

**Modalities for the 2016 Economic and Social Council Forum on  
Financing for Development follow-up  
Proposals by the ECOSOC Bureau**

**Introduction**

During its current cycle, ECOSOC has an important task of launching its new forum on financing for development follow-up (FfD forum), as mandated by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda<sup>1</sup> (AAAA). The new forum will constitute the centerpiece of a dedicated and strengthened FfD follow-up process, as called for in the AAAA. A significant value added of the FfD forum is that it will address, according to its mandate, both the FfD outcomes and the Means of Implementation (MoI) of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) thus contributing to enhanced coherence and coordination between the FfD and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development follow-up processes. Furthermore, the forum will result in intergovernmentally agreed recommendations and conclusions, which will be fed into the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development. This will contribute to promoting the efficiency of United Nations processes and avoiding duplication and overlapping of discussions.

It is understood that the inaugural FfD forum in 2016 would have somewhat distinct nature from the following ones, as it would need to devote particular attention to setting up the monitoring framework for the follow-up to the Addis Agenda for the years to come and thus might require particular modalities. This note outlines the proposals of the ECOSOC Bureau regarding the modalities for the 2016 FfD forum.

In accordance with the mandate (see Annex I), the proposals included in this note build on the strengths of the Monterrey modalities and take into account the best practices and lessons learnt from the existing arrangements of the Financing for Development (FfD) follow-up process, as well as ECOSOC forums, especially in view of the recent reforms of the Council.

**Mandate**

Paragraphs 131 and 132 of the AAAA elaborate the mandate for a dedicated and strengthened FfD follow-up. Paragraph 131 emphasizes the need for a dedicated follow-up to and review of the financing for development outcomes, as well as all the MoI of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>2</sup>. The same paragraph specifies that the follow-up process should: (1) assess progress, identify obstacles and challenges to the implementation of the FfD outcomes, and the delivery of the MoI of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; (2) promote the sharing of lessons learned from experiences at the national and regional levels; (3) address new and emerging topics of relevance to the implementation of the AAAA, as the need arises; and (4) provide

---

<sup>1</sup> A/RES/69/313.

<sup>2</sup> A/RES/70/1.

policy recommendations for action by the international community. In the same paragraph, Member States also agreed to enhance coordination, promote the efficiency of United Nations processes and avoid duplication and overlapping of discussions.

In order to strengthen the FfD follow-up process, Member States, in paragraph 132 of the AAAA, decided to establish an annual ECOSOC forum on financing for development follow-up (FfD forum) with universal, intergovernmental participation, utilizing the modalities of participation of the international conferences on financing for development, to be launched during the Council's current cycle. The FfD forum will constitute the centerpiece of a dedicated and strengthened FfD follow-up process.

Paragraph 132 further specifies that the Special high-level meeting of the Economic and Social Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (ECOSOC/BWI meeting), which is currently one of the key elements of the intergovernmental FfD follow-up process, will be held on one of the days of the FfD forum. Up to four days of the forum will be dedicated to discussing the follow-up to and review of the FfD outcomes and the MoI of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The intergovernmentally agreed recommendations and conclusions of the FfD forum will be fed into the HLPF on Sustainable Development. The deliberations of the ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), according to its mandate, will also be taken into account.

In addition, the recent General Assembly resolution on Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development<sup>3</sup> decides that the FfD forum will be held in New York in the spring, with its inaugural session in 2016, and that it will be chaired by the President of ECOSOC, who is requested to prepare the forum according to paragraph 132 of the AAAA and is encouraged to produce an information note regarding arrangements for the 2016 forum, in collaboration with the Secretary-General. The resolution further invites the ECOSOC President to consider appointing two co-facilitators to prepare a draft of the conclusions and recommendations of the forum and to facilitate consultations among Member States, with a view to reaching an intergovernmental agreement on that draft (see Annex II).

## **Time**

The currently proposed dates (subject to adoption by ECOSOC) are during the week of 18 April 2016, building on dates previously reserved for the ECOSOC/BWI meeting. It is expected that the dates will be officially decided shortly.

## **Participation**

### *Participating States*

---

<sup>3</sup> A/RES/70/192.

In accordance with its mandate, the FfD forum will have universal, intergovernmental participation, utilizing the modalities of the international conferences on financing for development. This entails participation by 193 Member States of the United Nations, European Union, the Holy See, Palestine, Cook Islands and Niue.

The participation by relevant ministers, including Ministers of Finance, Development Cooperation and Foreign Affairs both from the North and the South, was traditionally sought at the financing for development conferences and other high-level events of the FfD follow-up process. Regardless of the short timeframe and the fact that the inaugural FfD forum in 2016 would have somewhat distinct nature than the following ones, , the provisions will need to be made at the FfD forum with a view to providing an appropriate space for participation of ministers, who wish to attend the forum.

It will also be important to provide travel support (subject to the availability of extra-budgetary funding) for relevant ministers or other high-level officials from developing countries, with the emphasis on the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and other countries in special situations. Balanced participation of representatives from both developed and developing countries will ensure inclusive deliberations and build broad-based sense of ownership of the agreed outcome.

### ***Stakeholders***

#### *Major institutional stakeholders*

From its inception, the FfD follow-up process was mandated to make full use of the relevant intergovernmental/governing bodies of major institutional stakeholders (World Bank, IMF, WTO, UNCTAD and UNDP), for the purposes of follow-up and coordination. Thanks to extensive efforts, the engagement by these stakeholders, at both the intergovernmental and management levels, in the FfD follow-up process goes beyond the normal practice of the General Assembly (GA) and ECOSOC.

This special role of the major institutional stakeholders should be maintained in the FfD forum and efforts should be extended to secure participation of these institutions at the highest level, both at intergovernmental and management levels.

#### *Extended group of institutional stakeholders*

In accordance with its mandate, the FfD forum should engage an extended group of institutional stakeholders (beyond the traditional five, i.e., World Bank, IMF, WTO, UNCTAD and UNDP). Depending on the programme of the FfD forum, the President of ECOSOC could invite the executive heads of relevant institutions to deliver keynote addresses at the thematic debates. Senior staff from these organizations could also participate.

### *Regional organizations*

Paragraph 131 of the AAAA states that the FfD follow-up process should promote the sharing of lessons learned from experiences at the national and regional levels. Therefore, regional organizations have an important role to play. The regional commissions, with the support of regional development banks and other relevant entities, may consider holding regional consultations. In such case, space should be provided at the FfD forum for presentation of outcome of such consultations.

### *Civil society, business sector, philanthropic foundations and academia*

Responding to substantially expanded FfD agenda, embodied in the AAAA, the forum will also need to involve an expanded engagement with civil society, the business sector, as well as philanthropic foundations and academia. In addition, building on the recent experiences of the Open Working Group of the GA on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, the President of ECOSOC could hold open briefings or a short interactive dialogue during the FfD forum for all interested stakeholders.

### **Themes**

The currently proposed overall theme of the FfD Forum is “Financing for sustainable development: follow-up to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda” in alignment with the annual theme of the ECOSOC which is “Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results” and with the theme of 2016 HLPF, which is “Ensuring that no one is left behind”.

### **Format**

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 70/192, the FfD forum will be chaired by the President of ECOSOC.

### *Inaugural segment*

The inaugural segment of the FfD forum will provide an appropriate space for the participation by relevant ministers, including Ministers of Finance, Development Cooperation or Foreign Affairs, as well as Central Bank Governors. This segment should offer strategic guidance on the overall theme of the FfD forum, provide an opportunity to give updates on implementation of initiatives and commitments and address the new and emerging topics of relevance to the implementation of the AAAA, as the need arises. It could serve to demonstrate that the first steps, which are already being taken at various levels towards the implementation of the AAAA. This could be done in the form of voluntary presentations by “champion” countries, to be represented at the ministerial level.

The inaugural segment can consist of:

- (i) Opening of the FfD forum, featuring speeches by heads of major institutional stakeholders including BWIs, WTO, and UNCTAD ;
- (ii) Intergovernmental segment, including interventions by heads of intergovernmental bodies of major institutional stakeholders (IMF/WB Development Committee, IMFC, WTO General Council and UNCTAD Trade and Development Board);
- (iii) General debate during which ministers and other high-level participants would make statements, including presentations by “Champion” countries; and
- (iv) Dialogue between UN ambassadors and BWI Executive Directors, with the participation of relevant institutional stakeholders.

### *General segment*

The remaining days of the FfD forum will comprise its general segment, which will feature more technical discussions on selected topics relevant to the Addis Agenda. This segment will comprise a number of round tables organized in a multi-stakeholder format allowing all participants to contribute fully to the discussions.

In order to facilitate the discussions, a moderator and 3-4 panelists could be identified for each round table. Furthermore, they could include a national or regional presentation discussing lessons learned in the action areas of the AAAA, and related MoIs covered by these action areas, and provide an opportunity for the discussion of follow-up mechanism and other crosscutting issues. If appropriate, round tables could feature a keynote address by a head of major institutional stakeholder and other stakeholders.

Round tables will be open to participation by BWI Executive Directors and other members of intergovernmental bodies of relevant stakeholders.

In addition, a short interactive dialogue or open briefing with non-state actors may be organized.

### *Side events*

Side events could be organized by Member States, intergovernmental organizations, UN specialized agencies and regional commissions, civil society, the business sector and philanthropic organizations. Stakeholders should be encouraged to organize joint side events, allowing for presentation of diverse perspectives and supporting the inclusive approach of the FfD process.

### **Integration of the ECOSOC/BWI meeting into the FfD forum**

The Addis Agenda specifies that one of the days of the FfD forum will be the Special high-level meeting of ECOSOC with BWIs, WTO and UNCTAD.

Over the years, the special role and strong reputation of the ECOSOC/BWI meeting as a platform for an engagement with BWIs and other stakeholders has been widely accepted and appreciated by the relevant stakeholders. Therefore, it is proposed to maintain certain key elements, which have contributed to the special identity of the meeting.

In particular, one of the identifying features of the ECOSOC/BWI meeting has been its intergovernmental segment, at which the heads of the intergovernmental bodies of the major institutional stakeholders were to speak. Another has been a dialogue between UN ambassadors and BWI Executive Directors. These elements will be strengthened in the context of the FfD forum.

It is proposed that the existing ECOSOC/BWI meeting is to be held in the inaugural segment of the forum. The heads of the institutional stakeholders, as well as the heads of the intergovernmental bodies of these institutions will be invited to speak at the opening of the forum. The dialogue between UN ambassadors, BWI Executive Directors and other members of intergovernmental bodies of relevant stakeholders will also be held. In addition, the BWI Executive Directors and senior management will be invited to participate as panelists in other thematic debates.

## **Outcome**

The forum will result in an intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations, which will be fed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the HLPF. These conclusions and recommendations will take the form of a concise statement/communiqué.

The President of ECOSOC appointed two co-facilitators who will prepare a draft of those conclusions and recommendations and facilitate consultations among Member States, with a view to reaching an intergovernmental agreement on that draft.

In order to promote efficiency and, time permitting, the draft could be circulated to Member States for written comments and subsequently revised. The advantage of this approach would be that the draft would be effectively “pre-agreed” and require limited amount of line-by-line negotiations of the whole membership.

This will be followed by negotiations of the whole membership with a view to reaching an agreement on the draft, which will be adopted on the last day of the forum. Subsequently, it will need to be endorsed by a procedural ECOSOC action.

It is highly recommended that any negotiations be concluded ahead of the forum, since the outcome should be adopted by the end of the forum and negotiations ideally not coincide with the substantive programme.

## **Documentation**

### *Report by the inter-agency task force on progress in implementing the Financing for Development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

To ensure a strengthened follow-up process at the global level, the AAAA, in its paragraph 133, encourages the Secretary-General to convene an inter-agency task force, including the major institutional stakeholders and the United Nations system, including funds and programmes and specialized agencies whose mandates are related to the follow-up, building on the experience of the Millennium Development Goals Gap Task Force. The inter-agency task force will report annually on progress in implementing the FfD outcomes and the MoI of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and advise the intergovernmental follow-up thereto on progress, implementation gaps and recommendations for corrective action, while taking into consideration the national and regional dimensions.

The full report, issued in the form of a UN publication, as well as its executive summary issued as a parliamentary document of ECOSOC will inform deliberations at the FfD forum.

### *Pre-session documentation*

- (1) Information note on arrangements for the 2016 forum (English only);

This note is mandated by General Assembly resolution 70/192 (paragraph 6).

- (2) Inter-agency task force report on progress in implementing the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Executive Summary (parliamentary document);
- (3) Inter-agency task force report on progress in implementing the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Advance version (publication);

This report is mandated by paragraph 133 of the AAAA.

### *In-session documentation*

- (1) Draft outcome of the ECOSOC forum on financing for development follow up;

### *Post-session documentation*

- (1) Outcome of the ECOSOC forum on financing for development follow up;
- (2) Summary by the President of ECOSOC of the annual forum on financing for development follow up.

### **Coordination with HLPF**

Member States agree that it is critical to integrate the FfD follow up into the overall review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to create clear links between the FfD forum and the HLPF on Sustainable Development. In this context, three main channels/vehicles of such integration can be identified: (1) the theme(s) of the FfD forum should be aligned with the overall theme of ECOSOC and the theme of HLPF for 2016; (2) the scope of the IATF report on FfD, which would serve as the main substantive input to the FfD forum, should address, according to its mandate, both the FfD outcomes and the MoI of the Agenda; and (3) the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations resulting from the FfD forum should be fed into the HLPF.

### **Coordination with DCF and other forums**

In the AAAA, Member States decided that the deliberations of the DCF, according to its mandate, are also to be taken into account by the FfD forum. The President of ECOSOC, as the Chair of both meetings, will ensure that the preparatory symposia for the 2016 DCF are duly taken into consideration.

The outcome of other relevant forums will also be taken into account by the FfD forum, as appropriate.

### **Outreach**

FfDO/DESA, in collaboration with the UN Department of Public Information (DPI) and other UN partners, will support the ECOSOC communications and outreach for the FfD forum, including through the engagement of both traditional media and social media, in order to maximize the visibility of the FfD forum to Governments and other stakeholders at the national, regional and global levels, and the general public. FfDO/DESA will also maintain a designated webpage for the forum.



## **Annex I**

### **Addis Ababa Action Agenda**

Paragraphs 131 and 132

131. We appreciate the role played by the United Nations financing for development follow-up process. We recognize the inter-linkages between the financing for development process and the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, and emphasize the need of a dedicated follow-up and review for the financing for development outcomes as well as all the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, which is integrated with the post-2015 follow-up and review process to be decided at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. The follow-up process should assess progress, identify obstacles and challenges to the implementation of the financing for development outcomes, and the delivery of the means of implementation, promote the sharing of lessons learned from experiences at the national and regional levels, address new and emerging topics of relevance to the implementation of this agenda as the need arises, and provide policy recommendations for action by the international community. We will also enhance coordination, promote the efficiency of United Nations processes and avoid duplication and overlapping of discussions.

132. We commit to staying engaged to this important agenda through a dedicated and strengthened follow-up process that will use existing institutional arrangements and will include an annual Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up with universal, intergovernmental participation, to be launched during the Council's current cycle. The forum's modalities of participation will be those utilized at the international conferences on financing for development. The forum will consist of up to five days, one of which will be the special high-level meeting with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD, as well as additional institutional and other stakeholders depending on the priorities and scope of the meeting; up to four days will be dedicated to discussing the follow-up and review of the financing for development outcomes and the means of implementation of the post-2015 development agenda. Its intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations will be fed into the overall follow-up and review of the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda in the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The deliberations of the Development Cooperation Forum, according to its mandate, will also be taken into account. The High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development of the General Assembly will be held back-to-back with the high-level political forum under the auspices of the General Assembly when the high-level political forum is convened every four years.

## **Annex II**

### **General Assembly resolution on Follow-up to the International Conference on Financing for Development (A/RES/70/192)**

4. *Looks forward* to the launch of the annual forum of the Economic and Social Council on follow-up to financing for development in its current cycle, in accordance with the provisions in paragraphs 130 to 132 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;
5. *Reaffirms* that the Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development follow-up:
  - (a) Will hold its sessions at United Nations Headquarters in New York in the spring and its inaugural session in 2016;
  - (b) Will be chaired by the President of the Economic and Social Council, who will take the steps necessary to prepare the work of the forum according to paragraph 132 of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda;
6. *Encourages* the President of the Economic and Social Council, in collaboration with the Secretary-General, to produce an information note regarding arrangements for the 2016 forum;
7. *Invites* the President of the Economic and Social Council to consider appointing two co-facilitators, as appropriate, who will prepare the draft conclusions and recommendations of the forum and will facilitate consultations among Member States with a view to reaching its intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations;