

Proposal for voluntary common reporting guidelines for voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum

(as presented in the annex to the Secretary-General's report on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level, A/70/684)

In the 2030 Agenda, Member States decided that the high-level political forum, when it meets under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, shall carry out regular voluntary reviews. As stipulated in paragraph 84 of the Agenda, those reviews will include developed and developing countries as well as relevant United Nations entities and other stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector. They shall be State-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants. They shall provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders. In paragraph 84 of the Agenda, Member States are also encouraged to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and subnational levels which are country-led and country-driven. Voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum will likely build on such reviews.

The following components are suggested as a way to help countries to frame the preparations for voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum, bearing in mind that each country will decide on the scope of their review and the format in which they want to present their findings.

The expectation is that each country being reviewed may present a focused report to the high-level political forum and make brief presentations during its meeting.

1. **Opening statement.** An opening statement by the Head of State or Government, a Minister or other high-ranking Government official could highlight the key messages from the review and touch on critical issues in implementation of sustainable development that the country wishes to highlight.
2. **Summary.** A one-to-two page synthesis of the process and findings of the review highlighting two or three good practices the country wishes to share, two or three lessons it has learned in trying to accelerate implementation, two or three challenges on which it wishes to hear about other countries' good practices and two or three areas where it would need support in terms of finance, capacity-building, technology, partnerships etc.
3. **Introduction.** The context and objectives of the review could be presented here. The introduction may briefly describe key features of the country context as it pertains to the 2030 Agenda, with a discussion of national priorities and targets for sustainable development and their relation to the Sustainable Development Goals, and a discussion of critical challenges.
4. **Methodology and process for preparation of the review.** This section may discuss the methodology that was adopted for the review, including its scope, depth and limitations. Information on the process for preparation of the national review may be presented, including, for example, how different levels and sectors of Government contributed to the review, whether parliaments were engaged, whether national evaluation/oversight institutions contributed, how stakeholders from civil

society, academia and the business sector were involved, which consultations took place, and possibly whether another Member State or institutions contributed to the review, etc. Lastly, the country may indicate what support it received. The sources used for the review may be discussed. This could include, as per paragraph 74 (f) of the 2030 Agenda, how existing platforms and processes have been built on, as well as how existing national reports have been used in the process.

5. **Policy and enabling environment.**

(a) **Creating ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals.** The review could outline efforts made towards all stakeholders to inform them on and involve them in the Goals and targets, including national and local government, legislative bodies, the public, civil society and the private sector. It could indicate how it is planned to keep the Goals under review at the national level and, including the possible dissemination of reviews and their findings.

(b) **Incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals in national frameworks.** The review could outline critical initiatives that the country has undertaken to adapt the Sustainable Development Goals and targets to its national circumstances, and to advance their implementation. It may describe national efforts made to integrate the Goals into the country's legislation, policies, plans and programmes, including the sustainable development strategy, if there is one. The review could indicate the main challenges and difficulties experienced in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals as a whole. It could also highlight additional goals, beyond the Goals, which are national priorities. Countries could consider referring to major efforts undertaken by local authorities and non-State actors to implement the Goals, including partnerships.

(c) **Integration of the three dimensions.** The review might discuss how the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are being integrated and how sustainable development policies are being designed and implemented to reflect such integration. The review could also assess how other principles of the 2030 Agenda, for example, leaving no one behind, have been mainstreamed in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

(d) **Goals and targets.** The review may provide brief information on progress and the status of all Sustainable Development Goals, and critical difficulties encountered in reaching them, making reference, when appropriate, to data provided in the statistical annex (see sect. 8 below). The review may indicate whether a baseline for the Goals has been defined and remaining obstacles to doing so. The review may also provide a more in-depth analysis on a few selected Goals and targets. Those may be chosen by the country in the light of its priorities but also because they were tackled through innovative policies, are relevant to other Member States, and can be addressed in an international context. The discussion could focus on trends, successes, challenges, emerging issues, and lessons learned, and describe what actions have been taken to address existing gaps and challenges. It could support the identification of gaps, solutions, best practices and areas requiring advice and support. The review may examine the agreed global indicators for those goals and targets identified as priorities. Countries may choose to refer to complementary national and regional indicators.

(e) **Thematic analysis.** As appropriate for the country, the review could include an analysis of progress and initiatives related to the high-level political forum's thematic focus for that year.

(f) **Institutional mechanisms.** The review could provide information on how the country has adapted its institutional framework in order to implement the 2030 Agenda. This could include information on how the views of different ministries, agencies, levels of government and non-governmental stakeholders are taken into account and on the institution in charge of coordination and integration. The review could consider highlighting efforts to mobilize institutions around the Sustainable Development Goals, improve their functioning, and promote change. Information may also be provided on how responsibility is allocated among various levels of Government (national, subnational and local) for coherent implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. It would be useful to highlight how the country intends to review progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, including possible plans regarding the conduct of national reviews.

6. **Means of implementation.** Based on the above challenges and trends highlighted, the review may discuss how means of implementation are mobilized, what difficulties this process faces, and what additional resources are needed to implement the 2030 Agenda, including in terms of financing, capacity development needs, including for data and statistics knowledge-sharing, technology and partnerships.

7. **Next steps.** The review could outline what steps the country is taking or planning to take to enhance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

8. **Statistical annex.** Countries may include an annex with data, using the global Sustainable Development Goal indicators to be proposed by the Statistical Commission as a starting point and adding priority indicators identified at the regional and national levels. They may highlight whether statistics were collected from the national statistical system and pinpoint major gaps in official statistics on indicators.

9. **Conclusion.** The section may present a summary of the analysis, findings and policy implications. It may discuss new or emerging issues identified by the review. Lastly, the country may indicate what lessons it has learned from the review process, what support it would need in the future for preparing such reviews and any adjustment it believes should be made to the guidelines to ensure that they are useful.

10. The report could have a link to more in-depth national reports and reviews through the dedicated United Nations Secretariat website.
