President of the General Assembly’s Interactive Dialogue

Elements for an Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda

1 May 2014, ECOSOC Chamber, UNHQ, New York

Following the opening remarks delivered by H.E. Mr. John Ashe, President of the UN General Assembly, and Mr. Ban Ki-Moon, the UN Secretary-General, two panel discussion sessions were held. The two panel discussion sessions, entitled “concepts for a new accountability framework or frameworks for the post-2015 development agenda” and “learning from existing review mechanisms”, respectively, heard from twelve panellists and discussants representing Member States, UN organizations, international organizations, academia, research institutes, and civil society organizations. Each panel discussion session subsequently held interactive discussions.

On concepts for a new accountability framework or frameworks for the post-2015 development agenda, moderated by Ms. Amina J. Mohammed, the Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning, there was general agreement among Member States that accountability is essential to assess progress and achieve results at the national, regional and global levels, and the accountability and monitoring frameworks should constitute an integral part of the post-2015 development agenda. It was underscored that all stakeholders, including governments, the UN system, civil society and the private sector, should be held accountable to deliver their commitments. The accountability system must be universal, inclusive, and robust yet flexible, taking into account their different capacities and responsibilities.

Many countries highlighted a central role of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in monitoring the progress of and ensuring accountability for the post-2015 development agenda, building on the existing accountability frameworks at all levels to avoid extra layers of reporting. Some countries stressed the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities as a basic element for the post-2015 accountability framework. Others underscored that monitoring works best among peer countries at the regional level. Some countries felt that it is premature to discuss the post-2015 monitoring and accountability frameworks without the outcome of the substantive discussions on the subject.

On learning from existing review mechanisms, moderated by Mr. John Hendra, Assistant Secretary-General/Deputy Executive Director for Policy and Programme, UN Women, there was general agreement among Member States that the post-2015 accountability framework should mobilize and build on the existing accountability mechanisms incorporating their best practices and lessons learned. The existing accountability mechanisms highlighted included, among others: the MDG reporting and review process; the Universal Periodic Review on human rights; the ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum; the UN Global Compact-led corporate sustainability reporting; and the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation.

Many countries called for a greater focus on capacity building to strengthen national statistical capacities for enhanced data availability and quality in particular disaggregated data on vulnerable groups. Some countries underscored the need to go beyond the MDG review process to monitor the development results and delivery of commitments, including those related to means of implementation. Some noted an important role of parliaments in the review mechanisms. Others emphasized the effectiveness of regional accountability frameworks such as the African Peer Review Mechanism and the potential role of the UN Regional Commissions in the regional accountability system.

At the closing session, H.E. Mr. Ashe, President of the UN General Assembly (PGA), indicated that a summary of the key messages will be prepared and shared with Member States and the PGA’s stocktaking event to be held in September 2014 will provide an opportunity to further elaborate on the accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda.

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