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- ❖ **Gujarat Anti-Terror Bill**
- ❖ **India-Bangladesh Cultural Relations**
- ❖ **Women Empowerment & MGNREGA**
- ❖ **Women & Human Rights**
- ❖ **Human Rights of Migrant Labour**
- ❖ **CSR & Financial Inclusion**



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Third Concept aims at providing a platform where a meaningful exchange of ideas can take place among the people of the Third World. The attempt will be to communicate, debate and disseminate information, ideas and alternatives for the resolution of the common problems facing humankind. We welcome contributions from academics, journalists and even from those who may never have published anything before. The only requirement is a concern for and desire to understand and take the issue of our time. Contributions may be descriptive, analytical or theoretical. They may be in the form of original articles, reactions to previous contributions, or even a comment on a prevailing situation. All contributions, neatly typed in double space, may be addressed to:

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Sustainable Development Goals

The 193 U.N. member nations on 25 September formally adopted the sustainable development goals (SDGs) and called for shared peace and prosperity. Described by the United Nations secretary-general as “a to-do list for people and planet,” The 17 SDGs, are to be implemented over the next 15 years with a big global push to win public and political support. The document, titled “Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” not only outlines 17 broad goals but sets 169 specific targets. The non-binding goals succeed the eight Millennium Development Goals adopted by world leaders 15 years ago. Only one of those has been achieved: halving the number of people living in extreme poverty, due primarily to economic growth in China. At least one other is close — cutting in half the proportion of people without access to clean water — and there are still three months until the goals expire. The new goals include ensuring “healthy lives” and quality education for all; clean water, sanitation and reliable modern energy, as well as making cities safe, reducing inequality within and among countries, and promoting economic growth and good governance.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon after an opening ceremony said: “They are a to-do list for people and planet, and a blueprint for success. For the first time ever, we have a transformative set of global goals agreed by all countries and that apply to every nation.” He further added that implementation, requiring trillions of dollars in investment, will be monitored and reviewed using a set of global indicators to be agreed by March 2016. The adoption of the SDGs has come after three years of brainstorming among member nations to draw up the comprehensive slate, but supporters say now work must start on the bigger task of implementation into practical programs, policies and parliaments. The implementation of the goals is expected to cost \$3.5 trillion to \$5 trillion every year until 2030.

Pope Francis gave his backing to the new development agenda in an address to the UN General Assembly before the summit to adopt the 17-point plan opened, calling it “an important sign of hope” at a very troubled time in the Middle East and Africa. In pursuing development, the Egyptian president El-Sissi said, the Egyptian people are facing “the most dangerous extremist terrorist ideology.” He also expressed concern that “the tools” to achieve the goals are insufficient, and stressed that richer nations have a responsibility to help poorer ones. Afghan leader Abdullah Abdullah, whose country is one of the world’s poorest, urged “political commitment and revitalized partnership” to achieve the goals. India’s Prime Minister said eliminating poverty is the top priority in his country, which has the world’s largest number of people living in extreme poverty. He confirmed plans for a fivefold boost in renewable energy but added two years to the time frame, saying it will take seven years instead of five. Supporters say the SDGs go much further by addressing root causes of issues such as poverty and looking at means as well as ends. They also are intended to be universal, not just for the developing world.

Critics say they are too broad, lack accountability and will lead to disenchantment among those most in need of hope. Supporters say there is no choice but to go big in a world of expanding population, growing inequality, dwindling resources and the existential threat from global warming. They note that while the millennium goals were developed by then secretary-general Kofi Annan and his staff, the new goals are the result of years of negotiations by all 193 member states, which means they should all have a stake in their achievement. Salil Shetty, secretary-general of Amnesty International, opines: “There is a huge gap between the world we live in and the world we want. These goals represent people’s aspirations and rights and they must and can be realized.” Sweden announced that a group of nine leaders from different regions – German Chancellor Angela Merkel, the presidents of Brazil, Colombia, Liberia, South Africa, Tanzania and Tunisia and the prime ministers of Sweden and East Timor – will work to ensure implementation of the goals. Undoubtedly, the SDGs comprise the most sweeping agenda ever of global goals; nevertheless, it is the time for “a little less conversation, a little more action.”

— BK