

**Critical milestones towards a coherent, efficient, and inclusive follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level**

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**COVER NOTE:**

1. In September 2015, the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit adopted a new framework to guide development efforts between 2015 and 2030, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development”.
2. The 2030 Agenda contains 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets<sup>1</sup>. The SDGs address, in an integrated manner, the social, economic and environmental dimensions of development, their interrelations, aspects related to peaceful societies and effective institutions, as well as means of implementation (finance, technology, capacity development etc.).
3. Heads of State and Government also committed to engage in systematic follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The follow-up and review will be based on regular, voluntary and inclusive country-led reviews of progress at the national level feeding into reviews at the regional and global levels.
4. At the global level, the United Nations high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) will have the central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes. It is to work coherently with the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and other relevant organs and forums, in accordance with existing mandates, building on their work in order to boost implementation.
5. The HLPF will meet (i) every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government under the auspices of the GA and (ii) every year under the auspices of ECOSOC.
6. The follow-up and review processes at all levels will track progress in implementing the universal goals and targets, including the means of implementation, in all countries, in a manner which respects their universal, integrated and interrelated nature and the three dimensions of sustainable development. These processes will be guided by a number of other principles

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<sup>1</sup> [[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/L.85&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/L.85&Lang=E)]

defined in the 2030 Agenda<sup>2</sup>. For example, they will be voluntary and country-led, support the identification of solutions and best practices, help to mobilize the necessary means of implementation and partnerships, as well as be open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people.

7. The dedicated follow-up and review for the Addis Ababa Conference on Financing for Development—and the means of implementation of the SDGs—is integrated with the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda. The HLPF will build, inter alia, on the outcome of the annual ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development as well as on the summary of the annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation launched by the 2030 Agenda as part of a Technology Facilitation Mechanism. The HLPF will also take into account the biennial ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum. A General Assembly Dialogue on Financing for Development will be held back-to-back with the HLPF meeting, when it meets under the auspices of the General Assembly.
8. The 2030 Agenda stipulates that the HLPF will conduct:
  - i. Regular reviews of country-level implementation, “including developed and developing countries as well as relevant UN entities and other stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector”;
  - i. Thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, building on the work of the functional commissions of ECOSOC and other intergovernmental bodies and forums.
9. The follow-up and review by the HLPF will be informed by an annual SDG progress report and a Global Sustainable Development Report, which shall strengthen the science-policy interface and serve as an evidence-based instrument to support policymakers<sup>3</sup>.

#### **Mandate for the report by the Secretary-General on global follow-up and review**

10. The 2030 Agenda requested “the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States, to prepare a report, for consideration at the seventieth session of the General Assembly in preparation for the 2016 meeting of the HLPF which outlines critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level. The report should:
  - (i) include a proposal on the organizational arrangements for State-led

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<sup>2</sup> Agenda 2030 para 74

<sup>3</sup> 2030 Agenda, extracts of para 83

- reviews at the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC, including recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines,
- (ii) clarify institutional responsibilities,
  - (iii) provide guidance on annual themes, on a sequence of thematic reviews, and
  - (iv) [provide guidance] on options for periodic reviews for the HLPF.<sup>4</sup>”
12. The present questionnaire aims to collect views of Member States on milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review of 2030 Agenda at the global level, so as to inform the analysis and proposals to be contained in the report of the Secretary-General.
13. It takes existing mandates as a starting point and aims to determine how these can be operationalized or further clarified or elaborated on if needed.
14. The Secretariat kindly invites all Member States to provide responses to the following questions and submit them to the Division for Sustainable Development of the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs ([axster@un.org](mailto:axster@un.org), copied to [zubcevic@un.org](mailto:zubcevic@un.org) and [powellj1@un.org](mailto:powellj1@un.org)) **no later than 15 November 2015**.

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<sup>4</sup>2030 Agenda states that this report should “include a proposal on the organizational arrangements for state-led reviews at the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) under the auspices of ECOSOC, including recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines. It should clarify institutional responsibilities and provide guidance on annual themes, on a sequence of thematic reviews, and on options for periodic reviews for the HLPF” (Paragraph 90, Transforming our world” the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)

### **Questionnaire:**

*For each item below, please feel free to provide an answer in any format that is convenient to 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.*

### **Overall US Comments:**

Before answering the specific questions of this questionnaire, the United States believes it is important to lay out the general outline for our vision of an effective follow up and review framework. This vision involves incorporating the highest quality analyses of implementation from all actors (governments, civil society, scientific community, UN agencies, private sector, etc.) and ensuring an appropriate aggregation and synthesis as the focus moves up from the local and national level to the regional and global level, with each level transforming its inputs into suitable outputs for the level above. In concrete terms, national governments, in cooperation with other stakeholders, could incorporate local reviews conducted by all actors to produce a national report which clearly captures the most relevant information from the national perspective. In addition to these national reports, regional fora should also consider inputs from civil society and the scientific community (and any other actors producing quality work) in order to produce appropriate analysis from the regional level, with the aim of identifying common obstacles, innovations, and trends that are applicable to multiple countries rather than unique to a few. This work could be done at the most suitable regional fora, such as regional development banks, UN regional commissions, etc.

The apex of the discussion should occur at the High Level Political Forum, with the Global Sustainable Development Report as its base, and with active participation by expert practitioners. Follow up and review at the global level requires sufficient preparation and analysis to be ready for presentation at the High Level Political Forum. This should mainly be done by the authors of the Global Sustainable Development Report (it is not yet determined who will write this report). The authors of the GSDR should conduct an “assessment of assessments,” by surveying all the available analyses on global SDG implementation, including inputs from regional fora, inputs from the various UN entities (the technical subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC as well as outputs from various ECOSOC segments and events such as the FfD forum, the Technology Forum), and data and/or analysis from civil society, the private sector and the scientific community focused on the global level. The authors of the GSDR should rely on the highest quality, most technically rigorous analyses (regardless of origin) to create a state of the art understanding of SDG implementation, including all of the aspects mentioned in GA resolution 67/290. The GSDR should be technically rigorous yet also concise and digestible for policy makers. A high quality GSDR will

be an essential ingredient to a successful HLPF, as it will serve to anchor the discussion.

The agenda of the HLPF itself will be focused on the analysis of the GSDR combined with direct presentations from key actors who are doing the most cutting edge work in their areas, including from member states, local authorities, civil society, the private sector, and/or the scientific community. The style and type of presentations are crucial in ensuring that the HLPF is engaging and substantive, and that it provides a real platform for a useful discussion. This will require innovations that go beyond the past several years (and the typical panel discussions in which experts only have several minutes to discuss incredibly complicated issues). DESA will need to work with the President and Bureau of ECOSOC to identify the most appropriate presenters, and the best format for supporting the discussion.

The presenters themselves should be selected through a formal process that selects the most impactful presentations, with presenters based on their technical expertise and experience while also reflecting regional diversity. This could be done by DESA, for example, by putting out a call on its website for submissions of presentations on specific topics, and selecting those that are the most compelling. Presenters should be provided sufficient time to present key topics. Examples could include a member state official discussing an innovative program or policy that achieved significant progress in SDG implementation, a scientist discussing new ways to analyze data that uncover new insights on interlinkages between targets or emerging trends, or a discussion by civil society on unique partnership models.

We would argue against the default option of allowing the HLPF to be a simple litany of reports by member states on their experiences in SDG implementation, as this format will not allow the most crucial issues related to SDG implementation to rise to the top of the discussion in an efficient manner. Additionally, the HLPF should stick to a clear program that is not burdened by the arcana and jargon of the UN, so that Ministers see the value of engaging in the debate.

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In addition to the vision above, the U.S. believes that the organization of the HLPF and its interaction with ECOSOC and the GA at the global level should be based on the following overarching principles:

- Abide by existing mandates and work with existing structures already in place
- Rely on a reprioritization of the current work of the UN system in the GA, ECOSOC, and DESA to align with the SDGs, rather than considering this a new mandate on top of existing mandates.

- Fully incorporate non-UN sources of data and analysis. UN entities should not be given preference, but rather should compete with all entities doing SDG-analysis on the basis of the quality of the work.
- Avoid designating focal points within the UN system for follow up and review of specific goals. UN entities doing technical work should not also be responsible for selecting which inputs are used to support follow up and review, as they would have a clear conflict of interest. The authors of the Global Sustainable Development Report (not yet defined), potentially in conjunction with DESA, should play the role of aggregator and synthesizer of information.
- Participation in the HLPF (i.e. giving presentations on key issues) should be chosen based on the quality of the work done, with adequate representation from UN and non-UN sources, national governments, civil society, academia, and the private sector. There should be a process in place to select these participants.
- Create a clear division of labor among UN entities in contributing to follow up and review, including the GA, ECOSOC, the HLPF, regional fora, etc. aimed at avoiding duplication.
- Coordination between DESA's ECOSOC Support and Sustainable Development departments should be improved, particularly in the organization of the ministerial segment of the HLPF and the High Level Segment of ECOSOC. It will be difficult to sustain ministerial participation year after year if we continue with the confusing practice of separate sessions. We need to merge the segments.
- All themes for a given year should be identical (i.e. ECOSOC, High Level Segment and the HLPF) or as closely aligned as possible so as to avoid creating confusion. It is essential that the overall system starts to coordinate and support implementation of the SDGs, rather than take decisions on themes in isolation.
- The concept of thematic and national reviews should be combined so that national presentations focus on the chosen theme in the years when the HLPF is under the auspices of ECOSOC. Only when the HLPF is under the auspices of the GA should there be reviews looking at the entire Agenda without a thematic element. National reviews should not also be so narrowly defined as to mean that a Member State representative is simply given time to speak about that Member State's overall implementation of the SDGs, but rather could mean simply that Member States are participating in the discussion of specific topics to be covered at the HLPF.

## **I. Institutional responsibilities for follow-up and 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 plenary, 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?

**US Response:** The GA, ECOSOC and HLPF should work coherently together in the follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda by focusing on their comparative advantages. These are understood as follows:

**GA's role is in setting norms.** GA resolutions express global consensus on key issues.

**ECOSOC's role involves policy implementation and coordination as well as oversight:** Manage and coordinate ECOSOC's functional commissions, subsidiary bodies, funds and programs, to ensure that they are supporting SDG implementation in an integrated manner. ECOSOC should not engage in the negotiation of resolutions that duplicate the work of the GA. In other words, resolutions in ECOSOC should be limited to only those that are required procedurally to accomplish its task of coordinating its subsidiary bodies. Technical work done in ECOSOC should be organized to contribute as significant inputs to discussions at the HLPF in addition to the many other inputs from outside the UN system.

**HLPF:** The HLPF's role is to serve as the platform to discuss the critical issues related to implementation of the SDGs. It is a venue for a conversation based on the most important issues related to follow up and review. It should be grounded on the Global Sustainable Development Report and the inputs received from both ECOSOC and other non-UN sources (regional reviews, etc). These discussions can form the basis for decisions taken by the GA and or ECOSOC.

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

**US Response:** The most important things ECOSOC can do are:

1. Fulfil its mandates effectively by managing the work of its subsidiary bodies in a way that can be easily aggregated and incorporated into the analysis of SDG implementation that will support the discussion at the HLPF; and,
2. Work with DESA to organize an effective and productive program for the HLPF that fulfils the HLPF's mandates and is innovative in its ability to convey information and create an interactive discussion.

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 developed countries (LDCs), (2) small island developing States (SIDS), and (3) and landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)<sup>5</sup>?

**US Response:** The HLPF should ensure that adequate attention is devoted to the issues affecting these groups of countries in special situations. In addition, other follow-up and review processes should take into account their needs as part of the integrated collection and analysis of information related to the SDGs.

First, to the extent possible and in order to minimize the reporting burden, data and reporting on the 2030 Agenda and the outcomes of the conferences of Countries in Special Situations should be harmonized. There is significant scope for collecting one set of data that can be used for measuring progress on both the SDGs and group-specific programmes of action. This data can be tagged in order to enable its use both in the context of global SDG review, and for analysis in the context of annual reports currently drafted for use in monitoring the implementation of the programs of action for LDCs, SIDS, and LLDCs.

Second, the annual reports on the progress made in the implementation of the programmes of action for LDCs, SIDS and LLDCs should be considered as inputs to the GSDR. In addition, the GSDR should also consider the relevant regional or other inputs related to these groups.

Finally, the HLPF should consider on a regular basis a session devoted to addressing the issues affecting LDCs, SIDS and LLDCs, in the broader context of global implementation of the Agenda.

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 SDGs, and to the HLPF generally, in their work programmes and sessions? And what would it be?

**US Response:** No. The GA and ECOSOC are both charter bodies and the GA does not have the right to interfere in ECOSOC's work. It is ECOSOC's job to oversee the functional commissions, among its other tasks. See answer above on having the UN entities stick to their comparative advantages.

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 on Science, Technology and Innovation?

**US Response:** As envisaged in the agreed language from Addis, the outputs of the FfD Forum and the Technology Forum shall serve as inputs to the HLPF, like all other inputs. Means of Implementation are a topic that should be

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<sup>5</sup> 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 82

discussed at the HLPF along with all of the other issues mentioned in 67/290. This question singles out these two fora in a way that seems inappropriate as there are many inputs to the HLPF.

## **II. Overarching annual theme of the HLPF 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 ECOSOC<sup>6</sup> and “other intergovernmental bodies and forums”<sup>7</sup>. 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”<sup>8</sup>. 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”<sup>9</sup>. The thematic focus of the HLPF should allow the HLPF to follow-up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The GA decided that ECOSOC will base its annual programme of work on a main theme and defined the characteristics of this annual theme.<sup>10</sup>]*

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 or 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?

**US Response:** Our strong preference is for (ii). The other options would further cement a silo-ed approach that hides the interlinkages of the Agenda. It is these interlinkages that represent the biggest opportunities for achieving progress in implementation (e.g. gender equality programs that drive economic growth, or educational programs that improve environmental outcomes, etc). The transversal themes should be cross-cutting issues, such as data, leave no one behind, etc. Additionally, the themes of ECOSOC and the HLPF should be the same, so that we do not confuse everyone. The themes could be decided by the ECOSOC Bureau in consultation with regional groups.

7. What kind of inputs should functional commissions and other

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<sup>6</sup> For example, the Commission on Social Development, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Population and Development etc....

<sup>7</sup> Examples would include the World Health Assembly, International Labour Conference etc.

<sup>8</sup> 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para 85

<sup>9</sup> General Assembly resolution 67/290, op 7c

<sup>10</sup> General Assembly resolution 68/1, paras 7-9

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?

**US Response:** The functional commissions and other entities should provide their normal output as they currently do. The authors of the GSDR should seek to draw from all available inputs, both within the UN and beyond, and that report should serve as the basis for the discussion at the HLPF.

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?

**US Response:** The theme of the HLPF should be the same as the theme of ECOSOC and of the High Level Segment of ECOSOC. Otherwise, it is too complicated. Themes should crosscutting, such as broad-based issues such as health, gender, economic growth or the environment, always with the intention of seeking to highlight the interlinkages.

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 meetings 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?

**US Response:** The themes should be known a few years in advance, but not be selected so far in advance that they cannot respond to emerging trends and challenges. Two to three years in advance seems appropriate.

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

**US Response:** The STI Forum is tasked at looking at technology's role in driving development, while the mandate of the HLPF is the entire agenda. It is therefore too early to tell whether the theme of the STI Forum can be related to the theme of the HLPF.

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

**US Response:** The Statistical Commission's role involves providing technical support for the framework of global indicators. This requires the Commission to monitor the ongoing technical suitability of the indicators for measuring progress on the targets, mainly with a view to determining whether they can be improved. The Commission also provides guidance for developing greater

capacity for collecting the data that is necessary to monitor progress made on the SDGs. The Statistical Commission's annual report will include updates on the workstreams of the Inter-Agency Expert Group for SDG indicators and the High Level Group for SDG indicators. This report is considered by ECOSOC. The HLPF could at the appropriate time have a thematic discussion of data in the context of SDG monitoring, follow-up and review.

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

**US Response:** There will be a lot of analysis looking at identifying new and emerging issues, including in academia, the scientific community, national reporting, as well as in ECOSOC (via the subsidiary bodies and various segments) and the GA main committees. As the identification of new and emerging issues is clearly highlighted in 67/290 OP2 and OP7, the authors of the GSDR should include a section in the report on this topic that assesses the most up to date information from global sources. This would serve as the basis for the discussion at the HLPF.

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?

**US Response:** The authors of the GSDR should draw on all sources of information, both from within the UN and from outside of the UN. The GSDR should thereby serve to anchor the discussion at the HLPF. If a non-UN actor has done the highest quality work on a specific issue to be discussed at the HLPF, this actor should be invited to the HLPF to present that work.

### **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?

**US Response:** State-led reviews should not be defined to mean that member states are simply given a platform to speak about their experiences at the HLPF with no structure. The organizers of the HLPF should identify member states that have had experiences which highlight critical issues that need to be discussed at the HLPF (i.e. best practices, emerging trends, largest obstacles, innovations, etc.). This would be voluntary and member states should be selected to speak in a manner that reflects a regional balance. Simply having a

series of state-led reviews would undermine the value of the HLPF as a place to discuss the most essential issues related to follow up and review.

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?

**US Response:** 67/290 OP7 highlights the list of items that should be considered at the HLPF, including best practices, biggest challenges, emerging trends, innovations, science-policy interface, and MOI. For each of these issues, the organizers of the HLPF should identify which member states have the most compelling story to tell that neatly illustrates one of these crucial issues. One method for example would be to send out a request for countries to submit presentations on certain issues in advance of the HLPF and select those presentations that are the most insightful and impactful.

*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 it examines national implementation reviews?

**US Response:** National reports should not go directly to the HLPF to be discussed, but should serve as inputs to the GSDR and to other analysis done at the global level. Having national reports go directly to the HLPF would quickly overwhelm the HLPF and would not provide any useful analysis. National reports need to be examined and analysed by appropriate regional fora, the authors of the GSDR, and others, to draw out the most crucial elements, and only that analysis should be discussed at the HLPF. The type of issues that should be addressed systematically in examining national implementation are clear in 67/290 (i.e. most successful policies, biggest obstacles, emerging trends, innovations, science policy interface, MOI, and data.)

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 SDGs 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?

**US Response:** There is no need to be overly prescriptive on the guidelines for written national reports (which are voluntary). Certainly national reports should include issues such as success stories and biggest obstacles, to

encourage the type of analysis that is most helpful for the HLPF. A simple voluntary reporting template could accomplish this.

*Presentation of national reviews to the HLPF:*

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

**US Response:** As described above, the HLPF should not consist of a list of country reviews in which member states simply talk about their general experiences in implementing the Agenda. The organization of the program of the HLPF needs to consider the requirements of 67/290 to identify best practices, biggest obstacles, emerging trends, etc. DESA and ECOSOC need to work together to identify which Member States have had experiences that speak to those issues and then provide a platform to those Member States to share those experiences.

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

**US Response:** To reiterate, we do not envisage the concept of national reviews at the HLPF itself to entail simple presentations by Member States, but rather that such reviews will be highly targeted to specific issues and preselected from Member States for their impact. Technical experts at the national level should have ongoing discussions on whether national policies are appropriately generating the necessary means of implementation to drive SDG achievement. This means, for example, analysing whether the tax system is effectively generating tax revenue to support development, whether the judicial system is effective in handling legal disputes or whether the regulatory system is attracting sufficient foreign direct investment. This is an issue that falls under the competency of national governments, and certainly the most compelling stories could be selected for presentation during the MOI section of the HLPF.

20. What kind of outcome should result from the HLPF national reviews of implementation, and how could there be a follow-up to these reviews?

**US Response:** National reviews are voluntary. Member states will participate in the HLPF and take from it what they believe are the most effective lessons for use in their own domestic policy making. The GSDR should serve as a policy resource.

#### **IV. Regional reviews and processes**

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

**US Response:** As described above, the regional review processes should feed into the analysis done in the process of writing the GSDR.

## 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 options to seek their contributions to the reviews at the HLPF, (building on the 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)?

**US Response:** Civil society, academia, and think tanks should be able to participate freely in all HLPF sessions, including by making interventions. Additionally, in considering the participants to speak at the HLPF, if the highest quality analysis of implementation of the SDGs in a particular area is conducted by civil society, academia, or a think tank, that organization's expert should be asked to speak on this issue. Other stakeholders should also be involved in the authorship of the GSDR.

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?<sup>11</sup>

**US Response:** The HLPF should include presentations by people and groups that are engaged in cutting edge work that contributes to SDG achievement. Some of these groups will be from civil society, academia, and/or think tanks and so, on the basis of their work, should be invited to speak at the HLPF. Part of the GSDR should look at the contribution from other stakeholders.

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

**US Response:** As with all other UN activity, the UN's built in oversight mechanisms (OIOS, the QCPR for funds and programs, etc.) should ensure that the UN's contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is effective.

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<sup>11</sup> Agenda 2030 states 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."

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

**US Response:** The most important thing the Secretariat can do to support the HLPF is to study the most effective methods of giving presentations. This is a science in itself, and the HLPF needs to take advantage of the latest innovations in this field. We simply cannot resort to the outdated panel discussion in which too many experts sit on a panel discussion in which they are given five minutes to address an incredibly complicated subject, and there is never sufficient time for Q&A. The Secretariat should learn from other platforms that use presentations to convey information, such as TED talks, WEF meetings, World Bank meetings, etc. The participants and audience at the HLPF need to be engaged and feel that the discussion was useful.

## **VI. Other views and ideas**

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