

Intervention delivered by Mr. Vincent Rigby, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic Policy, Canada

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Canada is convinced that the post-2015 agenda will depend on a robust, effective, and efficient follow-up and review framework—one that is based on guiding principles such as flexibility, strengthened governance, partnership, openness and transparency, and accountability.

The framework should cover the entire post-2015 agenda, including its means of implementation.

Establishing a follow-up and review framework will undoubtedly be challenging—but we do have a number of good experiences on which we can build, including the MDGs, GPEDC and the WHO Commission on Information and Accountability for Women's and Children's Health. We therefore continue to believe that a structured mapping of existing mechanisms, including details about their strengths and weaknesses, would be extremely useful in helping us make informed decisions about how we can best take advantage of models that have shown success. This would allow us to ensure that the framework we craft can be accommodated by the institutional instruments we already have at our disposal. We therefore request the Co-Facilitators to task the Secretariat with developing such a document.

Once this has been completed, we will need to assess how these mechanisms relate to each other, and this could be discussed in the context of the upcoming HLPF. As the EU pointed out yesterday, many SDG targets are already addressed by existing accountability mechanisms, and we need to avoid creating a system that is characterized by fragmentation and disconnected efforts. Coherence will be critical to realize our broad and aspirational agenda.

Ultimately, we are seeking a new paradigm of accountability, one that involves a constellation of different actors including governments, international institutions, the private sector, civil society, and perhaps most importantly, ordinary citizens in all countries. If what we strive for is a people-centred agenda, then people should play a central role in monitoring its successes and failures. Our follow-up and review mechanism must provide effective platforms for meaningful participation of all people, particularly those most marginalized.

There is broad agreement that our framework would operate on three levels—national, regional and global.

A people-centred agenda reinforces the importance of a country-led, national component for accountability in the overall review process that builds on existing national and local mechanisms and processes with broad multi-stakeholder participation. Our new paradigm will be, to a large extent, bottom-up.

As many colleagues pointed out yesterday, most of the sustainable development action will need to take place primarily at the national and local levels, and this is where the greatest number of citizens will have access to accountability mechanisms. This underlines the need for an agenda that will resonate with people and drive them to inspire change.

At the regional level, each region will need to take stock of its own architecture and identify how it will support its members, and share lessons at the global level. Regional dialogue can play an important role in fostering knowledge-sharing, identifying best practices, and generating solutions.

At the global level, we need to establish an open, inclusive, and participatory mechanism under the HLPF, which should serve as the apex for the various follow-up efforts that exist and that will continue to exist beyond 2015, including the subsidiary commissions, various expert committees and other segments of ECOSOC. We should be looking at HLPF as part of a wider UN system.

We will also need to support efforts to further develop effective data collection and analysis, and encourage open data and open government. Supporting statistical capacity development, including civil registration and vital statistics, will help enable states to make sound policy, budget and programming decisions.

The follow-up and review mechanism should not only review progress, it should encourage follow-up on recommendations. For Canada, accountability is about more than reporting—it is about learning lessons, and integrating them into our efforts as we work to achieve our common goals. As stressed by our colleague from the Philippines yesterday, it is about action and results. We should strive for an HLPF that promotes real political dialogue, rather than a forum that simply receives reports. This underscores the important points the United States put forward yesterday on the need for a mechanism that is flexible, and encourages ongoing learning and adapting, as well as review through implementation. We won't have all the answers in 2015, and we can't possibly anticipate all the challenges we will face in 2020.

It is for this reason that from Canada's perspective, it would not necessarily be constructive to aim to agree on every aspect of the mechanism down to the last detail. As the representative of Belize said yesterday on behalf of CARICOM, our focus should be on laying out key principles—it will then be up to each country to give effect to these principles.

We should also aim to identify key milestones, and come to a general agreement on the venue for continuing the discussion and decision-making on follow-up and review. We should also be careful not to overburden the HLPF. We heard this many times throughout the discussion. Pragmatism is another important principle we should be mindful of.

Finally, while it is important to carefully consider each level of our follow-up and review system, we fully agree with the point raised by Ambassador Kamau's in his opening remarks on the need to consider the link between the national, regional and global levels as a critical aspect of the overall mechanism. The learning and sharing of best practices will need to flow within and across all layers. Some of our civil society partners refer to this as the "continuum of accountability", and we believe this concept should be concretized further in the context of our discussions, including in relation to the indicators.

In conclusion, our framework should meet the following five key criteria:

- 1- It should be positive and not punitive
- 2- It should incentivize and mobilize partnerships for action
- 3- It should be flexible and build on existing bodies and systems
- 4- It should enable us to see trends, share lessons, and innovative practices
- 5- It should encourage an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder engagement and efficient data collection and analysis.