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

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 targets¹. 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 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

¹ [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/69/L.85&Lang=E]

defined in the 2030 Agenda². 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 policymakers³.

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 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 HLPF⁴.”

² Agenda 2030 para 74

³ 2030 Agenda, extracts of para 83

⁴2030 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 responsibili-

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, copied to zubcevic@un.org and powellj1@un.org) **no later than 15 November 2015**.

Joint EU+MS reply to the UN DESA questionnaire

as agreed at the WPIEI Global/CODEV/CONUN meeting on 12 November 2015

Questionnaire:

The EU and its Member States are determined to constructively take part in the development of the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. The responses to this questionnaire reflect the EU and its Member States' initial views at this stage which will be developed further, since it is crucial for all partners to listen to and build upon each other's ideas.

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?**

As per the 2030 Agenda outcome and the AAAA, the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly and the ECOSOC will have the central role in the network of follow-up and review processes, ensuring coherence and integration while having a political impulsion role.

It is important that their work fully reflect the integrated and universal nature of the 2030 Agenda. The underlying structural question is that of the division of labour and coordination between the General Assembly and the ECOSOC, including a clear distinction between the sessions of the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly and ECOSOC.

The HLPF when it meets every four years at the level of Heads of State and Government should provide political leadership and guidance, give political impetus, look at the big picture and the general vision on the implementation of the Agenda, take stock of global progress, consider new and emerging challenges, be result-oriented and impulse actions to move forward. They will be informed by both the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) and the annual SDG Progress Report.

The annual meetings of the HLPF under ECOSOC should build on both its thematic focus reflecting the three dimensions of sustainable development and on the national reviews promoting sharing of best practices and experiences - including successes, challenges and lessons learned - promote new and reinforce existing partnerships, while being enabled to fulfil its coordination and leadership role by promoting system-wide coherence. They will be informed by the annual SDG Progress Report.

It will be important to define the respective roles and tools of the General Assembly and ECOSOC, e.g. resolutions (including resolutions conferring mandates to UN system entities), debates, side events, but also potentially to work on the definition of

principles, guidelines and other "soft law" instruments. There are different options for dividing labour between them: the key is ensure that integration and the transformational aspects of the 2030 agenda are fully reflected, to avoid or eliminate duplication (where it exists) and be able to work more efficiently.

The agenda of the General Assembly (in particular the 2nd and 3rd Committees, but not excluding the role of other Committees and the GA plenary) should be rethought in light of the 2030 Agenda and better reflecting the integrated nature of the SDGs. The potential for working in a coherent manner without duplications should be explored. This would also call for a rethinking of working methods and agendas as called for Resolution 69/321. In this context, we suggest that the overarching objective should be to ensure impact (rationalisation of the forward agenda and working methods). Guiding criteria could include relevance (useful and coherent contribution to the implementation of 2030 Agenda, without duplicating or pre-empting efforts underway elsewhere), balance (broadly reflect the comprehensiveness and integration of the Agenda) and efficiency (division of labour based on comparative advantage and organisational effectiveness, eliminating duplication (e.g., stopping existing processes/approaches rather than adding existing ones) of the General Assembly Committees, but not excluding the work of its plenary.

The application of the principles listed above might involve, inter alia: rebranding the 2nd Committee in line with the 2030 Agenda (as already proposed in debate on its working methods), reorganising its agenda, reviewing and revising intra-Committee clustering avoiding a silos approach; reducing the number of resolutions, including by: consolidating duplicative resolutions at issue or item level, eliminating duplication between General Assembly and ECOSOC resolutions, assessing the frequency of resolutions; applying more selective criteria on proposals on proclamation of internal years and days and ensuring non-duplicative reporting on the 2030 Agenda.

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

There is a need for system-wide coherence and complementarity between the HLPF and other I meeting under ECOSOC auspices as well as the ECOSOC's subsidiary bodies; and the HLPF should draw on the overall ECOSOC system's work to the highest possible extent. Indeed, the ECOSOC has at its disposal a wide range of powerful tools/mandates which, if executed in an effective manner, can support an effective and coherent follow-up and review process. The ECOSOC system should be fully used to inform the political discussions taking place in the HLPF and remains the focal point for the UN development system (UNDS) notably for operational activities. Moreover, given that most of the new bodies and I created in the AAAA fall under the ECOSOC's remit, it should have a prominent role in the follow-up of Means of Implementation (MoIs) commitments.

In order to achieve this, several strands of work could be pursued:

- The ECOSOC may need to align its own agenda and programme of work with other UN bodies engaged in the process of the follow-up and review of the

2030 Agenda. Adjustments in its calendar of work might also be needed, so that it covers all goals.

- The ECOSOC would need to concentrate on its supervision mandates, providing clearer guidance and support to specialized agencies, funds and programmes, functional and regional commissions to help them better align with the overall theme of the Council's session and submit meaningful and tailored inputs, preferably on the basis of a common format. There is room for improvement in this respect. For instance the ECOSOC Coordination and Management segment could play a more effective coordinating role. It could also analyse the reports of the functional and regional commissions of ECOSOC, as well as the inputs coming from the Integration and Operational Activities for Development Segments, in order to provide a comprehensive, operational and integrated input to the HLPF meetings.
- The ECOSOC should continue to focus and provide guidance, on the operational aspects of the work of the UNDS, notably specialised agencies, programmes and funds. Its Operational Activities for Development segment has a key role to play in this context; its meetings could review how the UN development system supports the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and how policy integration can be effectively pursued across the UN development system. In this context, the ongoing discussion on the long-term positioning of the UN development system (which is a first step to the QCPR resolution) is particularly important, and its reflections should already provide input to the UNSG report.
- The ECOSOC Integration segment would need refocusing. Further clarity is needed if it is to fulfil its main task of consolidating inputs of Member States, the subsidiary bodies of the Council, the whole UN system, intergovernmental fora and other relevant stakeholders to promote balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. Bearing in mind the mandate from A/RES/68/1, the Integration segment might serve as the meeting first reviewing reports produced by the actors mentioned above, identifying the main issues while also providing a comprehensive and integrated vision. In this context, it would also be worth considering holding a thematic debate in this segment, which would support the thematic reviews at the substantive/high-level segment mandated by the 2030 Agenda.
- The role of the Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), which was mandated by the World Summit in 2005 (complemented by UNGA Resolution 61/16), should be re-evaluated, so that it is consistent with the creation of the HLPF and its role of ensuring the coherence and integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. The DCF can still be used to promote greater coherence among the activities of different development partners, as well as policy integration and review trends in international development cooperation. In this context we might want to (i) review the cycle of the DCF for its main meeting to take place before the HLPF high level meeting; (ii) consider whether the main meeting of the DCF could be integrated in the high level meeting of the HLPF.

- The Partnership Forum could serve as a platform for the follow-up and review of partnerships, including the contribution and knowledge-sharing of stakeholders. As stated in the Chair's summary of the 2015 HLPF the "HLPF could review the contribution of partnerships, sharing experiences and success conditions; and developing appropriate criteria or frameworks for partnerships".
 - The different segments of ECOSOC are well placed to play a major role in reviewing, analysing, aggregating, integrating, consolidating and summarising reports from the different entities in order to prepare and support discussions within the HLPF in an operational manner, enabling it to focus on overall reviewing, guidance and policy debate. The UN Secretariat could process and systematise reporting from different sources. This would not require additional resources or staff, but rather be a matter of reprioritisation and re-organisation of work: the EU has long advocated for the need to create one coherent, integrated secretariat in order to achieve efficiency and avoid duplication.
 - The possibility of using the four-yearly Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) as a coherence-enhancing tool could also be explored. The EU stands ready to contribute to the consultations on the scope, methodology and other aspects of the report (as well as its relation to the SDG Progress Report) which will be conducted by the ECOSOC Presidency. First views on these issues were provided back in 2014, in response to the UNSG's questionnaire.
- 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) landlocked developing countries (LLDCs)⁵?**

UN Conferences and Summits – including but not only those on LDCs, SIDS and LLDCs – have laid solid foundations for sustainable development and have helped to shape the 2030 Agenda. This is why it is important to ensure effective and efficient linkages with their follow-up and review arrangements (as per para 82), including their actions plans. These Conferences and Summits can provide tailored and operational outcomes to the HLPF, including on the progress made on achieving SGDS, highlighting existing gaps and specific challenges. These can also inform the GSDR and the SDG progress report. We should make sure that all processes use the same indicators to monitor progress.

As LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS face special challenges, debates at/around the HLPF could include considerations on the sustainable development challenges faced by these country groups, including on means of implementation. There could also be dedicated meetings/side events addressing their specific challenges and the tailored outcomes prior to the main HLPF meetings, as envisaged with the annual multi-stakeholder SIDS partnership dialogue.

The HLPF should also be informed by thematic conferences and processes.

⁵ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 82

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?

The ECOSOC, not the General Assembly should give broad guidance to ECOSOC functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums on how they should best reflect their contribution to the review of SDGs in their work programmes. However, the General Assembly still has a crucial role in shaping the architecture of the overall integrated review and should ensure that the HLPF is clearly mandated to fulfil the central role in overseeing follow-up and review covering the full thematic breadth of the SDGs. Hence, the President of the General Assembly and the President of ECOSOC should work closely together in weeks ahead providing guidance that will ensure a successful HLPF meeting in 2016 and put in place an effective yearly cycle for years ahead.

ECOSOC has strong and broad mandates to coordinate and provide for synergies in the work of its functional and regional commissions, other inter-governmental bodies and forums. However, the current organization of work and cycle of the ECOSOC requires a review in order to adjust it to its role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and ensure synchronization with the agendas of ECOSOC's functional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies. In view of efficiency, functional commissions should adjust their cycles and timing of reporting in order to avoid a duplication of reports at country level, to the different ECOSOC system entities. As far as possible, a common format for reporting should be encouraged (see Q7).

The final follow-up and review framework will also de facto guide the General Assembly and ECOSOC – e.g. balance between thematic (to which functional and regional commissions and specialised agencies, programmes and funds should make the key contributions), regional and national reviews.

Non-UN entities, such as the OECD and IOM, should contribute as appropriate to the follow-up and review processes at the global level.

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?

The Addis Ababa Action Accord (AAAA) is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda (see para 40). Hence, as expressed by para 86, the Addis follow-up should be fully integrated with the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda.

- The outcome of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development (FfD) should be transmitted to the HLPF, as provided for by AAAA para 132. It should cover the full Means of Implementation component of the 2030 Agenda. It could also make the current ECOSOC financing for development resolution redundant.
- The HLPF should remain the central forum in charge of monitoring progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which (not least through SDG 17)

explicitly includes the AAAA. It should take up possible recommendations emanating from the FfD Forum and the multi-stakeholder forum on STI and lend them political support.

- Parallel or duplicative reporting processes and indicators must be avoided. The implementation of the AAAA should be monitored fully using the indicators defined the context of the 2030 Agenda.

As for the Financing for Development Task Force, substantial provisions and structural clarifications on its mandate and possible outcomes are required. It should also play a role in supporting the overall follow-up and review process of the 2030 Agenda in order to ensure coherence and reflect the integrated nature of the Agenda. Further- more clarification of the role of the ECOSOC DCF and the Busan Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) are needed. Current reporting of the UN (Human Development report e.g.) and the World Bank (member of the Task Force) as well as other Bretton Woods Institutions will have to be integrated into the overall reporting framework.

- All this requires close cooperation, complementarity and work between and within the respective Secretariats.
- Many more questions still exist around e.g. format of FfD Forum, the format of the inter-governmentally agreed conclusions, the format of the multi-stakeholder forum on Science, Technology and Innovation and the input from the ECOSOC functional commission on Science and Technology for Development in order to avoid duplication. These should be covered by the UNSG in his report.

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 ECOSOC⁶ and “other intergovernmental bodies and forums”⁷. 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”⁸. 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”⁹. 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.¹⁰]

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

⁷ Examples would include the World Health Assembly, International Labour Conference etc.

⁸ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, para 85

⁹ General Assembly resolution 67/290, op 7c

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

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?

Together with the overall review of progress and challenges (informed in particular by the annual SDG Progress Report, as well as the four-yearly GSDR) and the voluntary state-led reviews, the thematic reviews should allow for a discussion on all aspects of the 2030 Agenda, including means of implementation.

We should avoid pre-emptively deciding on a mechanism which would lock in the thematic cycle for the timeframe of the Agenda: this is why we would not consider option (iii) favourably.

We also need to take other important factors into consideration. For example we need to consider how the thematic reviews can best fit in and build on the overall follow-up and review architecture to ensure synergies and avoid duplications. We would also need to keep sufficient margin of flexibility to be able to consider priority as well as emerging issues, ensuring the framework remains ambitious and relevant.

A number of principles and ideas should guide our reflection:

- In line with resolution 67/290, the thematic focus should reflect the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced way. Considering that the UN Secretary General's report "Lessons learned from the Commission on Sustainable Development" (A/67/757) criticised the lack of integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions in the work of the Commission, themes should be integrated, and allow for inclusion of representatives from different policy areas at the same time.
- It will be crucial to ensure that proper and regular attention is given to each goal throughout the review process, in order to ensure that all commitments are implemented.
- Given the cross-cutting nature of SDG 17 and the Means of Implementation (MoI) of the SDGs, the outcome of the annual Financing for Development Forum should feed yearly in the HLPF; Likewise human rights, governance and gender should be considered every year.
- Thematic reviews should reflect the principles for reviews set out in para 74 of the Agenda 2030.
- It would be preferable to plan ahead in order to be able to prepare sessions well and avoid yearly negotiations on the upcoming theme. At the same time, we should retain some flexibility to help ensure the continuous relevance of the Agenda and maintain high-level interest and attendance.

After consideration of these principles and ideas, both options (i) and (ii) – or possibly a combination of these – have merits, yet need further reflection. We would welcome further guidance from the UNSG in his Report on how these options could be operationalised to ensure the principles above are reflected, and are open to further discussion with partners.

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?

This question is closely linked to the discussion on the institutional set-up (Section I).

The starting point always needs to be the existing mechanisms and reporting lines. There is no need to create additional reporting structures. Where negotiated outcomes or summaries of discussion are usually produced by these bodies and forums they can be submitted, in a concise and operational format, by the chair of the respective bodies to the President of ECOSOC and referred to by HLPF as needed. There should not be any strict requirement for negotiated outcomes – these may be resorted to as needed.

A key consideration will be to ensure that the information received by the HLPF remains manageable. The HLPF must not be overloaded with unnecessary information. As proposed in our response to question 2, providing integrated and operational summaries reports, based on robust evidence analysis, is an avenue to be explored. The different ECOSOC segments should have a fundamental role in providing the necessary compilation of integrated summaries of the different reports.

There would be merit in setting out general guidelines/orientations for the content of these summaries. For example, some common criteria could be defined, such as a maximum number of pages and the necessity to provide a short and limited list of key lessons and recommendations to inform political decisions. Other main points could include: progress with regard to the Agenda-related topic the body/organization is responsible for; identified challenges; new and emerging issues (if pertinent). These general guidelines would leave sufficient room for flexibility to relay main messages and recommendations as appropriate, while following a basic common format for reporting.

As already stressed in the reply to Question 5, the outcome of the ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum should feed into the HLPF, and will constitute an indispensable input to be taken into account.

Process-wise, we would suggest that those commissions, bodies etc. would present succinctly their findings or contributions to the HLPF in those years in which the annual theme is particularly closely linked to their work, possibly in a dedicated session that would allow for a constructive and substantial discussion. This could of course also be applied to the UN specialized agencies Funds and Programmes, although they are not directly touched by this question as they have their specific reporting schemes. But they should also be accountable. A summary of the reports by various UN bodies could be compiled into a UN System report to facilitate the work of the HLPF.

The commissions and bodies could also feed their expertise and data into the GSDR, keeping in mind the GSDR is of a different nature than an institutional or intergovernmental report.

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?

This question is very closely linked to question 6 (the thematic reviews of the HLPF). As pointed out in our reply to that question, the thematic element should be one of several elements addressed by the HLPF (along with, inter alia, the global assessment of progress and challenges based on indicators; state-led reviews; means of implementation; contributions by other stakeholders...).

When the annual HLPF is convened under the auspices of the ECOSOC, the overarching annual theme of the ECOSOC and the HLPF should be the same, or closely related. There could be an indicative list of themes that should not however limit the options available. The theme of the FfD Forum should be closely related. In addition, the overarching theme of the HLPF should correspond to the focus of the thematic review of progress on the SDGs, in order to achieve as much coherence as possible on interlinked issues. With these considerations in mind, the President of the ECOSOC will play a prominent role in establishing the annual theme. Ministers could adopt a common declaration to sustain progress and to secure further action in those specific fields.

For the HLPF session under the auspices of the GA every four years, a different logic should be applied. The HLPF under GA should not have a theme but rather focus on reviews of progress at a more global, strategic and political level, including emerging global/pressing issues that are more appropriate to be discussed by Head of States and Governments. The Hos and HoG would be in a position to give political impetus for the next cycle.

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?

The choice of the HLPF/ECOSOC themes should be done well advance in order to provide enough time for the different concerned bodies and entities to consider them when planning and preparing their work. This might also make it easier for countries with fewer capacities to plan ahead, and would also facilitate a broader involvement of stakeholders in national and regional review processes and to prepare underlying assessments.

Therefore some forward-looking planning will be needed, possibly in the form of a programme of ECOSOC/HLPF themes, perhaps 2 to 4 years in advance.

As also stated in questions 1 and 8, it will be important to make a clear distinction with the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly, which should review the global progress towards achievement of all SDGs and consider pressing and emerging issues which require urgent attention at the level of Heads of States and Governments.

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

Since the missions of the TFM are not clearly determined yet, this question could be clarified later on. However, it would be reasonable to ensure coherence and align the two processes as far as possible, considering that the outcome of the multi-stakeholder forum on Science, Technology and Innovation is expected to input to the HLPF.

Indeed, it would be useful for the various bodies and forums contributing to the HLPF to strive to, where relevant, address the yearly theme of the HLPF. On the other hand, sufficient room must be left for them to set their own priorities. For instance, sufficient flexibility should be granted to the TFM in order to benefit from a real bottom-up approach, especially from the academic, private and public business sectors.

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

The UN Statistical Commission will first need to endorse, during its 47th session in March 2016, the initial SDGs global indicators framework currently being developed by the IAEG-SDGs. This initial framework should be seen as a “work in progress”: as knowledge evolves during the life-span of the Agenda, further refinements to the global indicators framework may be needed to ensure that it remains up-to-date and relevant, and adequately reflects the inter-linkages among targets.

The UN Statistical Commission can best contribute to the HLPF by providing, in a timely and concise way, inputs to the annual SDGs progress report on the monitoring of indicators per target and goal. Specifically the UN Statistical Commission has a role to play in reporting on issues such as the establishment of baselines; highlighting data gaps; the future development, update and improvement of adequate global indicators; the use and development of relevant conceptual frameworks and methodologies for data; appropriate reporting and dissemination tools; and to support the central role of the national statistical offices in their coordination function for data collection. The UNSC could also serve as a forum to share experience of capacity building activities in developing countries.

The UN Statistical Commission should be responsible for assessing the quality of the indicators and should include the further development of the indicators into its work programme. The UN Statistical Commission therefore should also keep the HLPF informed about the existence of bottlenecks or other obstacles to the development of indicators, baselines and to the collection of data. It could also play a role in identifying and sharing good practice with regards to national reporting, especially data disaggregation and the use of innovative methods to fill data gaps. Country level

data should be made accessible online, building on the existing practice with MDG data (<http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Data.aspx>).

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

In order to avoid duplication of efforts and additional costs, the HLPF should build on already existing mechanisms. New and emerging issues should be highlighted by the functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums in their concise and operational inputs to the HLPF.

Meetings at regional level could also contribute identifying new and emerging regional issues with a global impact, keeping in mind that these issues may vary across regions. They should also give consideration to ensuring the existing framework remains sufficiently ambitious and relevant.

Moreover, new and emerging issues should be identified, including but not exclusively, in the four-yearly Global Sustainable Development Report, which would draw on a wide range of independent and credible evidence and assessments.

One possibility could be to have the ECOSOC President decide – after inclusive consultations - on emerging issues to be dealt with at the annual HLPF session. The PGA could decide in a similar manner for the HLPF at the level of Heads of State and Government.

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?

The inclusiveness of the follow-up and review presents an opportunity to provide a platform for partnerships, through the engagement of diverse stakeholders around the actions required to implement the 2030 Agenda.

The HLPF should draw on the many sources of evidence and analysis available. Several platforms and processes run by other international or regional organisations outside the UN system are already addressing the implementation of 2030 Agenda. Those organisations should be allowed to participate at main meetings and present their inputs when relevant, while their reports/outcomes could be considered when drafting thematic reviews, summary and synthesis reports by the UN secretariat. In particular the identification of potential emerging issues, for example by academic institutions, could be presented to the HLPF. These other organisations could also be encouraged to align their discussions with the annual ECOSOC/HLPF theme.

In particular the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) can play an important role in supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda as it offers useful methodologies, including country-led multi-stakeholder dialogue, data gathering and monitoring. The principles of effective development cooperation

(country ownership, focus on results, inclusive partnerships, transparency and accountability) will be critical in achieving sustainable development for all. Evidence and experience with aid and development effectiveness commitments are identified through the GPEDC focus on results, inclusive partnerships, transparency and accountability) will be critical in achieving sustainable development for all should be made available to the follow-up and review processes for the AAAA and the 2030 Agenda.

Major Groups should be invited to submit analyses on progress, gaps and also own contributions towards achieving the SDGs. Major groups and other stakeholders should be able to participate actively throughout the meeting, in line with resolution 67/290. Civil society has a key role to play in the “open, inclusive, participatory and transparent” system we have committed to (para 74). It will also be important to ensure that the views of the poor and vulnerable people are heard.

The design of the ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum also ensures contributions of non-state actors (see §132 AAAA).

We consider it important that adequate consideration be given to social partners, the private and public business sector and its contribution, possibly by using, when relevant, analysis of corporate sustainability reporting by sector, region and/or country. Reports by the ILO and the UN Global Compact can be instrumental in preparing such analysis. The outcomes of the Forum on Business and Human Rights should also be taken into account.

For these various stakeholders too, a common format for reporting (see Q7) could be envisaged, as far as possible. Possibly, these could be brought together in a single report compiling stakeholder input (with lengths restrictions), to be discussed at the HLPF.

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?

It is important to clarify the different reporting requirements. Firstly, all countries should be encouraged to report regularly to national stakeholders on progress in implementation. Experience - including from Europe - has shown that preparing for and undertaking reviews and assessments is necessary to ensure accountability to citizens.

Secondly, countries are also encouraged to submit information every year on the SDG indicators, in order to prepare the annual SDG report.

Thirdly, we believe that all countries should strive to participate in the voluntary, national review process at the global level to present their implementation efforts,

possibly twice by 2030. This would entail submitting their written national report ahead of the HLPF session and presenting this report at that session for discussion among UN Member States and other stakeholders. For this reason, countries are encouraged to produce these reports as far as possible in a common format, informed by specific guidance from the HLPF, to ensure consistency. It is important to strike a balance between regularly reviewing implementation, and ensuring that countries are not overburdened with reporting requirements, and that the HLPF sessions are streamlined. The summaries of national reviews could be used to inform the QCPR discussions every 4 years.

Peer reviews at regional levels could also be encouraged as an effective means of sharing learning and best practices. Ideally, one or more country from each regional group would volunteer to present the results of this exchange during the HLPF, together with its plans for enhancing progress based on feedback and recommendations.

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?

Reports for the voluntary national reviews at HLPF should be produced through an open and inclusive process and, as far as possible, in a common format to ensure consistency and should be made publicly available in order to allow for transparency and accountability. These reports should be submitted to the HLPF sufficiently far in advance of the session for other participants to read and prepare questions. In addition to the UNSG guidelines on national reporting, the HLPF should provide beforehand guidelines to countries on the structure of their presentation.

Attention should also be given to facilitating commitment and capacity-building support for regular reporting and to set up such framework/systems for follow-up and review including on statistics. For this, support from the UN system and other multilateral institutions, besides any other bilateral cooperation mechanisms (para 76) might be envisaged. UN agencies, programmes and funds (APFs) can play a main role in this context, with UNDP building on their successful experience on helping developing countries to design their policies and to prepare their MDGs reports. The preparation of the review process by the countries could also be supported by intergovernmental organisations operating nationally.

As already indicated in Section I, the HLPF should not operate in a vacuum, but rather should make full use, in a rational way, of existing information and processes tracking relevant commitments at global level including UN functional commissions and agencies, funds and programmes as well as other international institutions and organisations such as the World Bank, IMF and IOM, and agreements such as Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements and academia. It should also draw on reports which enable the HLPF to identify new and emerging issues.

Global progress should be assessed on the basis of the harmonised global SDG indicators covering the whole agenda (including means of implementation), complemented by thematic global monitoring looking at specific aspects, information from regional reviews and national reports and existing relevant reports from UN agencies and other relevant institutions or bodies, as well as reports from civil society.

It will also be essential for the HLPF to consider progress against the 2030 Agenda in all social and economic groups, and identify those issues on which progress is off track, as reflected by the global aggregated set of indicators and the associated baselines and targets. In this way no one will be left behind.

Consideration should be given to reporting of financial MoI including domestic resource mobilisation through existing channels (DCF under ECOSOC, OECD-DAC, GPEDC and others) and how financial flows not covered by these could be accounted for. Non-financial MoI remain crucial and further consideration should be given to the ways to monitor these. This reporting should take place in the context of the FfD Forum, that would then transmit its conclusions to the HLPF.

As reflected in the question, a key purpose of the global review is to provide political and leadership focus to motivate and incentivize further action at all levels. The agenda should therefore be focused, dynamic and action-oriented in order to be attractive both for Heads of State/Government and ministerial participation. Therefore, it should be considered as a positive process leading to political decisions and commitments to move forward. The annual thematic themes also provide the political leaders with the possibility to showcase national examples.

In addition, the HLPF support structure should prepare a Stakeholder Report, including but not limited to input from Major Groups.

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?

The HLPF should address progress against all commitments in an integrated and balanced way, addressing interlinkages between goals and targets. The global review is also a useful forum for identifying off-track targets, and collectively addressing shared challenges.

In order for the HLPF to systematically address the above, the reporting guidelines for voluntary state-led reviews could advocate a common format which is guided by the principles agreed in para 74 of the 2030 Agenda. The guidelines could propose a maximum number of pages in order to keep reports concise.

The national reports on which the reviews are based should contain information on implementation activities at national level – possibly based on national sustainable development strategies or other policies, and assessing the national whole of government approach. The reports could analyse implementation experiences, highlight challenges, lessons learned, and successes and best practices, including in promoting system-wide coherence and coordination. They can also include follow up to recommendations provided in previous reviews.

National implementation reviews should, where possible, draw on existing information bearing in mind reporting costs. National reviews could provide also information on implementation by and partnerships made with the private sector, with UN and non-UN and international organisations and other actors' activities supporting implementation efforts in country.

Contributions from the civil society are fundamental at all levels. The HLPF therefore should address transparency and the effective participation and contribution by the civil society, including through successful examples of partnership. It should furthermore consider if a gender equality and human rights perspective has been systematically applied in the national reporting.

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?

Accountability for progress needs to be pursued first and foremost at national level. Therefore national ownership of the reporting process is fundamental, and guidelines should allow sufficient flexibility to allow for this. However, experience in Europe shows that giving countries concrete guidelines and frameworks helps to ensure that information is useful and comparable.

The guidelines for voluntary national reviews at HLPF should encourage countries to analyse progress, challenges and lessons learned, and identify questions to be discussed and problems to be addressed by the international community as a whole

We believe it is important for all countries to ensure inclusive and participatory systems for accountability are in place at national level to report on progress on all aspects of the 2030 Agenda with broad, multi-stakeholder participation. National parliaments, national and local governments, civil society, science and academia, as well as trade unions, business actors should play central roles in this context and so do national supreme audit institutions and other independent oversight institutions. The Guidelines may therefore promote the inclusion of these stakeholders in national implementation reporting.

Reports for national implementation reviews should cover all goals and targets as well as all MoI (2030 Agenda/AAAA) in an integrated manner with a particular

focus on the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Additional themes may increase the reporting burden on countries and it is unclear what these may add. However countries should not be prevented from highlighting key issues, successes or challenges.

Presentation of national reviews to the HLPF:

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

See responses to Q14, Q15 and Q17.

As stated earlier, the national reports on which voluntary national reviews are based should be made publicly available (online, and in various languages) in good time to allow other participants at the HLPF to prepare questions for discussion. The session could begin with a presentation by the Secretary General of his annual SDG progress report with a focus on the annual theme when the HLPF holds its session in the context of ECOSOC. This presentation could lead to an interactive dialogue between all the countries. Countries would afterwards take the floor one by one to present their reviews during a limited amount of time – giving highlights in a dynamic format to allow time dedicated to debate at the end of each national review. Time should also be allocated to ensure stakeholders’ intervention. The aim of the discussion should be presentation of successes and challenges, constructive dialogue and peer learning. There could also be discussion on follow up to recommendations and effectiveness of measures taken to address off-track issues.

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

See responses to Q17 and Q22.

National implementation could be through sustainable development strategies or other relevant frameworks, which set out the national level of ambition and the measures that will be taken to achieve these. Reporting against these approaches would then ensure adequate attention to means of implementation, Reports on implementation of other commitments, such as those for Multilateral Environmental Agreements, could also be drawn on. Consideration could be given to developing a coherent set of indicators at national level for all MOI (bringing together the commitments made in the AAAA and the Agenda) and in particular non-financial MOI.

The country reports should identify successful MOI and assess why they were successful, and also point out where MoI are missing or inadequate, including political measures to create enabling environments. Discussions in the HLPF should include national MoI, including ideas for tailored support and partnerships.

Furthermore, to ensure a coherent follow-up and review process, it is important that national reporting on the MoIs will also be delivered to the ECOSOC forum

on FfD follow-up for its annual meeting. Reporting on MoIs can be seen as an opportunity for countries to highlight their challenges in making progress towards the agenda. It can also be used to promote new instruments/concepts/ideas on the global level in order to build new partnerships and identify other countries to join those initiatives.

The inclusion of a wide range of actors in the process of national reviews (see Q 17) will provide a platform for the mobilization and strengthening of partnerships.

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?

The HLPF national reviews are voluntary and should be seen by countries as an opportunity to present progress and seek ways of overcoming challenges. The reviews should be positive and constructive, based upon progress made by the countries. Best practises, methods and tools should be identified and shared.

The outcomes should incentivize focused action and mobilize all the actors. The reviews are intended to share knowledge and allow countries to learn from each other. The HLPF meeting under ECOSOC should identify on-track and off-track themes and the high level segment should propose recommendations to be taken up (at each level) for overcoming collective challenges and enhancing progress. We suggest a summary of discussions at the HLPF is made available, including identification of best practices and lessons learned, and containing recommendations to country governments and also to stakeholders, the UN System and multilateral development banks on how to enhance progress. Web tools and new technologies should also be mobilized to keep a track on the progress made towards the SDGs. Countries should be encouraged to address these recommendations in future reports.

Monitoring and review should not be seen as a singular reporting obligation, but as an inclusive cycle of planning, evaluating, learning, planning etc, in order for governments and other stakeholders to identify opportunities and tackle obstacles together in order to achieve the SDGs.

IV. Regional reviews and processes

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

The HLPF will need to make best use of the regional preparatory processes and existing international review processes, with a view to avoiding duplication and additional costs. The UN regional economic commissions (RECs) could play a coordinating role, and also provide technical assistance, in close collaboration with other regional organisations and processes. Stronger links should also be established with the OECD and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation. Complementarity with the integration segment of ECOSOC and utilisation of the guidance of ECOSOC's functional commissions will be important.

The regional level could provide particularly useful opportunities for peer review and learning, exchange of best practices, as well as contributing to global monitoring and review. The results of this peer learning could be made available at global level so more countries can benefit from it. We could build on existing experiences that have been effective and successful, such as the African Peer Review Mechanism under NEPAD and peer reviews within OECD, whilst recognising that there is no "one size fits all" approach. It will also be important to foster transparency and cross-regional learning. This process should not duplicate any reviews at global level, but instead could help streamline the process at global level.

Reviews at the regional level could also help to track progress on trans-boundary issues and regionally shared targets. Information on implementation and progress from Regional Convention Secretariats and other Regional organisations could also support reviews at global level.

The UN RECs could also provide harmonised reporting guidelines to support regional reviews, and technical assistance at regional level for the statistical needs arising from the follow-up and review framework. Their mandates and capacities should be mobilised to synthesise national inputs, regional trends and challenges in an operational way for assessment at the global level. It will be crucial to build at regional level on existing processes to avoid proliferation of monitoring frameworks and to minimise any potential need for additional resources. The HLPF should discuss main headline messages and lessons learned from each region, as well as the harmonization of reporting formats and feedback the results to the regional and national levels. This could be either in a dedicated session or integrated across discussions.

The EU has considerable expertise and existing monitoring systems in place which could contribute to follow-up and reviews at the regional level, taking into account that of the UNECE.

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)?

As this new agenda will be based on a multi-stakeholder approach it will be essential to assess the contribution of all actors, including the private sector, socially responsible enterprises and investors, trade unions, public-private partnerships, strategic investment funds, philanthropic organisations and foundations, civil society and academia, human rights organisations at all levels and to present these assessments within the HLPF meeting at ECOSOC level.

The UNSG Synthesis Report proposed a role for HLPF in knowledge sharing, through providing a forum for participatory, multi-stakeholder, and universal review. In accordance with RES/67/290 (par 14-17), the work of the HLPF is open to all UN MS, as well as to major groups, NGOs, other relevant stakeholders and regional organisations. Indeed, partnership and inclusiveness have been key elements during the negotiations of the Addis-Ababa Action Plan as well as the 2030 Agenda of sustainable development. Partnership is one of the 5 “Ps” in the preamble and also a cardinal principle of the Agenda. Major Groups should therefore have access to all documents and should be able to listen to and comment on all discussions, according to the provisions of GA resolution 67/290.

National reports along with reports at all levels should take into account the views of non-state stakeholders, including the civil society, private sector, academia and media and should be publicly available to ensure the full transparency of the review-process and broad public engagement in the 2030 process. National stakeholders should be invited to submit evidence and concise and operational reports within the formal review process. Subnational and local authorities and their associations are important channels for the views and opinions of their members on local and national progress against the SDGs.

Discussions by the HLPF may be facilitated if thematic and country reviews, including national stakeholder reports are published ahead of the meeting, so that other participating stakeholders have time to prepare.

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?¹¹

It will be essential to assess the contribution of all stakeholders including NGOs, local authorities, civil society and academia, the private sector, including socially responsible enterprises and investors and public-private partnerships to the implementation of the agenda at all levels. This assessment will be facilitated by the uptake of voluntary corporate sustainability reporting which should be usefully supported and guided by the national policy framework and national systems for accountability. At the global level, this could include tracking progress in the uptake of standards and certification schemes, as well as corporate reporting processes. To ensure an effective contribution of the private sector, the UN Global Compact could prepare assessments in line with existing standards for discussion together with relevant stakeholders at the HLPF sessions under ECOSOC, within an adequate period of time, in line with the modalities of Resolution 67/290.

Foundations, philanthropic organisations (which operate internationally) and other social enterprises may also be encouraged to present, as appropriate, their

¹¹ 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.”

contributions and assessment of progress by theme and by region. Such assessment could be presented and discussed within the HLPF meeting at ECOSOC level.

The ECOSOC Partnership Forum can provide a relevant contribution in the involvement of the private sector, foundations and philanthropic organisations, possibly by discussing partnership during its annual session, and feeding in a synthesis of this discussion to HLPF. Thematically, multi-stakeholder partnerships around SDGs could be invited to report, e.g. GFF on Health, GAIN on food and nutrition.

The 2030 Agenda also provides for a “platform for partnerships” as part of the follow-up and review mechanism (para 84). A ‘Platform for Partnership Reviews’ could be included as a session during the HLPF. In it, different stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, as well as the UN should be encouraged to share their contribution to the implementation at various levels.

The AAAA also highlights the financing role of the private sector for development. Alignment of private sector investments with public goals, environmental, social and governance factors should be included into company reporting. A strong participation of the private sector in the AAAA follow-up processes would foster transparency.

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

All UN system entities should be asked to include in their existing reporting an assessment of their respective contributions to the implementation of the agenda building on their respective comparative advantages. On this basis the UNSG should prepare a UN system-wide assessment of progress in implementation by the UN system as well as gaps and challenges. In this work the UNSG should make full use of the inter-agency task force as called for in the AAAA (para 133). The UN System Reports should be based on existing reporting obligations and include proposals to streamline existing formats and structures to avoid overlaps and duplications. UN system reports should go beyond single agency contributions towards the achievement of SDGs and include information on arrangements needed for the provision of global commons. This assessment could be presented on the Platform for Partnership Reviews proposed in Question 23.

Ongoing work to make the UN system more fit for purpose at headquarters as well as at country level is important for achieving the agenda. Making the UN fit for purpose will require a reinforced and well-coordinated UNDS that delivers effective and coherent development results. In this context, we need to look at the mandates and functions of UN entities to reduce overlaps, and strengthen coordination, and thereby further strengthening the value proposition of the UN Development System. All efforts toward this objective should therefore be reviewed and encouraged (reinforcement of the Chief Executive Board for instance). The “fit for purpose” exercise should also reflect the link to humanitarian work as well as human rights and peacebuilding.

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

(See responses in Section I)

The HLPF needs an effective support structure and preparatory process in order to conduct its work effectively and efficiently. As indicated in our reply to question 2 the UN system can play a key role in consolidating the various inputs, when consistent and operational, in order to prepare and support the work of the HLPF. The UN support structure could be used to process and systematize reporting from different sources. It could also gather and review relevant scientific reports to ensure HLPF is presented with independent reviews and policy-relevant assessments.

The UN Secretariat would need to consider the way it organises itself to effectively and efficiently support the global Follow-up and Review. We would invite the UN SG to take this up and include a bold assessment of the current set-up in the upcoming report for follow-up and review.

We suggest the Secretariat evaluates and updates reporting guidelines on a regular basis.

Due to the integration of the Financing for Development process and the means of implementation of the Agenda 2030 the follow-up and review of the Financing for Development outcomes and the Agenda 2030 should be considered as a whole. Hence, the conclusions of the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development will feed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 agenda in the HLPF. Therefore it is important that UN DESA and ECOSOC Secretariat jointly work together to ensure coherence between the 2030 Agenda and the AAAA.

VI. Other views and ideas

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

Institutional and budgetary Issues for global reviews

We are keen to make sure that the implications of the Agenda 2030 and the AAAA for the regular budget of the UN are thoroughly assessed and approached holistically.

Implementation will first and foremost take place at country level - the regular budget of the UN should not be the main vehicle for implementing the agenda. It is essential that the UN delivers as one at country and HQ levels. Each UN body should play to their institutional strengths, in a rationalized and efficient way, and consider new partnerships.

The main effort within every entity and across the system should be one of reprioritization and redeployment based on comparative advantages, avoiding

duplication and stepping up system-wide coherence and partnerships. In some specific cases, where resources might be required, these should be met from efficiency savings elsewhere.

Linkages with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda

We would have expected better coverage of the FfD angle in this questionnaire.

We should bear in mind that the AAAA (along with the SDGs) sets-out the means of implementation for the whole 2030 Agenda. This means that the follow-up of the two agendas cannot be separated, and the need for policy coherence between the two processes will require more than just this institutional linkage between the ECOSOC Financing for Development Forum and the HLPF. Conceptually, we need to view the AAAA as an integral part of the 2030 agenda. The bringing together of the 'means and ends' in this way is part of the transformational aspect of these Agenda, and must be supported through a well-integrated implementation and review mechanism.

Gender mainstreaming

The preamble states that the 17 goals and the 169 targets seek to realize the human rights of all and to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. Para 74 states that follow-up and review processes at all levels will be guided by principle 74.e, which includes gender-sensitive follow-up and review. In order to monitor this ambition, Member States should be encouraged to report on gender mainstreaming- efforts, best practices and challenges.

Policy Coherence for Sustainable Development

Policy coherence for sustainable development and a “whole of Government approach” is essential in delivering on the 2030 Agenda. Domestic policies in all policy areas are increasingly likely to have a global reach and influence. Governments need to enhance their capacities to exploit synergies across different policy areas in order to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Institutional mechanisms and processes should be put into place to produce coherent policies for global sustainable development.

Communication

A communication strategy should be planned and launched to communicate the content of the 2030 Agenda in national parliaments and Civil Society Organisations (academia and non-governmental organisations and the general public etc) in order to raise awareness on the importance of implementing the 2030 Agenda at national level.

Accountability

We want to recall the important principle of accountability to our citizens the Agenda refers to in its para 48, and which should also be reflected as guiding principle and objective for follow-up and review in the report to be prepared by the UNSG.

Reports

Further clarification on the distinction between the annual SDG report (based on the global set of indicators) and the four-yearly GSDR would be welcome. We believe the Global Sustainable Development Report shall strengthen the science-policy interface by providing an integrated assessment of sustainability globally and identifying risks and emerging issues. Without duplicating (but rather drawing on) existing assessments, it should provide a strong evidence-based, policy relevant and action-focused instrument to support policymakers in promoting poverty eradication and sustainable development. The GSDR could also serve as a tool for communicating progress against the 2030 Agenda to the wider public, thereby contributing to the public diplomacy role of the HLPF. Beyond the GSDR, the HLPF should draw on as many sources of evidence and analysis as required.

Outcomes of the HLPF

- Further distinction between the operations and outcomes of the HLPF in ECOSOC and GA years would be welcomed.
- Further specification on the outcome of the HLPF would be welcomed, including how recommendations and Ministerial Declarations will be followed up.

Functioning of the HLPF

- Further proposals would also be welcomed on how the HLPF can engage with other parts of the UN system on an ongoing basis, not just through the annual reviews, including how HLPF recommendations will be taken up by the UN system.
- The duration of each session should also be determined.
- The differences between the technical and ministerial segments should be clarified.
- Integration between the secretariat of UN DESA and ECOSOC should be considered.

Finally, it should be noted that monitoring and review are means, not ends in themselves. These processes should be used to inform policy decisions and point to action in specific areas. Translation of the SDGs themselves and of the outcomes of reviews to the national level should be seen in this regard. Data should provide a baseline, inspire plans, monitor the results, and adjust plans if needed. Monitoring should focus on learning from each other and to be accountable. It should not be used to ‘grade’ countries.