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**FIJI RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ON THE ORGANIZATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR STATE-LED REVIEWS
AT THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM**

1. This submission outlines general views in response to the questionnaire circulated earlier to Member States on 16 October 2015, requesting for Member States inputs into the report of the Secretary-General on the organizational arrangements for State-led reviews at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF).

GENERAL APPROACH

2. The follow-up and review should build the approach of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, “The future we want”^[1]. This outcome document outlines the social, economic and environmental pillars as the three dimensions of sustainable development. These three dimensions served as a fundamental basis for catalyzing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and should therefore be the basis for its follow-up and review.
3. To ensure a truly transformational and progressive sustainable development that leaves no one behind, all three dimensions of sustainable development must be addressed in an integrated and balanced manner. This means that the follow-up and review of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) must treat all the goals equally, as well as to ensure that all the SDGs are on equal footing in terms of the supporting mechanisms for the follow-up and review.
4. The HLPF as the proxy of the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) should remain as the apex of the follow-up and review of the SDGs, informed by the national and regional reviews, as well as taking into account the inputs of the various functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and other intergovernmental bodies, forums and processes.

^[1] Resolution 66/288, annex.

THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SAMOA PATHWAY

5. Fiji is devoted to a system where we effectively link the follow-up and review arrangements of the 2030 Agenda with the SAMOA Pathway.
6. In this regard, we recall that the Commission on Sustainable Development was the sole forum to review the implementation of the outcomes of global conferences on SIDS. As a result of this move, a dedicated session was created specifically to address the various themes of the CSD from SIDS perspectives. In negotiating discussions leading up to this change, SIDS was particularly concerned with the HLPF providing inadequate time and focus on SIDS issues. In light of the modest strides taken to articulate SIDS priorities from the SAMOA Pathway into the 2030 Agenda, the HLPF should transform itself to become the forum that will help deliver the SIDS Programme of Action and priorities.
7. The thematic reviews should similarly devote a dedicated space for follow up and review on the designated theme from the perspective of SIDS. If themes are designated on the basis of a cluster of SDGs, any associated commitments or thematic clusters contained in the SAMOA Pathway should also be given due consideration.

CYCLE OF THE HLPF FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

8. While we see it reasonable to have all seventeen goals progressively reviewed by the HLPF each year, we note that the days allocated for the HLPF to carry out this exercise may be insufficient to allow for the comprehensive and detailed review of the SDGs.
9. A possible approach to this is to consider the follow-up and review in the context of the three dimensions of sustainable development, i.e. for the follow-up and review to be conducted by the HLPF organizing the SDGs into the social, economic and environmental clusters. This annual consideration of the clusters would then be supported by the thematic reviews, which should be convened annually.
10. For instance, if the HLPF will be substantively considering the ‘social cluster’ of the SDGs in 2016, the thematic reviews will focus on the cross cutting economic and environment aspects of other goals that relate to the social cluster of SDGs. Given the importance of SDG17, we expect that this goal be considered annually aside from the organization of the clusters, including the consideration of SIDS issues, as well as the issues relating to Financing for Development (FfD).

11. This approach will allow for a comprehensive approach through detailed and focused considerations of each of the dimensions annually, while also ensuring the crosscutting nature of the SDGs are addressed. This approach will also be in line with the current cycle of the HLPF, with three years under ECOSOC and the fourth year under the auspices of the General Assembly in 2019. Following this approach, we would have considered all three clusters when HLPF is convened for three years (2016 – 2018) under ECOSOC. The fourth year in which the HLPF will be considered under the GA (2019) would mainly be to conduct a course correction review of the HLPF’s programme of work for the next immediate three years (2020 – 2022). By 2030, there would have been 4 full cycles of comprehensive follow-up and review of the SDGs.

SUPPORT MECHANISMS FOR FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

12. Given the limited number of days allocated to HLPF for the follow-up and review of the seventeen SDGs, the national and regional reviews would play a crucial role. Similarly, the inputs of the various functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and other intergovernmental bodies, forums and processes would similarly be important in terms of addressing the specific and integrated nature of the goals.
13. Where such functional commissions, intergovernmental bodies and forums already exist, they must be aligned to support the considerations of the HLPF. The HLPF should, where possible align its cycle of the follow-up and review to such processes. Where such supporting mechanisms have become outdated or do not exist, they should strengthen or created to ensure the follow-up and review of all the goals are equally effective and balanced for all the goals right throughout the follow-up and review process. During the Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, the Co-facilitators noted that the supporting mechanisms for certain goals may need to be rearranged or even newly created to ensure these goals are on equal footing with other goals that already have strong supporting mechanisms in place to assist the HLPF in the follow-up and review process. For instance, the HLPF’s considerations of the follow-up and review of SDG 2 will amongst others be supported by FAO, SDG3 by WHO, SDG4 by UNESCO, SDG5 by the CSW and so on and so forth.
14. In this connection, Fiji and the Pacific SIDS are giving sustained attention to SDG14’s implementation, through the creation of a support mechanism by way of a high-level UN platform involving all relevant stakeholders, to ensure the integrity of SDG14’s implementation. As things currently stand, the oceans

governance has developed over the years in a dispersed manner without a dedicated high-level platform that will involve all relevant stakeholders, including member states, UN development system, including specialized agencies, civil society and the private sector. To mandate this high-level platform, the UN General Assembly is expected to adopt a resolution next month to formalise the creation of the United Nations Conference on Oceans and Seas. The first conference will be held in Fiji from 5 – 9 June, 2017. In this regard, the HLPF should already consider the review of the environment cluster, including SDG14 either in 2017 or 2018.

ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS OF THE UN SYSTEM

15. The UN system must progressively align its committee discussions on how the various specialized agencies, and funds and programmes can best support countries in the integration and implementation of the SDGs. Again, the three dimensions of sustainable development could be the measure of how the UN system's work should be aligned and we note that the social and economic aspects are well addressed in the work of the UN development system as compared to the environmental dimension. For instance, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) builds on the two latter dimensions. This could also be quite noticeable in the work of the Committees where majority of the work is focused mainly on the social and economic issues. The environment dimension is lacking on the agenda items of the GA and the Committees and this issue will need to be addressed to ensure all dimensions are addressed in a balanced manner without having to selectively placing emphasis on only a few.

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