



Statement

By

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**General Debate of the High-Level Segment
of the Economic and Social Council**

United Nations

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Mr President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

This year's High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) and the High-Level Segment of the Economic and Social Council are taking place at a critical juncture for the discussions on the post-2015 development agenda. Within their framework, the role of the High-Level Political Forum in monitoring and reviewing the implementation of the future development agenda is being deliberated on. Let me elaborate more on this crucial issue.

The European Union sees the main objectives of monitoring, accountability and review as to: monitor progress; assess the effectiveness of implementation and the continued relevance of the agenda, including ensuring goals and targets remain ambitious in light of new and emerging issues; ensure sustained political commitment and action and effective multi-stakeholder participation and involvement in the process; and increase the credibility of our commitments.

Effective monitoring, accountability and review (MAR), including data disaggregation, are beneficial for all and at the heart of leaving no one behind. Identifying gaps and difficulties enables more targeted provision of supporting measures (from domestic and international sources) to "get back on track". It helps countries maximise their progress in relation to their own starting point. The objective is not to finger-point but rather to foster exchange of best practices and mutual learning in order to overcome shared challenges, and to provide political and leadership focus to motivate and incentivize further action at all levels. It also enables us to identify new and emerging issues.

At the global level, the purpose of a framework for monitoring, accountability and review is to assess the overall global progress in an integrated fashion, based on a set of aggregated global indicators. Review at the global level also provides a forum for accountability between all actors and contributes to knowledge sharing, through participatory, multi-stakeholder, and universal review.

The HLPF is the primary forum at the global level. We welcome that the zero draft considers the HLPF the "apex" of a global network of review processes. The HLPF should draw on national and regional review processes taking into consideration contributions from other multilateral and non-governmental actors as appropriate and play a key oversight role in order to maintain political commitment and facilitate progress reviews and the sharing of best practices, and make recommendations for further action at national, regional and global level. The HLPF can hold thematic discussions on cross-cutting issues and host country presentations (building on the model of the ECOSOC AMR which it replaces), where States present the results of their national implementation and review efforts together with their plans for enhancing progress based on feedback and recommendations. Ideally, each State would volunteer to participate in this process at least twice until 2030, more if possible.

The HLPF should address progress against the whole post-2015 agenda, including means of implementation in an integrated way. The MAR of the financing for development (FfD) conference should be an integral part of the post-2015 MAR and therefore – feed at global level – into the HLPF. In order to provide strong political guidance and follow-up to the Addis outcome, adequate consideration should be given to this topic during the HLPF under the auspices of the GA every four years. It will be important to ensure integration of the proposed high-level follow-up on finance for development into the four yearly HLPF with the FfD follow-up feeding into the HLPF.

The HLPF should add value by ensuring progress is reviewed in a holistic manner on the basis of integrated assessments, which capture inter-linkages between different parts of the agenda, identify challenges to progress as well as areas or issues that are off-track. The HLPF should also ensure lessons and best practices are shared between all relevant actors at all levels.

We believe that the HLPF could also play a role in ‘future-proofing’ the framework with respect to global commitments.

The HLPF will need to be effective, inclusive and inviting. The EU would like to underline the importance of an effective implementation of the modalities for civil society and stakeholder engagement under the HLPF resolution. It is essential that major groups and other stakeholders have the opportunity to comment on national reviews of progress, but also have an opportunity to give an account of their own contributions. The envisaged platform for partnerships with participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders should contribute for information sharing and knowledge exchange. The ECOSOC Partnership Forum can play a role in this context.

Moreover, it is important to strengthen the science-policy interface, to facilitate evidence-based decision making by the HLPF. The HLPF should draw on a wide range of scientifically credible, peer reviewed, evidence-based reports relating to all aspects of sustainable development, including the Global Sustainable Development Report.

Undue duplication must be avoided as far as possible by using existing processes to the extent possible. In order to not overburden the HLPF agenda, the forum should build on the work of the UN system, notably the ECOSOC, including its functional and regional commissions, expert bodies and specialized agencies, as well as other international institutions and organisations. The Coordination and Management meetings of ECOSOC can provide guidance as they already provide reviews of the work of the different entities that report to ECOSOC, while the ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment can review how the UN Development System supports the implementation of the new agenda. However, the HLPF should taking account ongoing work to make the UN development system more fit to purpose, including the ECOSOC dialogues on the Longer Term Positioning of the UN Development System. Finally, special consideration should be given to integrate the work of the ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum and establish links with the OECD DAC and the Global Partnership of Effective Development Cooperation.

Mr President,

The European Union and its Member States underline the importance of one single overarching framework for monitoring, accountability and review of the post-2015 development agenda and the FfD process, covering all aspects of the sustainable development goals and targets, and all means of implementation (financial and non-financial) in a comprehensive fashion. Separate systems for monitoring and review will result in duplication of effort and diversion of resources. This is the best way to ensure that the post-2015 agenda is effectively supported and implemented across the board, without unnecessary duplications or inconsistencies. In short, we see integration as a precondition for maximum effectiveness, efficiency and impact. In order to provide strong political guidance and follow-up to the Addis outcome adequate consideration will be given to this topic during the HLPF under the auspices of the GA every four years.

Mr President,

This year's meeting is the moment to set a clear agenda for the HLPF for the coming years. It is also an opportunity to discuss and clarify the HLPF's role in the overall framework for monitoring, accountability and review, and elaborate on how its monitoring, accountability and review functions will be operationalized in the meetings of the HLPF in 2016 and the years to come.

Also at this session, the role and format of the GSDR should be clarified.

Finally, the HLPF this year should – in accordance with its mandate – give recommendations to the board of the 10-year framework of programmes for sustainable consumption and production.

I thank you.