



# AUSTRALIA



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## Post-2015 Development Agenda: Intergovernmental Process 18 May 2015

### Follow-up and Review of the Post-2015 Development Agenda

**Statement by Mr Sean Batten  
Director, Global Development Section  
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade**

(Check against delivery)

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Thank you co-facilitators.

Australia welcomes this discussion on follow up and review as we believe that a coherent system and efficient processes will be critical to the successful implementation of the post-2015 development agenda over the next fifteen years.

We believe that the following principles, which have received broad support this morning, should be the basis for the follow up and review framework:

Firstly, the system should focus on **improving development outcomes** through the use of high quality data.

Second, the system should be as **efficient** as possible, and not burdensome or duplicative.

Third, the system should **build on existing data and processes**.

- The MDG era saw unprecedented gains in the availability and quality of development data, allowing us to observe trends, celebrate progress and identify areas where change was needed.
- Also, Australia, like many other countries, produces a wealth of information across the breadth of the post-2015 development agenda, including through our national statistical office.

This demonstrates that we have a strong base to build upon.

Fourth, we must recognise **the critical role to be played by sectoral and technical experts.**

- The Inter-Agency Expert Group on MDG indicators played an extremely important role in bringing together experts to harmonise and aggregate data.
- The continuation of this work through the Inter Agency Expert Group on SDG indicators is critical. Given the central role and expertise of international organisations, their full participation in this Group is essential. We further emphasise that this Group's work is technical in nature and does not require further political guidance.

Fifth, the system should be **nationally owned** and **voluntary** with **flexibility** to respond to different national circumstances.

Sixth, the system should integrate **means of implementation** – so we do not have separate and overlapping processes with Financing for Development.

Seventh, the system should **develop and improve over time**, making use of innovations in data collection and analysis.

There are a number of ways we could bring life to these principles.

In particular, at the regional level, as well as sharing lessons among countries with common development challenges, we should be building on existing processes that work well. For example, as raised this morning by the Permanent Representative of Tonga, the Pacific Island Forum Compact peer review assesses all development partners' policies and processes for development effectiveness. Australia is currently being reviewed by our partners and we value the dialogue it generates.

Turning to the role of the **High Level Political Forum**:

We see this Forum as an opportunity

- to bring together a broad range of stakeholders.
- to benefit from the many existing thematic reviews.
- to share successes and exchange ideas for overcoming persistent challenges.

It is important that we capitalise on the HLPF's ability to focus more deeply on thematic issues. One option would be to focus on certain thematic aspects of the agenda each year, sharing successes and identifying enduring and emerging challenges.

Such an approach would support the exchange of knowledge, while also identifying opportunities to support and assist those facing these challenges.

This would encourage participation, and, most importantly, lead to better outcomes.

A strong thematic focus for HLPF meetings would also have the great advantage of drawing in stakeholders from the private sector, philanthropic organisations and the scientific community – whose contributions are critical but whose engagement is often limited to particular sectors.

We believe this ambition could be achieved within the existing modalities of the HLPF.

In conclusion, we should start from strong principles, recognise the significant efforts we are already making, and identify where we can genuinely add value.

Effectiveness, efficiency, national ownership and flexibility will be critical to achieving our goal of improving development outcomes.

These principles – the foundations of a system that will evolve over time, as the MDG framework did – should be the basis of our agreement in September.

We look forward to continuing the conversation as we all focus our efforts on building a system that will serve us for the next 15 years.