

**Notes from the “General Assembly informal exchange of views on the advance unedited report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up and review on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Agenda”**

**Friday, 5 February 2016**

**UN Web TV Recording**

**Key Highlights:**

- The President of the General Assembly (PGA) will take this work forward around follow-up and review, and will follow-up in the next couple of weeks regarding next steps for this process.
- The PGA also highlighted proposals from a few Member States to discuss these outstanding issues in different stages – addressing the urgent issues that need to be resolved before the July 2016 HLPF in the coming months ahead, and leaving longer-term issues to after the HLPF.
  - Urgent issues to be addressed ASAP are, *inter alia*: the multi-year programme of work of the HLPF under auspices of ECOSOC, and how it is operationalized; decisions on HLPF annual theme and relationship to ECOSOC theme; the HLPF thematic reviews and how they will be considered by the HLPF; how national reviews will be conducted and prepared; and stakeholder participation in these review processes.
- Most Member States pushed against the clustering of the Goals to undertake thematic reviews. However, some voiced support for clustering the Goals, as long as all 16 goals were reviewed in any 4-year cycle.
- Most Member States stressed that no single institution/forum can take ownership for a specific SDGs and that instead there needed to be better integration amongst all issues.
- There was concern among Member States about the weak linkage between AAAAA and the HLPF in the SG report, and calls to elaborate on this further.
- Many countries pushed back against the SG report proposal around “peer reviews,” noting that “peer review” is different from “peer learning,” and that peer reviews were never agreed upon by Member States and remain a politicized issue.
- Most Member States called for multi-stakeholder engagement. However, the Russian Federation noted caution in engaging certain NGOs.
- Many Member States expressed support for establishing common reporting guidelines for the follow-up and review process, to ensure comparability of reports.
- A few delegations called for proper indicators for the SDGs. In addition, the process needs to be open, inclusive and transparent.

**Key Sticking Points:**

- Linkage between reviews around the Means of Implementation through the FfD Forum, and on Goal 17 through the HLPF – how to avoid duplication and ensure coherence.
- Disagreement on thematic reviews: clustering or cross-cutting approach.

- Organizational aspects of follow-up and review, and the need to integrate other forum with the HLPF review system – how do functional commissions or other review processes ensure coherence with HLPF reviews, and what kinds of outcomes will be presented to the HLPF.
- What does stakeholder engagement in this review system look like?
- Discussion on the “peer review” proposal within the SG’s report

#### **Next Steps:**

- **PGA stressed the need to make decisions over the coming months:**
  - **Decision on annual HLPF themes and its relations to ECOSOC.**
  - **Decision on thematic reviews.**
  - **Decision on national reviews and stakeholder participation.**
- **PGA recommended short negotiations among member states to make these decisions in the coming months ahead.**
- PGA stated the second set of issues that will need to be deliberated is on coherence and integration with the UNGA Committees and ECOSOC.
- PGA stated will ask the UN General Committees to take on the issue of coherence (mainly within the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Committee).

#### **Minutes:**

##### **Thailand on behalf G77 and China:**

- Supportive of SG Report assertion of no UN agency taking ownership of specific goals
- Further development needed regarding SG report proposals for “peer reviews,” on summary from President of ECOSOC as outcome from reviews, and around stakeholder engagement in these reviews.
- Clustering of issues around thematic reviews have not been discussed by Member States, but the inclination thus far has been leaning towards integration of all themes across these reviews to avoid silos.
- Called for an intergovernmental process to discuss operationalizing follow-up and review at earliest opportunity
  - This process will build on 2030 Agenda, Res 67/290 and Res 68/11

##### **Belize on behalf CARICOM:**

- Begin to consider what is occurring now system wide and on the ground.
  - UN needs to consider how they are integrating 2030 Agenda.
- Discussions need to be had on how to fit UNGA committee work into the 2030 Agenda integration and review process.
- Establishing themes for reviews and HLPF is not a substitute for ensuring coherence and integration.
- HLPF process straddles ECOSOC and UNGA - How does division of labor work in practice?
- Support for common guidelines and practices for national reviews.

- Similar guidance will be needed system wide and regional processes
- Encouraged by engagement of stakeholders in drafting of report, but agreement needs to be reached on complementary reports from outside stakeholders, and needs further discussion
- Peer review mechanism needs further elaboration - peer learning can help us learn from reviews.
- Regional component needs further elaboration.
- Outstanding question on how we ensure coherence between various mechanisms and processes and the HLPF?

**Maldives on behalf of AOSIS:**

- Review architecture should include the SAMOA Pathway
- HLPF should have session on SIDS.
- “Peer review” was not agreed in 2030 Agenda and was a politically sensitive issue - language was around “peer learning” and we need further clarification on this.
- Need timely and reliable data, and UN system need to support this.

**EU:**

- Follow-up and review processes should promote accountability between states and their citizens.
- The review system needs to build upon what already exists on these fronts.
- Support assertion that no UN agency should take ownership over any particular goals
- Common reporting guidelines are needed to ensure comparability
- Encouraged by stakeholder participation and transparency of process in SG report
- Concerned that link with Addis follow up is not properly articulated.
- Division of labor between UNGA, ECOSOC, FFD and HLPF needs to be further elaborated
- Clustering goals for thematic reviews needs further reflection, particularly regarding integration and tackling emerging issues
- Next steps: Process to take action should be inclusive, timely and light-touch
- Remember that ECOSOC and HLPF resolutions will be reviewed in coming years

**Liechtenstein:**

- All stakeholders must be at the table in review processes and welcome references to this in SG report
- Clustering of goals could be helpful for thematic reviews
- Coherence of themes with functional commissions of ECOSOC and ECOSOC High-level segment will be critical.
- We might want to consider having FfD Forum and HLPF back to back with one another
- Further consultation needed soon, between now and HLPF in 2016.

**Fiji:**

- Need for further clarity of relationship between ECOSOC and HLPF and other review systems, including discussions around the QCPR
- Clear timelines are needed for review landscape - request the PGA to assist with this

- HLPF is central to the follow-up and review framework
- Need for thematic discussions to address cross-cutting nature of SDGs
- Thematic reviews run parallel to national reviews

#### **South Africa:**

- Need national governments to align with 2030 Agenda in planning and implementation.
- Key is implementation - important to set up effective institution that are adequately resourced.
- Proper indicators needed. Urge the Secretary-General to take charge of this indicators process to make sure it is open, transparent and inclusive.
- Capacity building will be important to the follow-up and review process
- Creation of proper framework agreement on Follow-up and review is needed.

#### **Switzerland:**

- Support “up to two times” for reviews and common reporting guidelines
- Clarity needed on thematic reviews for all stakeholders and UN System to be able to contribute
- Support clustering of goals for thematic reviews so we can focus more deeply on individual issues.
- Propose to follow incremental approach - 2016 HLPF ministerial declaration is a first step, with other opportunities over the years to review longer-term issues.

#### **Pakistan:**

- Report is good basis for further work going forward
- Encouraging for orientation to national implementation and coherence of UN system
- Concerned about peer review process and periodicity of voluntary reviews and summary from president of ECOSOC, clustering of themes
- Structured intergovernmental discussions to adopt a resolution via UNGA

#### **Kenya:**

- Must not undermine the ambition of the SDGs, and we must go beyond political will and now need “financial will.”
- Link between SDGs and FfD3 outcome is very weak in the SG report.
- Implementation at national level must be primary emphasis for reviews.
- Universal nature and integrated nature of agenda must dictate the way forward - cannot end up with arrangement that peer reviews some countries as “implementers” and others as “reviewers”
- Must get on with business of articulating what we want to do and not get lost in details of negotiation on every finer detail

#### **Canada and Australia:**

- How can these review processes can be useful for implementation, instead of serving as fora for re-negotiating existing commitments?

- We must avoid of competing themes amongst various UN fora and instead need integration of themes between STI forum, ECOSOC High-level Segment, Youth Forum, FfD Forum, etc.
- Member States must also agree on themes well in advance for planning ahead.
- Review of Goal 17 at HLPF overlaps with FfD forum and we will need to reconcile how to review the Means of Implementation and Goal 17 in different contexts
- Call on PGA to facilitate discussions going forward.

#### **Argentina:**

- Intergovernmental negotiations are necessary - call on PGA to convene these negotiations shortly
- Process for indicators must be transparent, and we need reliable data
- Resources must be dedicated to implementation first, and follow-up and review comes second
- Balance must be struck between three dimensions of Sustainable Development through these reviews
- Peer review is not the same as peer learning - and peer reviews are not possible given the circumstances and political climate.

#### **Ireland:**

- 2030 Agenda laid foundation for follow up and review, and we must now build on those foundations and achieve a fully developed follow-up and review architecture
- Revitalization of committees of the UNGA is a big part of ensuring coherence amongst UN system
- Functional commissions role also important - but these commissions must also be aware of avoiding a siloed approach and instead should explore interlinkages
- Essential that all stakeholders can engage in process at all levels of the review system - need for transparency and inclusivity are critical

#### **UK:**

- Framework needs teeth to implement 2030 Agenda.
- Follow-up and review process need to be effective, streamlined
- HLPF must be as interactive as possible to ensure that ministers are attracted to participate.

#### **Japan:**

- Not realistic or necessary to take up all issues all at once
- In next few months, Member States must address urgent issues around all relevant processes (2016 HLPF and ministerial declaration, GSDR, FfD Forum, revitalization of UNGA, Second Committee, QCPR)
- As for 2017 HLPF and beyond, discussions can first take place in preparation for 2016 HLPF ministerial declaration
- Relationship between FfD follow up process and HLPF was not discussed - can be discussed in FfD forum discussions

### **Morocco:**

- Frequency and modalities for national and regional reviews should be decided by national governments themselves.
- Value participation of all stakeholders in global reviews, and also in national reviews.

### **Norway:**

- July 2016 will be too early to review progress on the SDGs
- We have to make 2016 HLPF a success and attract high level participants through attractive and interactive discussions
- No time for drawn out negotiations on follow up and review at this stage and further consultations are needed.
- Further elaboration needed on link between HLPF reviews of Goal 16 and MOI review through FFD Forum

### **USA:**

- Generally broad consensus on various issues around Follow-up and Review
- Decisions need to be taken on themes, clustering of goals for thematic reviews and on specific arrangements for follow-up and review and the HLPF
- Themes need to be substantive and cross cutting, and no desire for political negotiations on themes
- Need for ECOSOC integration of themes with HLPF and all functional commissions
- Thematic reviews: Avoid looking at subset of goals as it overlooks interlinkages and interdependence between goals
- More work needs to be done to make sure we're going beyond national voluntary presentations
- GSDR not sufficiently elaborated in SG report and needs to be featured more strongly
- Thought needs to be given on re-structuring secretariat - potential to merge DESA office for ECOSOC support and Division for Sustainable Development
- We won't be creating any new mechanism, but instead seeking integration of already existing mechanisms

### **Russian Federation:**

- Need reflection on if/how the Human Rights Council and Peacebuilding Commission links with any of this work - not convinced
- Several proposals from SG report risks changing political balance of 2030 Agenda
- In regards to stakeholder engagement: we must be very cautious about which NGOs can contribute
- Negotiated outcome document to ensure that conclusions from reviews reflect views from all Member States
- Need for informal consultations going forward on these issues.

### **Peru:**

- Need to understand follow-up and review in terms of participation from the local to the global levels

- Important to recognize the role of regional commissions to conduct peer views
- Prefer cross cutting focus for thematic reviews instead of clustering

**PGA:**

- **No need for complex negotiations, but decisions needed to be taken over coming months around some urgent issues.**
  - **Clarity is needed on multi-year programme of work of HLPF under auspices of ECOSOC and how it is operationalized**
  - **This includes decisions on HLPF annual theme and relation to ECOSOC theme, and on the HLPF thematic reviews and how they will be considered**
  - **Also includes how national reviews will be conducted and prepared, and stakeholder participation**
  - **For this set of issues, may be need for short set of negotiations to conclude well in advance of HLPF in July**
  - **Focus on issues where decisions are most needed now for ECOSOC president to carry out HLPF 2016**
- **Flexibility of our approach over time, and second set of issues need to take an overarching look at coherence and integration of UNGA committees and ECOSOC**
- **Take things forward on coherence in context of UNGA committees - second committee in particular**
- **Will follow up with next steps on taking urgent issues forward in next couple of weeks**

