

**US Statement at FfD Informals, 4/4/2017, As Prepared**

Thank you and good morning.

We'd like to congratulate the co-facilitators on their appointment and wish them the best of luck in this task.

We'd also like to thank the IATF for its work on the report. We appreciate that it has been released with sufficient time before the Forum. We have not yet had time to analyze the report in detail, and so we will defer specific comments until later, but would like to take this opportunity to make a few general points.

We think that it is important that we succeed in reaching a consensus outcome this year. This is only the second year of the Forum and the window in which the Forum can demonstrate that it is a useful platform will close quickly. We would urge that the outcome document remain concise and that it avoid UN jargon, so that it remain accessible and useful to the world beyond the UN, which is where the majority of the impactful work will take place.

We support the timeline that you have laid out, and would urge that we finish all negotiations before the actual Forum, to avoid a repeat of last year, when the negotiations overshadowed the forum itself. We would also urge that the negotiations take place during normal working hours.

The most important item for us is that the outcome document is balanced and based on the IATF report, that it avoids seeking to renegotiate Addis, and that it focuses on real pragmatic issues that can drive progress on the ground, rather than theoretical and overly politicized debates.

We would like to flag one particular item regarding trade. Our government's trade policy is changing rapidly and we are therefore not in a position to support broad language on the multilateral trading system or ongoing trade negotiations. We will of course raise specific concerns once negotiations on the zero draft begin. And, as always, we remain opposed to language that could incur budgetary implications.

Thank you.