

**Statement by the United States of America
Post-2015 Session on Follow-up and Review
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**As delivered by
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Thank you Mr. Co-Facilitator for the chance to speak to the critical topic of follow-up and review, and for the helpful questions and frame that your discussion paper offered us.

The purposes you have laid out in your discussion paper set us on precisely the right path: to “help track progress and identify achievements, challenges and critical factors in implementing the Post-2015 Development agenda” and to “support decision makers in policy choices and help them to prioritize actions and investments.”

As we have all noted here many times, the success of this agenda will rise or fall based on the strength of our implementation – and this, in turn, will depend on the strength of our platforms and mechanisms for monitoring progress and facilitating accountability. Thus we greatly appreciate our conversation this week.

We will speak today to two key elements of our follow up and review process: 1) its underlying principles, and 2) its institutional architecture.

First, for us, a strong and effective framework should reflect the **universality and voluntary** nature of our agenda, and be based on the following principles:

1. **A Focus on Outcomes:** Lessons from past experience tell us that learning is iterative – we do not always know now which interventions or innovations will lead to the greatest results. To end extreme poverty and leave no one behind, we must design a **flexible learning system** that does not presuppose a particular pathway to success and is focused on outcomes, rather than inputs; one that deepens our understanding of what works and the consequences of our strategies as they are executed; one that maximizes results rather than means. Ours should be a flexible system that can evolve throughout the next 15 years, and continues to focus on action; focused on policy change and management, as suggested in the discussion paper, identifying solutions in a collaborative and innovative learning environment

that informs policy and program changes over time to achieve long-term sustainable development.

2. **National Ownership:** While our framework will also operate at regional and global levels, the MDG experience has taught us resolutely that country ownership is the linchpin of a successful development agenda. Country reports and domestic reviews, informed where possible by strong national planning and strategy, and by country-specific targets and indicators, will ensure national ownership, broad participation, and direct accountability of national authorities. The ability of stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels to influence and engage decision-makers directly makes the country level an important venue for stakeholder involvement in our follow-up and review framework.
3. **Multi-Stakeholder Approach:** We agree with the Secretary General that the culture of shared responsibility and universal norms embodied in the post-2015 agenda requires a review and accountability process built on broad participation and transparent, public discussion. It should allow and empower all citizens and stakeholders to participate effectively and directly in the review process at all levels. We recognize that the contributions of businesses, civil society, UN agencies, philanthropic foundations, universities, and others will be critical to successfully achieving the goals; our follow up and review mechanisms must also ensure and enable them to play an active role in monitoring our progress. Data can and should come from a wide range of public and private sources, and be open to analysis and interpretation by this diverse set of actors.
4. **Transparency:** Mutual accountability is ensured when all stakeholders in development have access to a comprehensive and timely picture of how resources are deployed, how decisions are made, and the impact on specific sustainable development goals and targets. It is critical that such data be shared in an open, dynamic, real-time manner to maximize its relevance and the decision-makers' ability to act on it. As we've pointed out before, access to **robust data is a key enabler of development** that can inform decision-making, spur innovation, drive business activity, and better mobilize and target funding, based on information about what is and isn't working to advance sustainable development. Increased availability and more effective use of data to monitor and drive sustainable development in real time have the potential to be *the* game-changing innovation of the next decade. And we join the chorus of others that data must be disaggregated to support our

agenda of inclusivity and leaving no one behind. **We see a commitment to openness and disaggregation as fundamental to our success.**

- 5. Evidence and the Science of Evaluation:** To be effective, the process should be rooted in multi-level reporting and monitoring that is based on facts, scientific findings, and evidenced-based evaluations. Our approach should take into account not just the revolutionary advances in data but also the **latest state-of-the-art on evaluation approaches and methodologies.** Being clear about the questions that we are trying to answer from the beginning will help us most effectively apply and use the data we are collecting. We should draw upon the lessons learned from our extensive experience with a wide variety of existing monitoring frameworks, including the MDGs.

Next, we want to speak to institutional architecture. We have a real opportunity now to construct an open, innovative, and dynamic follow-up and review model. As others have already noted, we are not starting from scratch. Indeed, much of the know-how and **institutional architecture** for monitoring and review already exists, and data and information from existing reporting mechanisms should be used where possible. We need to harness the potential of multiple, existing mechanisms at all levels in service of the agenda, and **avoid duplication.**

As we have noted, we see the backbone of an effective monitoring framework to be at the **national level.**

Follow-up at the **regional level** can supplement the reporting from the national level and initiate a process of thematic and cross-cutting analysis and peer reviews. The regional level should focus on comparability and identification of common and trans-boundary challenges, offering valuable knowledge regarding the success of practices and policies across countries in the region.

At the **international level**, the monitoring and review process should maintain a longer-term orientation, focused on comparable and aggregate data, vigorous thematic analysis, identification of gaps and challenges in implementation, and knowledge sharing. It should consider longer intervals in which to measure results than the more regular approach taken at national level. Broader trends in development often take multiple years to be clearly visible in data, and longer intervals will provide the right incentive for investing the resources and political attention and participation at the global level.

In this context, we see the **High Level Political Forum** (HLPF) as the crown of a network of existing follow up and review mechanisms. It is, as its name suggests, a **political** forum, to communicate and discuss a synthesis of key issues among a range of external stakeholders and high-level political officials. We see the annual meetings of the HLPF as where the most important questions are asked – and answered: What progress has been made at the goal level? What do the trends tell us about the progress of countries, regions or populations? Does attention need to be shifted at the global level or within the UN system? Are there areas where we must accelerate progress, and how do we do this? In this context, we appreciate the work that the Group of Seven countries has done and see that as a solid basis for our discussion.

We believe this vision can be realized within the existing HLPF modalities and see little value in expanding beyond these. ECOSOC's functional commissions and subsidiary bodies are ideally placed to contribute to follow up and review of key elements of the goals and targets that can then feed into the discussion at the HLPF. This could be done via collection of data and the establishment of reporting templates that allow for easy aggregation and analysis. We also see value in exploring the possibility of an independent network of international experts authoring the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) to ensure it has the necessary technical rigor to provide us the essential information we will need to gauge our progress accurately.

Thank you.