

Talking points of the co-facilitators at the open-ended informal meeting on HLPF
Friday, 1st March 2013
3.00 - 6.00 pm, ECOSOC Chamber

Welcome to this second open-ended informal consultation on the format and organizational modalities of the high level political forum. As anticipated at the first informal meeting of January 30, over these last weeks we had a series of separate informal consultations with Groups and individual Member States to deepen their preliminary views. We also met with the organizations representing the nine Major Groups to collect their opinions and suggestions.

The **objectives of today's meeting** are: a) to share the outcome of these consultations with the whole membership; b) to provide delegations with a further opportunity to articulate their position; c) to delineate the next steps of the consultation process.

- What seems very encouraging is that **all parties showed a genuinely constructive approach**. Even the delegations with the most defined opinions stated their openness to other delegation's views and their willingness to work collectively for a consensual and effective solution. In other terms, we didn't hear of strong "red lines". We could perceive, rather, a common interest in making the forum an effective instrument for the promotion and implementation of sustainable development.
- Some Groups and Member States have already developed a defined opinion; others have gone even further, by articulating quite specific ideas; some others are still evolving their thinking.
- Notwithstanding the different levels of specificity, most delegations expressed the view that **the pace of this process should be consistent with the agreed deadline of next May**, so as to allow the holding of the first meeting of the forum at the beginning of the next GA session. Another reason for fully respecting the agreed timeframe is to allow coherence and, ultimately, alignment of outcome with the parallel process on the review of resolution 61/16, which has been pursuing so far a rather intense schedule. Other important processes, related to the Rio+20 follow-up, may also benefit from the timely inception of the high level political forum.
- Having this in mind and in order to promote some concrete advancement, we have tried to gather **a few general points from our consultations that may help us identify a possible consensual avenue** and subsequently conceive the main elements for a draft resolution. We would like to submit these considerations to you and listen to your reactions.
- The first point is that there seems to be **little appetite for creating a new structured institution with its own layer of bureaucracy**. Beyond the differentiated views on its positioning, most delegations seem to agree that the forum should be conceived as a flexible platform with an institutional anchorage at existing UN bodies.
- A second, widely shared, view is that the **positive legacy of the CSD should be preserved** and that the forum should have the capacity to effectively follow up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments. At the same time, the opinion was also expressed that the **strategic guidance on sustainable development policy should be elevated**, by devising a space where agenda setting, including emerging issues, and broad political direction can be discussed at the highest possible level and in a dynamic and flexible manner. **These two views are not incompatible, but may require a bi-dimensional approach in the way the forum is eventually conceived**.
- On the **institutional positioning of the Forum**, we heard differentiated opinions, in some cases also quite articulated, in favor of: a) the holding of the Forum in the framework of ECOSOC; b) its positioning in the framework of the GA; c) the establishment of links to both the ECOSOC and the GA, with the ECOSOC providing relevance and coherence in the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and the GA providing universality and convening power (so called "hybrid option"). The third option seems to have broader support from the membership. It would also be coherent with the aforesaid bi-dimensional approach aimed at making follow-up and review functions compatible with the need for high level strategic guidance.

- On the basis of what we heard, if the “hybrid option” was to be pursued the forum would have to hold **regular, probably annual, meetings, at ministerial level, in the framework of ECOSOC and periodical meetings, aiming at the HoS/HoG level, in the framework of the GA**, back-to-back with the September general debate.
- **Rules of procedures, nature of the meetings’ outcome and related preparatory mechanisms would have to be defined for each of the two dimensions**, trying to strike a balance between those who favor a normative process and those who prefer the high level debate formula. This is no easy task and would require the precious assistance of the Secretariat in its various configurations.
- On the **involvement of UN agencies, funds and programs and other relevant multilateral institutions** and treaty bodies, the preference seems to be for linking their participation to the agenda of the Forum’s meetings and for ensuring that these organizations participate at the highest level possible.
- On the **enhanced consultative role of Major Groups and other relevant stakeholders**, there seems to be agreement on the fact that modalities of participation should be no less than what is provided in the framework of the CSD and possibly more. In the consultation with the Major Groups we received a draft working paper with specific suggestions, which has been uploaded on the Sustainable Development website of DESA.
- We would like now to open the floor and listen to your views. We would be particularly interested to know whether you may share these general considerations. Should this be the case, we would feel encouraged to proceed along this avenue and might start working at the next steps, **including the elaboration of the first elements of a draft resolution**.