



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

8 September 2017

Excellency,

Further to today's stocktaking meeting, I am pleased to share with you an end of term report on SDG implementation efforts during the 71st session of the General Assembly.

The report includes nine key findings that I encourage you to relay to your capitals as collectively we strive to transform our world for the better through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson', written in a cursive style.

Peter Thomson

All Permanent Representatives
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

The Sustainable Development Goals: A Universal Push to Transform Our World

An end of term Report from the President of the 71st session of the General Assembly

Summary

The President of the General Assembly undertook an extensive range of activities during the 71st session aimed at delivering a universal push to transform our world through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In summary, the President assesses that:

- SDG momentum is growing, but implementation is not yet taking place at the speed or scale required.
- Governments are clearly embracing the SDGs, but fidelity to the 2030 Agenda requires a greater focus on integration, inclusion, empowerment, sustainability and maintaining the conditions for sustaining peace.
- While the great majority of the international community remains committed to the Paris Agreement, climate action is more urgent than ever.
- Integration is a central pillar of the SDGs, but greater effort is needed to keep transversal Goals, such as poverty eradication, to the fore.
- Progress has been made in sensitising the private sector to the SDGs, but governments can do much more to transform financial systems to drive both public and private investment in support of the SDGs. The UN system can play a more proactive role in this area.
- Member States, particularly the most vulnerable, require a UN system that provides them with coherent SDG support at the country level. The Secretary-General's proposed reforms are crucial in this regard.
- There is enormous scope to deploy innovation and technology in support of the SDGs. The UN has a key role to play in facilitating collaboration between innovators and implementers.
- The Ocean Conference demonstrated the global interest in uniting around the SDGs. It reminded us that multi-stakeholder collaboration at all levels is key to delivering the SDGs.
- A more effective campaign is required to raise global awareness of the SDGs at individual and community levels.
- Greater effort is needed to place young people and vulnerable communities in driving seats of SDG implementation.

Ending poverty and placing humanity on a path that delivers shared prosperity, sustained peace and environmental sustainability by 2030 is attainable. We've made a good start but time is of the essence.

September 2017

I. Introduction

The Sustainable Development Goals: A Universal Push to Transform Our World was selected as the theme of the 71st session of the UN General Assembly by the President, H.E. Mr Peter Thomson. The President committed to strengthening momentum on implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and to ensuring that the SDGs would remain paramount on the global policy agenda during the transition at the highest levels of the United Nations.

Below is an overview of the SDG-related activities undertaken by the President and his office in response to these commitments, as well as a report on key findings and conclusions.

II. Strategy

The President's plans for the session were elaborated on in his SDG Strategy¹, introduced to Member States in November 2016. The SDG strategy focussed on the following three priorities:

- (1) Raising the global public's awareness of the transformative potential and necessity of the SDGs;
- (2) Strengthening the momentum in the implementation of each of the 17 SDGs;
- (3) Supporting the UN and related agencies in making the maximum contribution possible to the implementation of the SDGs.

To deliver on this strategy, the President set up a dedicated team of SDG Advisors within his office led by Special Adviser, Ms Dessima Williams. The team included secondments from Member States, the UN System and the World Bank Group. He also appointed Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya, to serve as the PGA's Special Envoy on SDG implementation and Climate Change.

The President and his team engaged Member States, the UN System and a whole range of external actors throughout the 71st session. In addition to briefing Member States in November, the President received feedback during a mid-term progress report in February 2017; held an SDG Implementation briefing for the new Deputy Secretary-General, Ms Amina Mohammed, in April 2017, and an end-of-term reporting session with Member States on 8 September 2017.

III. Key activities

A detailed table documenting the activities undertaken by the President and his team on each of the 17 SDG is included in Annex 1. Overall, the President's actions this session included advocacy and awareness raising activities; convening five SDG Actions Events; driving preparations for the successful Ocean Conference; and overseeing progress on a number of SDG-specific files in the General Assembly.

(1) Advocacy and awareness raising

The President and his representatives travelled to 32 countries to advocate with world leaders, governments, multilateral organizations and the general public for comprehensive, integrated and early action on the SDGs. They visited countries within all five geographical regions, as well as UN Offices in Vienna, Nairobi, Rome, Bangkok, Geneva and New York. They attended major

¹ http://www.un.org/pga/71/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2016/11/2_SDG-IMPLEMENTATION_external.pdf

UN conferences in Ecuador, Morocco and Turkmenistan, and engaged key actors beyond the UN at the European Union and the Africa Union, at the World Economic Forum, the OECD and the World Bank and IMF Spring Meetings. The President also visited Silicon Valley to meet with the private sector in pursuit of innovation for the SDGs.

The President's SDG Envoy and his Special Adviser on SDGs represented the President at over 20 international meetings assessing preparedness for SDG Implementation. This included meetings on health, education, data, transport, the Ocean, migration, governance and finance. The President was also represented in meetings of the five UN regional commissions in recognition of the strong regional dimension to the SDGs.

The President placed specific emphasis on reaching the world's young people, who stand to lose most if the SDGs are not implemented. He advocated for SDG Learning and the incorporation of the SDGs into the national curriculum of every country in the world. He wrote to all Heads of State and Government on this subject and requested leading third level institutions across the world to do like-wise in their sector. The President and his office met with groups of young people throughout the session and advocated for the SDGs to be understood as both rights and responsibilities.

In addition, the President sought to raise SDG awareness within both traditional and new media. Specifically, he organized SDG Social Media Zones on the margins of the General Debate of the General Assembly, at a number of his SDG Action Events and at COP22, where social media companies engaged leaders on what it will take to realize the SDGs. The President of the General Assembly's twitter followers increased by over 80%, in large part due to his consistent messaging on SDG action.

(2) PGA convened SDG Action Events

In choosing to convene five SDG Action Events in the resumed session of the Assembly, the President was mindful of avoiding duplication with the SDGs under review at HLPF 2017; as well as those Goals that were addressed by dedicated UN fora such as the Commission on the Status of Women, and the Human Rights Council. Each meeting responded to the unique context of each issue, promoted an integrated approach to SDG implementation and sought to draw out the gender equality dimensions of each subject.

A. Sustaining Peace

Recognizing that SDG implementation requires an integrated, coherent and coordinated approach to peace, development, human rights and humanitarian efforts, the President convened a High-Level Event on 24 January entitled 'Building Sustainable Peace for All: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace'. In a demonstration of the need for this integrated and fresh approach, the meeting brought together the presiding officers of four UN Organs – the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council – and the Peacebuilding Commission.

During the discussion, speaker after speaker rose to reinforce the critical nexus between sustaining peace and sustainable development. This included views on how the UN system could take advantage of synergies to promote the effective implementation of the SDGs and the

achievement of sustainable peace². The message was expanded on at practical levels during the President's official visit to the Central African Republic in May 2017.

B. Climate Change

The President convened a High Level SDG Action Event on Climate Change and Sustainable Development on 23 March 2017 in partnership with UNFCCC Executive Secretary, Ms Patricia Espinosa. The meeting sought to ensure the spotlight remained firmly on climate change and, specifically, on the need for climate action by all actors, despite changes in the global political landscape.

The High Level Event benefitted from deep and broad engagement of Member States, experts and stakeholders from all sectors who reiterated their political commitment to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and drew attention to the clearly defined interlinkages between action on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda, particularly as focus shifts to implementation.³

The Office of the PGA also sought to green its own activities including by offsetting all emissions from travel undertaken by the Office; by supporting installation of three charging stations for electric vehicles in the UN garage; and by providing approximately 5000 reusable water bottles for the Ocean Conference.

C. Sustainable Finance

Recognizing that a major increase in investment is required to realize the SDGs and that investment needs differ from goal to goal, region to region and country to country, the President, working closely with the UNEP Inquiry, convened an SDG Financing Lab on 18 April. The meeting brought together Member States, the UN system, private investors, civil society, and academia to advance discussions on how to mobilize the estimated US\$5-7 trillion in annual investments needed to achieve the SDGs.

Building on the findings of the SDG Financing Lab,⁴ the President convened a two day Sustainable Finance Retreat on 12-14 June 2017, with support from the Group of Friends of Sustainable Development Goals Financing, co-chaired by the Permanent Representatives of Canada and Jamaica. Entitled 'Catalyzing New Coalitions to Accelerate Co-Financing of Sustainable Infrastructure', the retreat brought together a small group of capital-based government officials, senior representatives from the global private financial sector and leaders from development finance institutions, academia, the UN Secretariat, and other international organizations. It set out to identify existing opportunities and challenges to unlocking financing solutions for specific projects in sustainable infrastructure and for aligning the financial system with the SDGs.

The retreat's findings, which were discussed at a Ministerial level breakfast meeting during the High Level Political Forum in July 2017, include recommendations for Member States, the UN, IFIs and others.⁵ Though specific to sustainable infrastructure financing, they are also applicable more broadly to private investment in the SDGs including climate change and building resilience, and reflect the overall conclusion that there is much the UN system can do to

² <http://www.un.org/pga/71/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2015/08/Summary-of-the-High-level-Dialogue-on-Building-Sustainable-Peace-for-All.pdf>

³ http://www.un.org/pga/71/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2015/08/President-Summary_SDG-Action-Event-on-Climate-and-SD_23-March-2017_FINAL.pdf

⁴ <http://www.un.org/pga/71/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2015/08/SDG-Lab-Summary.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.un.org/pga/71/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2017/08/Pocantico-Retreat-Summaryfnl.pdf>

promote closer engagement between governments and the business sector, both as a trusted convener and at country level.

D. Innovation

On 17 May, building on the ECOSOC Multi-Stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation, the President convened an SDG Action Event on Innovation and Connectivity. The meeting came about following the President's travel to Silicon Valley and Los Angeles and engagement with key innovators from across the world. Working closely with Los Angeles-based XPrize, the President brought leading innovators, thought-leaders, and technology companies to the UN to engage with Member States and the UN system on how emerging technologies can be used to best effect and to ensure successful implementation of the SDGs.

Using an engaging format, the meeting succeeded in increasing understanding and awareness of the opportunities and challenges of new technology and exponential change. It highlighted the need for a significant strengthening of the UN's ability to act as a catalyst for innovation and technological solutions to the SDGs.⁶

E. Education

Following extensive outreach by the President and his office throughout the session including attendance at major conferences on Education in London, Ottawa, Doha and elsewhere, the President convened a High-Level Event on Education in New York in partnership with key SDG4 stakeholders on 28 June. The meeting took a holistic approach in exploring what it will take to realize the Education SDG, looking at financing needs, at empowering youth, at education in humanitarian and emergency settings, as well as at education for sustainable development.

The meeting helped to bring together the many stakeholders who work in this sector, to identify some areas where greater attention is needed and to push for renewed partnership and collaboration to achieve SDG 4.⁷ It also helped to build a strong global network among youth advocates for education from the global South.

F. UN Ocean Conference

Building on his past work on Ocean issues and SDG14, President Thomson and his team played a central role in preparing for the Ocean Conference, held on 5-9 June 2017 at UN Headquarters, New York.

The Ocean Conference proved to be a benchmark example of multiple actors coming together to determine an ambitious and action-oriented response to one of the SDGs, in this case SDG 14, the Ocean Goal. These actors included the Co-Presidents of the Conference Fiji and Sweden, the Secretary-General of the Conference (USG DESA), the Special Adviser to the Co-Presidents (USG OLA), the co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations Portugal and Singapore, the UN System and a host of external partners from civil society, the business sector, NGOs, IGOs, and the scientific community. All were united in delivering a conference that witnessed both Governments and the world wide ocean community rallying in support of SDG14's implementation.

⁶ <http://www.un.org/pga/71/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2015/08/ummary-SDG-Action-Event-on-Innovation.pdf>

⁷ <http://www.un.org/pga/71/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2017/08/High-Level-SDG-Action-Event-Education.pdf>

The President worked to promote global awareness of SDG14 through The Ocean Conference. He pushed for the empowerment of Ocean partners in the research, technology and creative communities, including by attending Ocean-related conferences across the world and transmitting a large number of video-messages. Throughout, he called for outcomes that would deliver the necessary partnerships, programmes, commitments and call for action to reverse the cycle of decline into which accumulated human activity has placed the Ocean, urging strong follow-up measures from the conference that would ensure the commitments made are implemented.

The Ocean Conference resulted in 1395 voluntary commitments pledged by stakeholders aimed at advancing the implementation aspects of SDG 14. Critically, the assembled world expertise produced solutions to Ocean's problems presented at 7 partnership dialogues. An ambitious 'Call for Action' outcome document was agreed to by Member States; with subsequent adoption by the General Assembly.

(3) Overseeing implementation of GA mandates of direct relevance to the SDGs

During the 71st session, there was broad agreement that an enabling global environment and a UN system that is fit for purpose is needed to support the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Thus, a number of steps were taken in this direction, particularly in the General Assembly:

- *QCPR*: The agreement by the General Assembly of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development of the United Nations System has provided the Secretary-General with a clear mandate to advance reforms that will make the UN more capable of supporting Member States to implement the SDGs. The report from the Secretary-General in July 2017⁸ was a direct follow-up to the QCPR resolution and further action will follow in the 72nd session.
- *Technology Bank*: The General Assembly formally established the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries thereby supporting the achievement of SDG 17.6 and an important element of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
- *SDG Global Indicator Framework*: Following action by the UN Statistical Commission and the Economic and Social Council, the General Assembly adopted the Global Indicator Framework for the SDGs and targets, which will serve as crucial part of the SDG implementation architecture.
- *Alignment process*: Consultations aimed at bringing about greater alignment of the agenda of the GA, ECOSOC and the HLPF with the SDGs were held under the leadership of the Permanent Representatives of Argentina and Australia. These consultations resulted in a number of recommendations for the General Assembly, the President of the General Assembly and the President of ECOSOC. Consultations will continue during the 72nd session mandated by the General Assembly.⁹
- *Global Migration compact*: Following the adoption of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants in September 2016, intergovernmental negotiations of the global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration got underway led by the Permanent Representatives of Mexico and Switzerland, with both thematic consultations and multi-stakeholder hearings

⁸ <https://www.un.org/ecosoc/en/node/1213351>

⁹ Resolution on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly to be adopted on 8 September.

convened by the President, as part of the lead-up to the 2018 Intergovernmental Conference during the 73rd session on this subject.

- *Human Trafficking*: Consultations on the preparations for a High Level Meeting on Human Trafficking on 27-28 September during the 72nd session were concluded. Agreement was reached on a short Ministerial Declaration which draws attention to an area that is the explicit focus of three SDG targets.
- *Habitat III and the HLM on the New Urban Agenda*: The outcome document of the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, the New Urban Agenda, was adopted by the General Assembly in December 2017. The President also convened a two day High Level Meeting on the New Urban Agenda and the positioning of UN Habitat in that regard, on 5-6 September which responded to the Report of the High Level Independent Panel to Assess and Enhance Effectiveness of UN-Habitat.
- *South-South Cooperation*: Led by the Permanent Representative of Uganda, consultations were concluded agreeing to the modalities for the 2019 Conference on South-South Cooperation to be hosted by Argentina.
- *Dialogues on Water-related SDGs*: Co-chaired by Hungary and Tajikistan, two working level dialogues discussed improving the integration and coordination of the work of the UN on the water-related goals and targets. A summary of discussions was circulated to Member States that included a number of important findings and recommendations.

The President also convened a number of mandated meetings of the General Assembly that were of direct relevance to SDG implementation. These included:

- 19 September – High-Level Meeting on addressing large movements of refugees and migrants;
- 21 September – High-Level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance;
- 22 September – High-Level Meeting to commemorate 30th Anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development;
- 2 December 2017 – High-Level Meeting to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities;
- 3 March 2017 – High-Level Thematic Discussion on the global observance of World Wildlife Day, including on the protection of wild flora and fauna and on tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife;
- 21 March 2017 – Commemorative plenary meeting of the General Assembly to mark the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination;
- 21 April 2017 – Interactive dialogue on Harmony with Nature to commemorate International Mother Earth Day;
- 25 April 2017 – High-level Event to mark the Tenth Anniversary of the Adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

IV. Key findings and conclusions

A number of findings and conclusions can be drawn from the work undertaken on SDGs during the 71st session by the President and his team, along with their engagements with key global networks and SDG actors.

(1) SDG Momentum is growing but implementation is not yet taking place at the speed and scale required.

A vast array of stakeholders in governments, civil society, the private sector and academia are taking the first steps towards implementation of the SDGs. The appetite for action was clearly on show at conferences and meetings across the world, along with the PGA's SDG Action Events and in the many processes underway here at the UN.

At the same time, many millions of people and indeed a number of countries, are at risk of being left behind. Early progress on the SDGs seems to show that implementation of the individual goals is at best uneven. This was recognized in the UN's SDG Progress Report 2017 which states that 'advancements have been uneven across regions, between the sexes, and among people of different ages, wealth and locales, including urban and rural dwellers.'

Equally worrying is the fact that the Earth reached record temperatures in 2016 for the third year in a row;¹⁰ that women continue to spend almost triple the amount of time on unpaid domestic and care work as men,¹¹ and that the number of people forcibly displaced around the world is at its highest in decades.¹²

Clearly, a sea-change in ambition is required to meet our 2030 objectives.

(2) Governments are embracing the SDGs but fidelity to the 2030 Agenda requires deeper change.

Countries at different stages of development are embracing the 2030 Agenda. During his country visits and attendance of meetings at the regional commissions, the President and his team consistently observed the spread of the 2030 Agenda's message. Interest in the High Level Political Forum is growing as evidenced by the 43 countries wishing to present their national strategies at the HLPF this year.

It remains to be seen whether this global response sufficiently embraces the central principles of the 2030 Agenda namely ending poverty in all its forms, leaving no one behind, and taking an integrated approach that fully respects the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

(3) SDGs are high on the global economic agenda but both global and local financial systems must be transformed to direct trillions towards SDG implementation.

The President's engagements at the World Economic Forum and the World Bank Spring Meetings, with the G20 and with leading actors from the private finance, show that as an action plan for a fairer, more inclusive and sustainable world, the 2030 Agenda resonates very highly with those who hold the global and national purse-strings.

¹⁰ NASA, <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/goddard/2016/climate-trends-continue-to-break-records>

¹¹ UN SDG Progress report 2017

¹² UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/globaltrends2016/>

This is also evident in commitments in December 2016 from more than 60 donor and borrower governments for a record USD75 billion funding for the World Bank's International Development Association,¹³ in trends on global development assistance,¹⁴ and in funding announcements in areas such as gender equality and sustainable infrastructure.

In order to translate this positivity into real investment, a series of changes must be undertaken at both national and international levels. The UN can and must play a greater role in advancing implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. At the global level, for example, the UN can use its convening power to bring government, international financial institutions and private investors together to remove regulatory obstacles and align international strategies in support of Agenda 2030. The UN could assist by convening platforms for individual governments or groups to discuss the financing and investments needed to implement their SDG and Climate action plans with the financial and corporate sectors.

Similarly, at the country level, the UN System must become more accustomed to supporting Governments in the attraction and deployment of both public and private investment, to catalyzing robust pipelines of bankable projects, to encouraging new partnerships, and to stimulating new coalitions of domestic and cross-border investors. In addition, the UN needs to develop capacity to engage in the global conversation on the sharing economy and the circular economy.

(4) Climate action is more urgent than ever.

Unless radical action is taken over the coming years, the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement will quickly prove unachievable. Now is the time for genuine Climate champions to emerge from all sectors and for the United Nations to continue to play a firm leadership role. Faster, deeper and more dedicated climate action is needed to reduce vulnerability and strengthen resilience. Scaled up collective action on climate change will also be directly beneficial for a range of SDGs, which all link in with the efforts to curb climate change: food, water, energy, urban development and transport, infrastructure, sustainable consumption and production, biodiversity and the Ocean.

(5) Greater effort is needed to keep Goals of a transversal nature to the fore.

The integrated nature of the SDGs is a defining feature of the 2030 Agenda. It reminds us of the inextricable linkages between peace, gender equality, environmental sustainability, social progress and economic development. In taking this approach, however, it is incumbent upon us to see that cross-cutting issues like poverty eradication, reducing inequalities and promoting sustainable consumption and production do not slip below the radar. These goals, which rely on action by governments and the general public, must remain at the fore of both our communications and programming strategies.

¹³ World Bank, <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/348661486654455091/pdf/112728-correct-file-PUBLIC-Rpt-from-EDS-Additions-to-IDA-Resources-2-9-17-For-Disclosure.pdf>

¹⁴ SDG Progress Report 2017: From 2015 to 2016, official development assistance (ODA) rose by 8.9 per cent in real terms to 142.6 billion US dollars, reaching a new peak.

(6) Member states, particularly the most vulnerable, require a UN system that can provide them with coherent support at the country level. The Secretary-General's proposed reforms are crucial in this regard.

The United Nations system has a crucial role to play in supporting SDG implementation, especially in the most vulnerable countries. The appointment of Secretary-General Guterres, Deputy Secretary-General Mohammed and key global development leaders to the UN System, means that the UN is now ready to act on this role.

The implementation of the SDGs requires both a different approach and a different catalogue of expertise from the UN System. It is essential that the support and trust availed to the Secretary-General and his team be maintained over the coming years as the Secretary-General advances his reforms across the Organization.

Universal support is also needed to align the work of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the High-Level Political Forum with the SDGs, building on work undertaken in this area in the 70th and 71st sessions. Two years into the SDGs, Member States may also wish to consider how different for a such as the HLPF can best be organized to support Member State implementation efforts.

(7) The enormous scope for SDG progress through innovation has yet to be realized

From the President's Innovation Event and his engagement with the world's leading technologists, it is clear that as technology develops at exponential rates, these changes, if managed well, can be deployed to greatly accelerate SDG implementation. The United Nations can play a leading role in matching innovations with global challenges. Given the implications for humanity of uncharted territory in such fields as artificial intelligence, the UN could also play a leading role in creating do-no-harm principles to guide technological innovations. More action will be needed to build this interface and both increase access to and manage the growing gap between exponential technology development and the international system's capacity to meaningfully engage with this sector.

(8) SDG success required greater multi-stakeholder collaboration

The 2030 Agenda states that 'all countries and all stakeholders, acting in collaborative partnership, will implement this plan'. The Ocean Conference demonstrated how such collaborative partnerships can be mobilized around one specific SDG, but a systematic approach has not yet been taken to advancing such partnerships in relation to the overall Agenda and many of the other SDGs.

Willing actors, particularly from non-traditional sectors have repeatedly reported difficulties in finding the right point of contact within the UN to build strategic relations to advance the SDGs for the duration of the 2030 Agenda. This gap was identified in the report from the Secretary-General on UN Development System reforms. It is essential that this be dealt with as a matter of urgency so that the full potential of collective action on the SDGs can be harnessed. Partnerships is an essential element of the SDG Implementation. A half-hearted approach by the UN towards partnership is not acceptable. Rewards greatly outweigh risks, and where the latter exist, our systems must be established to mitigate them.

(9) SDG awareness and community-level ownership levels remain far too low

Significant efforts have been made by DPI, the UN SDG Action Campaign, Project Everyone, Global Compact and others to bring the message and urgency of the SDGs to the global public. Different UN entities at country-level are also making strides in this regard. Overall, however, the level of penetration remains low.¹⁵ A massive and sustained effort is required to increase awareness.

Action is also needed to go beyond awareness and ensure that the SDGs are owned by the people. Ownership and participation including by civil society, can help identify the right policy choices, align personal behaviour with the SDGs; bring in the voices of the most vulnerable, monitor implementation and hold decision makers to account.

If humankind is to achieve the future we want, a sustainable relationship with the planet we inhabit, the 2030 Agenda must be implemented. It will not be implemented if those for whom it is designed are unaware of its existence and the rights and responsibilities that they and their communities are required to act upon.

¹⁵ Promotion of the sustainable development goals in 2016: an assessment; outreach and advocacy for the 2030 agenda for sustainable development and climate change, Report from DPI

Annex 1: Full table of activities taken by OPGA71 in support of momentum across each of the 17 SDGs

Note: This list includes mandated as well as other events. Special Advisor refers to Ambassador Dessima Williams unless otherwise stated. SDG Envoy refers to the PGA's Special Envoy on SDG implementation and climate change, H.E. Macharia Kamau. This list is not exhaustive.

SDG 1 – Ending poverty in all its forms everywhere

- PGA participated in the Commission on Social Development on 1 February 2017, highlighting his push for social development with the need to end poverty as a core focus.
- PGA's Special Advisor reached out to leaders and champions representing governments, local authorities, private sector and civil society of 45 countries through the SDG assembly of UN ESCAP's Regional SDG Week. In November 28-30,
- PGA's Special Advisor represented the PGA in the OECD's global development forum from 5-7 April 2017 in Paris, which brought together governments, and the business community with emphasis on supporting the implementation of the SDGs. Reports from many developing countries focused on planning for poverty reduction.
- PGA delivered a video-address to leading experts at a Ministerial meeting of UN ECE countries, with a focus on the integrated nature of SDGs to alleviate poverty, 25-27 April 2017.
- PGA's Special Advisor attended the forum of countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on sustainable development from 26-28 April 2017 in Mexico. With a focus on ending poverty and inequality, the meeting was in preparation for reporting at the HLPF.
- PGA's Special Advisor addressed the high level ministerial meeting of UN ESCAP countries in May 2017 which focused on .
- PGA gave the opening statement for the 2017 HLPF (ECOSOC) which was focussed on ending poverty.
- PGA addressed the high level meeting on building the community of common destiny of mankind in Geneva on 18 March 2017.

SDG 2 – End hunger, achieve food security, improve nutrition, promote sustainable agriculture

- PGA reached out through the Zero Hunger Challenge Initiative of the FAO, WFP and IFAD during the High Level Week of the 71 Session of the UNGA.
- PGA participated in the launch of FAO's 2016 State of Food and Agriculture Report in November 2016 which linked food security to other SDGs.

- PGA visited the Rome-based agencies to emphasize the priority for ending hunger and promote agriculture in November 2016. He reached out to the representatives of member states in the FAO's council.
- PGA initiated the installation of 150,000 Italian honeybees on the North Lawn of the United Nations in support of SDG 2 (food security) and SDG 15.
- PGA's Special Advisor hosted a school-style breakfast as part of the opening of the High Level Education Event, 28 June, 2017 at UN Headquarters.

SDG 3 – Ensure Healthy Lives

- PGA's Special Advisor, reached out to 1000 global leaders from the government, scientific and private sector, and health care experts to tackle the most pressing health care challenges by using the World Innovation Summit on Health which took place in Doha, Qatar in November 2016.
- PGA convened a briefing with Director General of WHO and USG of OCHA in November 2016 on the work in progress to improve coordination during international health emergencies.
- PGA participated in and made opening remarks on 30 November 2016 at "Moving forward together: Leaving no one behind" a special event to commemorate World AIDS Day and the commitment to move forward together to end the AIDS epidemic by 2030.
- PGA's Special Advisor participated in World Mental Health Day on 7 April 2017 which focused on innovation and SDG linkages.
- PGA delivered remarks on the implementation of commitments and Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS, 1 June 2017.
- PGA convened a GA briefing on 4 May on a series of health issues. The meeting addressed inter-alia health systems strengthening, health emergencies, migration, follow up to the Secretary-General's Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, Antimicrobial Resistances (AMR), preparations for the 2018 High Level Meeting on Fight Against Tuberculosis and for a comprehensive review of the progress achieved in the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in 2018, and preparations for the 2017 High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).

SDG 4 – Education

- PGA wrote to all Heads of State or Government to encourage them to include SDG learning into school curricula and recommended free SDG learning tools such as the World's Largest Lesson to support these efforts. Letter was sent in November 2017.
- PGA visited UNESCO Headquarters in November 2016 and gave an address. This was followed up by the PGA's Special Advisor participation in UNESCO's SDG 4-Education 2030 Steering Committee, the committee responsible for providing strategic guidance and monitoring to support the implementation of SDG 4.

- As a push to call for the inclusion of SDG curricula in tertiary education, in May 2017, the PGA sent a letter to heads of some 4,000 institutions of higher learning to encourage them to encourage SDG research and make SDG learning materials available to their students.
- OPGA met a number of students from around the world through school assemblies and school visits to further underscore his commitment to the SDG4 as a whole; and especially SDG4.7, Education for Sustainable Development.
- PGA's Special Advisor addressed 80 Ministers of Education and over 500 participating experts in the 2017 Education World Forum, hosted by the United Kingdom in January.
- PGA's Special Advisor participated in the UNESCO Week for Peace and Sustainable Development, March 2017, which was organized to discuss education for sustainable development and global citizenship.
- OPGA advised the Global Goals Educator Task Force to open and maintain the Twitter account #TeachSDGs which has grown to over 9,500 followers in 6 months and has become a movement in and of itself.
- On 28 June, PGA convened the SDG Action Event on Education which brought together civil society, students, young leaders, subject matter experts in education and Member States to discuss what's needed to achieve SDG 4.
- On 14 July, PGA delivered the keynote address to 100 students from Nord Anglia Schools worldwide and an equal number of diplomats and educators.
- PGA's Special Advisor addressed groups of students in the New York City UN Ambassador's Programme in a school in the Bronx and at Dwight School in Manhattan who had been studying the SDGs. .
- In August 2017, PGA invited 50 students from the Practice Makes Perfect programme, NYC, to the UN to learn about the Sustainable Development Goals and the United Nations.

SDG 5 – Gender Equality

- PGA used the occasion of the International Women Day, which was organized by UN Women with the participation of high ranking government officials, academia, celebrities and civil society, to highlight the importance of strengthening the momentum on SDG 5.
- PGA participated in the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on 10 February 2017.
- PGA addressed the 61st Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which ran for two weeks, beginning 13 March 2017.
- PGA made opening remarks at a key exhibition HerStory: A Celebration of Leading Women in the United Nations held on 13 December 2016.

- PGA addressed an event to mark International Day of Women and Girls in Science: From Vision to Action Gender, Science and Sustainable Development - The Impact of Media on 10 February 2017.
- PGA addressed an event to mark International Women's Day 2017 under the theme Women in the Changing World of Work: Planet 50-50 by 2030 on 8 March 2017.
- At the PGA's action event on Building Sustainable Peace for all: Synergies between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Sustaining Peace on 24 January 2017, a workshop was held on "Empowering Women and Youth for Peace and Sustainable Development" to discuss role of women and youth • On 1 May 2017, PGA joined as the International Gender Champion and announced his commitments as a Gender Champion during the 71st Session of UNGA. International Gender Champions is a network of senior leaders working to advance gender equality and has chapters in New York and Geneva.
- PGA achieved gender parity in his office and in senior positions.

SDG 6 – Sustainable Management of Water and Sanitation

- Special Advisor addressed the World Toilet Day event organized by the Singaporean Mission in November 2016.
- PGA addressed the High-level opening segment of the Budapest Water Summit, which was hosted by the Government of Hungary on 28 November 2016.
- PGA took the leadership role in implementing the mandate of resolution 71/222 of 22 December 2016 on "International Decade for Action, Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028" by convening two dialogues, the first on 22 March 2017 and the second on 30 May 2017.
- PGA participated in the Special Event on Priority Actions for Water and Disasters on 20 July, 2017.
- PGA addressed a Water and Sanitation focussed meeting organized by UNICEF and the WBG during the WBG and IMF's Spring meeting in Washington DC.
- PGA addressed World Water Week in Stockholm in August 2017 the largest annual global gathering of water and sanitation professionals.

SDG 7 – Access to Energy for All

- PGA reached out to government leaders, policy makers and entrepreneurs from 175 countries and 639 companies from 30 countries at the World Future Energy Summit in Abu Dhabi in January 2017. To support an end to energy poverty and for renewable solutions.
- PGA took the momentum further by reaching out to government, businesses and other stakeholders during the Sustainable Energy for All Forum on 5 April 2017 in New York.
- PGA's Special Advisor addressed Formula E Car Racing with Italian, Uruguayan and Chilean Ministers and congratulated them on the occasion of a speed car race in New York, powered by solar, July 17 2017.

SDG 8 – Sustainable economic growth, productive employment and decent work

- PGA's participated in the World Economic Forum and met with the President of the International Olympic Committee, speaking about sustainable economic development and job creation and economic, focus on youth.
- PGA reached out to the youth during his missions to Quito, Ecuador, Marrakesh Morocco, Suva, Fiji and others with emphasis on education, employment and youth development.in October and November 2017.
- PGA delivered a video-message to the Morocco Forum for Adolescent and Youth Human Rights 'Driving Sustainable Development' held on 8-9 December 2016.
- PGA made opening remarks at the 2017 United Nations Economic and Social Council Youth Forum (ECOSOC) held in New York on 30 January 2017.
- PGA, with Every Woman Every Child initiative, convened a "Youth Marketplace on Social Innovations for Health and Wellbeing: Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals" in the margins of ECOSOC Youth Forum.

SDG 9 – Infrastructure, Industrialization and Innovation

- PGA visited UNIDO Headquarters in Vienna, in November 2016 and held discussions on the subject.
- The Special Advisor addressed the UN Conference on Transport in Turkmenistan, 26-27 November 2016.
- PGA reached out to African leaders at a meeting in Dakar, Senegal, on 26 March 2017, on African driven industrialization, organized by UNDESA and UN ECA.
- PGA addressed the Global Infrastructure Forum of 22 April 2017 in Washington DC, which was established with the endorsement of 193 countries.
- In June 2017, PGA, as part of his support for financing, organized a retreat of a small number of member states with world known experts on financing for infrastructure development.. A follow-up meeting was held at Ministerial level on the margins of the HLPF.
- PGA travelled to Silicon Valley to promote innovation for the SDGs.
- PGA hosted an SDG Action Event on Innovation and Connectivity on 18 May.

SDG 10 – Reduce Inequality within and among Countries

- PGA organized a high level panel to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities on 2 December 2016.
- PGA addressed the annual celebration of the International Day of Older Persons "Take a Stand Against Ageism" held on 06 October 2016.

- PGA's Sustaining Peace event in January 2017 highlighted the growing problems of unemployment and inequality especially for young women and men.
- PGA engaged with the leaders and champions of youth through ECOSOC's 19th Session of the Youth Assembly in 1 February 2017, urging them to harness their voices, energy and initiatives, since young people number around 1.8 billion across our world.

SDG 11 – Cities and Human Settlements

- PGA reached out to mayors, government administrators, community leaders and others through the HABITAT III conference in Quito Ecuador from 17-20 October 2017.
- OPGA engaged with the City of New York Commissioner for International Affairs in workshops, a health event and the celebration of Nelson Mandela Day
- PGA addressed the 26th session of the Governing Council of the UN-Habitat to promote the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, in Nairobi, in May 2017.
- PGA convened a High Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the New Urban Agenda and the positioning of UN Habitat in that regard, from 5-6 September 2017. On the margins of the event, the PGA convened a luncheon with Mayors and other stakeholders to discuss their contribution to SDG implementation.

SDG12 – Sustainable Consumption and Production

- PGA, in partnership with UNEP and WRI, organized a discussion luncheon on sustainable consumption and production (SCP) patterns, 23 March 2017 in New York.
- PGA reached out to nearly 1000 innovators, start-ups and computer specialists who connected, created and collaborated in 9 cities on 5 continents around the world for technology solutions through the "Global Hackathon 2017" (co-sponsored by UNDP/SDG Action Campaign). This helped in implementing SDG 9,10 and 12.
- PGA supported the "Greening the Blue"- initiatives of the Secretariat including OCSS to bring UNHQ's first electric-vehicle charging stations to the UN garage. PGA promoted the drinking of tap water instead of buying single use plastic bottles, providing permanent signs above the water fountains in all the Secretariat and enhanced transparency of water-testing results on the Greening-the-blue website to UN-buildings encourage lasting a behavioural change and provide further information about the water testing on the Greening-the-blue website.
- PGA convened a GA meeting to mark Mother Earth Day on 22 April on the theme "Environmental & Climate Literacy".

SDG 13 – Climate Change

- PGA participated in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP22 in Morocco in order to urge ratification of the Paris Agreement among all Parties to the

UNFCCC, enhance commitments to climate finance, and increase broad stakeholder engagement on climate action at all levels.

- PGA convened the mandated plenary meeting of the UNGA on El-Nino.
- PGA convened a High Level SDG Action Event on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, co-hosted with UNFCCC Executive Secretary Patricia Espinosa, on 23 March 2017, helping to maintain political momentum during a time of transition for global leadership and solidify the linkage between climate action and the sustainable development agenda.
- PGA supported the Office for Central Support Services (OCSS) for the installation of three charging stations for electric vehicles in the UN garage (April 2017) available now to permit-holders within UN Missions and UN Staff. Studies reveal employees likely to buy a plug-in car if their employer offers at-work charging stations.

SDG14 – Oceans, Seas and Marine Resources

- PGA engaged with the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), International Atomic Energy Agency – Environment Laboratories (IAEA-MEL), Oceanographic Institute and Scientific Center in the Principality of Monaco from 19-21 November 2016.
- PGA participated in the Bali Oceans Conference which was organized by The Economist in 22-24 February 2017, garnering support for ocean finance as well as supporting the launch of the UNEP-led Clean Seas Campaign and other commitments to reduce ocean plastic and pollution.
- PGA reached out via an address on video link to Heads of State or Government and other high ranking participants through the Pacific Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Oceans Conference on 16 March 2017.
- PGA reached out primarily to the private sector by using the platform of the Global Outlook Forum that was organized by the Norwegian Ship-owners Conference on 28 March 2017 and helped secure Voluntary Commitments from this industry for the Ocean Conference.
- PGA and his Ocean Team worked to raise global awareness and support leaders and coalitions, leading to the registry of more than 1300 almost 1400 Voluntary Commitments support humanity's best efforts to achieve SDG 14.
- PGA, supported by his Ocean Team, led processes leading to and supported the Oceans Conference of 5-9 June 2017. Over 6,000 participants undertook careful assessments of the Ocean and bold commitment for a healthier ocean.

SDG 15 – Protect Terrestrial Ecosystems, sustainable forestry, combat desertification, reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

- PGA supported a dedicated workshop on exploitation of natural resources which was organized as part of the PGA convened meeting on Sustaining Peace event on 24 January in New York.

- On 3 March 2017, PGA convened a high level thematic discussion on the global observance of World Wildlife Day entitled "Tackling illicit trafficking in Wildlife "in collaboration with CITES Secretariat. The meeting sought to advance dialogue on Earth jurisprudence and the Sustainable Development Agenda.
- PGA's Special Advisor, addressed the International Day of the Forests on 21 March 2017.
- PGA strengthened the momentum by addressing the United Nations Forum on Forests in May 2017 in New York.
- PGA's SDG Envoy attended and addressed the Fifth Global Platform for disaster risk reduction in Cancun, Mexico, from 24-27 May 2017.

SDG16 – Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies, Justice for all and accountable inclusive institutions at all levels

- PGA convened a High Level SDG Event on sustaining peace and sustainable development on 24 January 2017.
- PGA convened an informal meeting of the UNGA on children and armed conflict of 8 February 2017,
- PGA convened an informal meeting on global counter-terrorism strategy on 22 February 2017.
- PGA addressed the Special Committee of Peace Keeping on 3 March 2017, highlighting the importance of sustaining peace.
- PGA travelled to Central African Republic as part of his push for sustaining peace and met with UN peacekeepers.
- PGA addressed the Human Rights Council on 27 February 2017.

SDG17 – Means of Implementation and Global Partnerships for Sustainable Development

- PGA engaged with the leadership of OECD on 18 November 2016 in Paris
- PGA's Special Advisor for SDG Implementation represented the PGA during the OECD's SDG week in April 2017.
- PGA tabled a GA resolution to establish the UN Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, which was approved on 23 December 2016.
- PGA organized a dialogue for member states with the German Sherpa for the G20 in early 2017 as well as one on the new instruments for sustainable development financing with the World Bank Group.

- PGA's SDG Envoy participated in in the UN World Data Forum, which took place from 15-18 January 2017 in Cape Town, South Africa.
- PGA addressed the High-Level Forum on Official Statistics of 48th United Nations Statistical Commission.
- Through a video message, PGA reached out to participants of the international Bali Democracy Forum that looked into religion, democracy and pluralism on 8 December 2017.
- PGA's SDG Envoy reached out to around 4000 experts from government, businesses, international development community, civil society and others from around 130 countries through the World Governance Summit in Dubai from 12-14 February 2017.
- PGA convened the SDG financing lab, a High Level SDG Action Event, on 18 April in New York. It considered the regulatory and policy levels to align global capital markets and examine concrete strategies and financial instruments available for financing of the SDGs.
- PGA used the platform of the ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development that was organized on 2 March 2017 to highlight the importance of reforms and to make the operational delivery of the UN Development System more effective.
- PGA's SDG Envoy reached out to high ranking officials of the governments and international organizations through the high level Euro-Asia Regional Meeting to improve cooperation on transit, trade facilitation and 2030 Agenda that was organized in Hanoi, Vietnam from 7-9 March 2017.
- PGA appointed the PRs of Argentina and Australia to lead consultations on the alignment of the agenda of the General Assembly with the 2030 Agenda which resulted in a commitment from the GA to continue this work in the next session.
- In June 2017, PGA hosted a retreat for a small number of member states, with world-known expertise from governments, investors and finance institutions on sustainable finance for infrastructure development. This was a response to the key concerns of member states regarding the infrastructure financing gap. A follow-up meeting at Ministerial Level was held on the margins of the HLPF.