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საქართველოს მუდმივი
ნარმომადგენლობა გაერთიანებული
ერაზის ორგანიზაციასთან

PERMANENT MISSION OF GEORGIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

№ 19/43006

11/16/2015

Dear Mr. Gass,

In response to your letter dated 16 October 2015, I have the honour to enclose herewith the filled-in questionnaire regarding the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Enclosure: 7 pages.

Respectfully,

Ambassador **Kaha Imnadze**
Permanent Representative

H.E. Mr. Thomas Gass
Assistant Secretary-General for Policy
Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs
United Nations
New York

One United Nations Plaza, 26TH floor, New York, NY 10017, USA

ტელ./Tel: +1 (212) 759-1949; ფაქსი/Fax: +1 (212) 759-1832; ელ-ფოსტა/E-mail: geomission.un@mfa.gov.ge

Questionnaire:

For each item below, please feel to provide an answer in any format that is convenient for you. If possible, please provide a brief explanation for your responses. You may consider using the elements in italics to frame your answers. Please feel free to leave blanks for questions you feel unprepared to answer.

I. Institutional responsibilities for follow-up review:

1. How can the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the HLPF work coherently in follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda? What should be the role of the General Assembly in follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda? Do you see a need to adjust the working methods and agenda of the General Assembly, its primary, second, third committees in particular and their relation to ECOSOC to respond to the 2030 Agenda and ensure coherence, complementarity and efficiency? If so, how?

The General Assembly, ECOSOC and the HLPF within its competence can request and review the information on implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For the coherent review it's very important to discuss the results - countries' reports according the goals, considering not only the information on the activities done, but also the general picture of what and how is transmitted within the country Governments in order to fulfill and achieve those goals defined by the Agenda. In this case precise, evidence-based information should be requested from all of the actors on the ground to track the progress in implementing the universal goals and targets. Indeed there is a need to set out the procedures and working methods in order to make clear definitions and separations of duties/responsibilities, in this manner the process of assessment on country-level regular implementation will be more time-bound and regulated. First of all, in contemplation of ensuring the complementarity and efficiency, submitted reports have to be divided thematically. Considering the interrelations to ECOSOC the committees (mandated to examine) have to administrate the issues correspondingly to the competences of first, second, third and the rest committees.

2. Given its Charter and other mandates, how can ECOSOC help ensure that global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda is coherent?

Resolve to assess the implementation of the measures and mechanisms defined in 2030 Agenda and follow-up economic and social field; oversee system-wide coordination and the balanced integration of economic, social and environmental aspects of counties policies and programmes aimed at promoting sustainable development.

3. How can the HLPF most effectively make linkages with the follow-up and review arrangements of United Nations conferences and processes on (1) least develop countries (LDCs), (2) small island developing States (SIDS), and (3) landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)¹?

HLPF can make an comparative analysis of the listed counties on the policies promoting sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, creating greater opportunities for all, reducing inequalities, raising basic standards of living, fostering equitable social development and inclusion and promoting the integrated and sustainable management of natural resources and ecosystems that supports, inter alia, economic, social and

¹ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 82

human development. As well as the progresses in following indicators have to be tracked: freedom, peace and security, human rights, right to development and the right to an adequate standard of living, the right to food, the rule of law, gender equality, women's empowerment, reducing inequalities and the overall commitment to just and democratic societies for development. HLPF can support the identification of solutions and best practices, assist in mobilizing the partnerships and developing the cooperation.

4. Should the General Assembly provide some guidance to ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums on how they should best reflect their contribution to the review of SDFs, and to the HLPF generally, in their work programmes and sessions? And what would it be?

Yes, general assembly should provide guidance to ECOSOC subsidiary and other intergovernmental bodies as well as to the forums. We see it as a continuous process that will have permanent character. The guidelines should be provided through manuals and guidebooks as well as workshops and seminars. Guidance will improve the national responsibility and ensure the timely implementation of SDGs. General Assembly should run experience exchange programs in order to create a platform where agencies will share their best practices.

5. How can the HLPF best build on the outcome of ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development and the summary by the Co-Chairs of the multi-stakeholder forum non Science, Technology and Innovation?

Multi stakeholder forum should link public and private sectors in order to enable public private partnerships and especially in since technology and innovations. Primary consumer of latter should be governments and the vulnerable who don't possess necessary means to access the innovation. HLPF should think of follow up of the ECOSOC forum and create innovation labs and spaces where the stakeholders could interact actively and then track the partnerships and help the parties in legal, financial and other issues.

II. Overarching annual theme of the HLF vs thematic reviews of progress of the SDGs to be carried out by the HLPF:

[The 2030 Agenda decided the thematic reviews of the HLPF will be supported by the reviews conducted by the functional commissions of ECOSOC² and other intergovernmental bodies and forums³. These various bodies and forums are mandated to "reflect the integrated nature of the Goals as well as the interlinkages among them"/ they "will engage all relevant stakeholders and, where possible, feed into, and be aligned with, the cycle of the HLPF"⁴. The HLPF, when meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC, "shall have a thematic focus reflecting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, in line with the thematic focus of the activities of the Council and consistent with the post-2015 development agenda". The thematic focus of the HLPF should allow the HLPF to

² For example, the Commission on Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Population and Development, etc.....

³ Examples would include the World Health Assembly, International Labour Conference etc.

⁴ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para 85

follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The GA decided that ECOSOC will base its annual programme of working a main theme and defined the characteristics of this annual theme.^{5]}

6. Should the HLPF thematic reviews of the progress on the SDGs (i) focus on clusters of closely related SDGs or (ii) examine progress in all SDGs based upon on a transversal theme such as gender, health and education or (iii) address four SDGs every year, taken in a numerical order, along with SDG17? If option (ii) is preferred, when and how should the transversal theme be decided upon?

(i) focus on clusters closely related SDGs.

7. What kind of inputs should functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums provide to the HLPF (e.g. negotiated outcomes, summary of discussions and analysis or other)? And how should the inputs of various platforms be presented to the HLPF so as to best support its review and political leadership, guidance and recommendations?

The functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies should provide to the HLPF the summaries of discussions and analysis regarding the Sustainable Development Goals and targets as a sequences of thematic reviews done individually by each functional commission or other body. The analysis should point out the weak and strong points and the recommendations should contain the ways of solutions. This will facilitate the work of the HLPF in its additional review and support.

8. What would be good overarching annual themes for the HLPF to address (when it meets under the auspices of ECOSOC) and how can they be aligned to that the theme of ECOSOC? Please give several examples?

E.g. themes related to sustainable development, follow-up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments; Sustainable Development Goals; innovative ways to collaborate with the private sector and foundations in search of solutions for the many development challenges facing governments today. All these could be aligned to the themes of ECOSOC as a platform for reflection, debate, and innovative thinking on sustainable development.

9. How long in advance should HLPF themes be known? For example, (i) should there be a programme of work for the four years in between two meeting of the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly or for a longer time period or (ii) should themes be determined every year and if so how could other intergovernmental platforms and other relevant actors contribute to the HLPF review?

(ii) Determination of the themes in every year will make the HLPF review process more flexible. Although this may pass through a programmatic cycle of meetings. The work would be guided by an issue-based approach, and there should be an annual theme that accompanies each programmatic cycle, ensuring a sustained and focused discussion among multiple stakeholders.

10. Should the multi-stakeholder forum on Science, Technology and Innovation address the same theme as the HLPF?

Not necessarily, it can be covered by the ECOSOC Functional Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

⁵ General Assembly resolution 67/290,op 7c

11. How should the United Nations Statistical Commission best contribute to the work of HLPF?

The United Nations Statistical Commission will regularly compile and disseminate international statistics based on impartiality; share collected data with HLPF and mostly important the Commission will ensure that national statistical offices and other national organisations for official statistics are duly involved and advocating that the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics are applied when data are collected in countries. All these will result the evidence-based and verified information for HLPF in the process of analyzing the country-led reports.

12. What arrangements would be needed to allow the HLPF to identify and consider new and emerging issues?

The follow-up and review by the HLPF should be informed by an annual SDG progress report, which will serve as an evidence-based instrument to consider emerging issues and support policy-makers.

13. How can platforms and processes outside the UN system, including those run by other international or regional organizations and by non-state actors, contribute to thematic reviews at the HLPF?

With a view to strengthening the role of non-governmental organizations as social partners, the United Nations system and Governments should initiate a process, in consultation with non-governmental organizations, to review formal procedures and mechanisms for the involvement of these organizations at all levels from policy-making and decision-making to implementation. For example the contribution can be expressed with the complementary reports and forums of non-state actors, other international or regional organisations and should be recognized as partners in the implementation of Agenda in order to activate a sense of common purpose on behalf of all sectors of society. The community of non-governmental organizations, therefore, should offer a global network that should be tapped, enabled and strengthened in support of efforts to achieve these common goals. National governments and non-governmental organizations should be promoted in institutions mandated, and programmes designed to carry out 2030 Agenda. Non-governmental organizations will also need to foster cooperation and communication among themselves to reinforce their effectiveness as actors in the implementation of sustainable development.

III. HLPF National Reviews of implementation:

Preparation and conduct of national reviews:

14. How often would countries be expected to participate in regular state-led reviews in order to allow for a meaningful exchange of experiences and feedback at the HLPF? Should there be a minimum number of reviews within 15 years to be presented at the HLPF?

Countries would be expected to participate regularly in every 5 year. That will automatically balance the minimum threshold of reviews.

15. How can the HLPF discussions on the reviews be best prepared in order to facilitate a sharing of experiences and the provision of political leadership, guidance and recommendations at the HLPF? How would countries like to be supported in preparing the review process at global level?

HLPF should adopt guidelines to help states prepare the reports. These consolidated guidelines for State reports should be designed to ensure that reports are presented in a uniform manner and to enable the HLPF and States parties to obtain a complete picture of the situation in each State as regards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. According to these guidelines, the initial report would be intended to be a detailed and comprehensive description of countries implemented activities at the time of submission; it is meant to provide a benchmark against which subsequent progress can be measured. The review processes should update the previous information, detailing significant developments that have occurred over the last years, noting key trends, and identifying obstacles to the full achievement of the Goals. The follow-up and review should assess the results of such a mechanism of transferring the achievements to developing countries.

Voluntary common reporting guidelines:

16. In order to help elaborate voluntary common reporting guidelines for State-led reviews at the HLPF, kindly indicate what issues you would want the HLPF to address systematically when examines national implementation reviews?

HLPF should focus on international efforts promoting sustainable development, as well as the national assessment of progress, gaps, achievements and challenges in the implementation of the development agenda. For the systematical address the balance and integration of the framework of goals should be preserved, while acknowledging the priority for the implementation of Goal 17 and specific targets under other goals, given their cross-cutting nature and importance for the implementation of the entire framework of Goals.

17. How can the guidelines leave enough flexibility to Member States while ensuring sufficient comparability between HLPF reviews to facilitate cross-country comparisons and to help track global progress? Could guidelines identify a core set of issues, in addition to the status of all SDFs and Targets, which all countries would be encouraged to address in their reviews and, in addition, a number of issues which countries might consider addressing if feasible?

Compliance with the guidelines will reduce the need for the HLPF to request further information when it proceeds to consider a report; it will also help the HLPF to consider the situation regarding the implementation in every country on an equal basis. Countries should underline the progress made in this respect and for this the guidelines should leave enough flexibility to describe the factual situation and the practical availability, effect and implementation. While review typically, the country representative should return a day or so later to respond to the questions asked during the forum; answers or supporting material may be presented in writing. For sure the guidelines should identify the core set of issues as well as the issues which countries might consider addressing.

Presentation of national reviews to the HLPF:

18. How should the country reviews be featured and discussed at the formal HLPF meeting?

The country reviews might be discussed as sub-headings grouped in accordance with the SDGs. The forum should assess and evaluate the implementation of policies established in relevant countries with a look to the future, providing an opportunity to States and other stakeholders to engage in dialogue

on how to adapt all relevant activities for development to the changing global development cooperation context. It should assess changes, if any, that might be needed to make.

19. How can national reviews give adequate attention to the means of implementation? And how can they help to mobilize new support and partnerships?

National reviews should provide coordination and guidance to the all related actors to ensure that those policy orientations classified in the Agenda are implemented. The United Nations Office for Partnerships serves as a gateway for public-private partnerships with the United Nations system in furtherance of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the overall Post-2015 Development Agenda. UNOP fosters innovative strategies for engaging non-state actors including global corporations, philanthropic foundations, and civil society organisations to help meet UN objectives. Therefore UNOP should be concerned in the process of promoting and implementing partnership advisory services, outreaching initiatives, and fostering innovative strategies for engaging non-state actors on an international level. On a local level the new support and partnerships might be mobilized through the inter-coordination councils, with a majority of local non-governmental sector.

IV. Regional reviews and processes

21. How should the outcome of regional review processes be considered at HLPF?

The regional review outcomes should be submitted to the HLPF with a purpose of tracking the progress in implementing the universal goals and targets.

V. Inclusion of UN system and other stakeholders in global follow-up and review

22. How can the HLPF support the participation by the major groups and other relevant stakeholders in the follow-up and review processes conducted at the global level including the thematic and country reviews? What are possible modalities for the participation of major groups defined by General Assembly resolution 67/290 and the practices of the General Assembly open working group on SDGs)?

The HLPF should incorporate lessons learned from the Commission for Sustainable Development (CSD) on stakeholder participation. Specifically, representatives of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders should be allowed to attend meetings, have access to information and documents, intervene in official meetings, submit documents and make oral contributions, make recommendation and organize side events. According to the Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 9 July 2013 67/290 the while retaining considering the intergovernmental character of the forum, the representatives of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders shall be allowed: (a) To attend all official meetings of the forum; (b) To have access to all official information and documents; (c) To intervene in official meetings; (d) To submit documents and present written and oral contributions; (e) To make recommendations;(f) To organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat. Also the major groups should be called to provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of other relevant stakeholders.

23. The 2030 Agenda calls on major groups and other stakeholders to report on their contribution to the implementation of 2030 Agenda. How can such reviews be prepared and conducted at the HLPF? How can these actors be encouraged to engage in such reviews?⁶

The Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 9 July 2013 67/290 encourages the major groups and other stakeholders active in areas related to sustainable development, to autonomously establish and maintain effective coordination mechanisms for participation in the high-level political forum and for actions derived from that participation at the global, regional and national levels, in a way that ensures effective, broad and balanced participation by region and by type of organization.

24. How should UN system contribution to the implementation of 2030 Agenda be reviewed?

UN should play the domain role to achieve the coherence in the process of implementation, which requires interinstitutional coordination to develop mechanisms for monitoring the impact of overlapping policies, assessments of progress in implementing agreed commitments or common goals, and mechanisms for addressing poor or negative performance. HLPF could link with inter-agency coordination processes within the UN system by providing high-level political leadership and support for integration and coherence in the work of agencies throughout the system and in mainstreaming sustainable development into policies and programs.

25. What steps can the UN system, including the Secretariat take to best support follow-up and review in a coherent and effective manner?

The UN System should precisely define the roles and responsibilities of related actors in review and follow-up process. It can bring focus to the sustainable development agenda specifically in terms of implementation, articulating how to operationalize integration, and how to work with other parts of the UN system, other intergovernmental organizations, and non-state governance mechanisms. Especially important will be HLPF working relationship with ECOSOC and the Development Cooperation Forum to ensure a consistent and mutually supportive agenda, and avoid duplication.

The Secretariat should ensure appropriate support linked directly to the very broad mandate of the HLPF and its role in coordinating across the UN system.

VI. Other views and ideas

26. Please add any other points you would like to raise.

⁶ Agenda 2030 state in para 89 that “the high-level political forum will support participation in follow-up and review processes by the major groups and other relevant stakeholders in line with resolution 67/290. We call on those actors to report on their contribution to the implementation of the Agenda.”

