics industry, FIATA proposes that the UN dedicate more space to discuss the contribution that logistics can make to sustainable development. Implementing strong policy focussed on logistics development may prove to be a far more effective initiative towards achieving the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals.

FIATA looks forward to continuing the discussion on SDGs and remains available to discuss any key points with the UN Secretariat, UN Member States, civil societies and any other stakeholders with a view to improving their development and implementation.

For more detailed information please contact the FIATA secretariat.