



Summary of the briefing on the “Post 2015 UN Development Framework”

4 April 2012, 11a.m.-1p.m. – ECOSOC Chamber – New York, UN Headquarters

INFORMAL SUMMARY

Opening session

Chair H.E. Mr. Miloš Koterec, President of the ECOSOC

Briefing

Presenters Mr. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General, DESA
Mr. Selim Jahan, Director, UNDP Poverty Group

Panellists Frances Stewart, Chair of the Committee for Development Policy
Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, member of the Committee for Development Policy

The Under-Secretary-General provided an overview of key messages and questions emerging from discussions on the post-2015 development agenda to date. He stated that, while the Millennium Declaration and MDG framework should serve as the starting point, new challenges such as sustainable development, continuing conflicts, human rights, rising inequality and demographic pressures would also have to be considered. Decisions taken at Rio+20 would significantly impact the shaping of the agenda. The need to avoid overloading the agenda and to achieve balance between global agenda setting and national target setting was highlighted. It was stressed that ECOSOC and its subsidiary machinery, as the custodian of the United Nations follow-up work on the MDGs and the internationally agreed development goals, would play a key role in defining a post-2015 UN development agenda. The role of the UN System Task Team in supporting the Member State-led consultation process, by providing analytical inputs, expertise and outreach, was also reiterated.

The Director of the UNDP Poverty Group followed with an elaboration of the analytical work undertaken by the UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda. He spoke about emerging issues, and the mapping process within and outside the UN system. He also described the different work streams complementing the work of the Task Team, such as global thematic consultations and national consultations being organized through the United Nations Development Group. Global themes would include inequalities, health, education, growth and employment, population dynamics, governance, conflict and fragility, environmental sustainability, and food security and nutrition. National consultations would be supported in 50 countries, encouraging the shaping of the global agenda based on both national realities and priorities for the “future we want”. It was noted that the Task Team would submit an initial report to the Secretary-General by end May. This would in turn inform the work of the high-level panel that the Secretary-General intended to appoint to advise him on the post-2015 agenda, after the conclusion of the Rio+20 Conference.

Initial reflections concerning the framework and overall process were provided via video link by the Chair and Member of the Committee for Development Policy. The CDP Members stressed the need for the goals and expectations of the Post-2015 agenda to be universal. They emphasized the effect of global challenges such as sustainability and climate change on inequality and youth unemployment. The need for the Post-2015 agenda to be concrete and concise was highlighted, and they noted that some of the previous MDGs were “too narrow” and need to be re-examined. National goals should be determined nationally, in line with global principles and goals. Macroeconomic, political (democratic rights and participation) and social policies, as well as a supportive international environment (internally driven development, technology transfer, aid and labour mobility) and stronger global governance (regulation of trade and finance) would all contribute to providing an enabling environment to support the new goals.

Following this was an interactive discussion with Member States and other participants. The event was then adjourned after the President’s closing address, in which he announced that a follow-up meeting with the UN System Task Team would be held in May or June 2012.

Primary issues raised by Member States

- 1. The world had changed dramatically since the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and formulation of the MDGs. The post-2015 UN development agenda must reflect those changes, while building on the MDG framework.** It was also stressed that current collective efforts to achieve the MDGs must remain a top priority. The need to strengthen the emphasis brought by the MDGs on the multidimensional nature of poverty was also mentioned.
- 2. A range of challenges that had emerged or intensified since 2000 would need to be addressed.** Among those mentioned were sustainable development, inclusive growth, inequalities, demographic dynamics, governance, conflict, food security and nutrition. The intergenerational dimension of a number of these issues was noted. Also mentioned was the need to expand the coverage of issues under the global partnership for development, with specific reference to trade, migration and subsidies.
- 3. The link to the Rio +20 was stressed, along with the need to work toward one UN development agenda post 2015, with sustainable development at its centre.** The discussions on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), green economy and the institutional framework for sustainable development were noted as important elements of progress. In terms of developing SDGs, the need for an inclusive process was highlighted and the possibility of an expert group of Member States and other stakeholders, with expertise in all three pillars of sustainable development, was mentioned. Clarification was sought on how to achieve greater convergence of the Rio+20 and post-2015 processes, while ensuring Member-State leadership and making full use of Secretariat expertise and participation of all stakeholders
- 4. Concrete, quantifiable, time-bound goals, which could be communicated in a clear and straightforward manner, must be the focus of the post-2015 UN development agenda.** The need to preserve the catalytic power of the clear and simple MDG framework was reiterated, in order to build political momentum, ensure feasibility of implementation and strengthen measurability and accountability for progress. By the same token, the need to avoid an overloaded agenda, while still ensuring an inclusive process, was stressed.

5. **The post-2015 UN development agenda should be applicable for all countries, not only Least Developed Countries.** The importance of universal applicability of the agenda was noted by a number of delegations. A number of related questions were raised: how to balance universality with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, especially in the realm of sustainable development; how a universal framework would align with a continued focus on poverty eradication; and how to take a balanced approach toward national and systemic/international level issues, including the challenge of measurement in relation to some of the systemic issues, such as governance.
6. **The post-2015 UN development agenda must recognize that “one size does not fit all” and balance global agenda setting with national target setting.** The post-2015 agenda must take into account national ownership, priority setting and different national circumstances and means of implementation. More understanding would be needed on how to achieve this balance while ensuring consistency with globally agreed goals and a continued focus on the poorest and most vulnerable groups of countries.
7. **Delegates shared the view on an open and inclusive consultation process, engaging all stakeholders, on the post-2015 UN development agenda.** Clarification was sought regarding the relationship of the Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on post-2015 to the UN System Task Team and to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. It was noted by the panel that the Special Advisor would work closely with the Task Team and would support the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel. Clarification was also sought on the coordination with the Bretton Woods institutions in the post-2015 process, with a view toward policy coherence. The active involvement of the World Bank and IMF in the work of the UN System Task Team was noted.