



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

8 May 2015

Excellency,

Further to my letter dated 24 April 2015 on the convening of informal interactive hearings with representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, major groups and the private sector on the post-2015 development agenda, scheduled for 26-27 May 2015, I am pleased to forward to you the Concept Note and provisional programme.

As indicated earlier, the two day hearings will consist of an opening segment, four interactive roundtables and a closing segment. A President's summary of the hearings will be prepared and circulated to Member States and stakeholders. A more detailed programme will be availed in due course.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam K. Kutesa', written over a large, stylized 'X' mark.

Sam K. Kutesa

To All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Concept Note
Informal interactive hearings on the post-2015 development agenda
26-27 May 2015
Trusteeship Council Chamber

Background

Engagement with multi-sector and multi-stakeholder actors in the sustainable development agenda of the United Nations has increased steadily. Outcomes from the UN Millennium Summit and the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) further underscored the need for governments to address development challenges in a more holistic, inclusive, transparent and accountable manner with new levels of cooperation. Such engagement is of critical importance at a time when the post-2015 development agenda, with eradication of poverty and the achievement of sustainable development in its social, economic and environmental dimensions, is being formulated by Member States and stakeholders.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/244, the President of the General Assembly will organize, in conjunction with the co-facilitators for the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations, two days of informal interactive hearings with representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, major groups, and the private sector.

The interactive hearings are aimed at fostering active participation and ensuring regional and gender balance, diversity of expertise, sectors and age among speakers to contribute to the formulation of the new development agenda.

Objective

The interactive hearings will provide an opportunity for representatives of non-governmental organizations, civil society organizations, major groups, and the private sector to exchange views and make proposals on the post-2015 development agenda at a critical stage of the intergovernmental negotiations. It is expected that the zero draft of the summit outcome document will be issued by the end of May 2015.

Format and outcome

The interactive hearings will comprise an opening segment, four interactive roundtables and a closing segment. The outcome will be a President's Summary to be circulated to Member States and stakeholders. It will be made available prior to the Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, scheduled for September 25-27, 2015 in New York.

Roundtable Discussion 1: The Declaration

The Declaration of the post-2015 development agenda offers a unique opportunity to present an ambitious vision for sustainable development. This roundtable discussion will address how the Declaration of the outcome document can in a clear and visionary way articulate the objectives and priorities of the new agenda and its implementation.

Guiding questions

1. How should a visionary and ambitious sustainable development agenda, in its social, economic and environmental dimensions, be framed in the Declaration so it can be understood and embraced by all people?
2. How would you suggest inspiring all governments and all stakeholders to take action towards implementing the fundamental transformations envisioned in the post-2015 development agenda?
3. How can the Sustainable Development Goals and targets be featured in the Declaration to maximize ownership and communication?

Roundtable 2: Sustainable Goals, Targets, and Indicators

The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed upon an ambitious set of 17 goals and 169 targets. To be effective, the SDG framework must inspire countries and communities to act to implement transformative change; build upon best practices; and encourage innovation to address gaps and new and emerging challenges. The Secretary-General in his Synthesis Report proposes 6 essential elements, namely dignity; people; prosperity; planet; justice; and partnership, to help frame and communicate the SDGs. There is need for development of both qualitative and quantitative indicators for all of the SDG targets, which are evidence-based and measurable. The UN Statistical Commission is currently working on proposed indicators for consideration.

This roundtable will exchange views on the goals, targets and indicators, and also consider the need for investment in capacity-building; data collection, statistical analysis; and overall implementation. Strategies to achieve disaggregation of data on the basis of sex, age, ethnic background, race, geographic location, income, and disability, among other variables, will be discussed.

Guiding questions

1. How can the indicators be developed in a way that will facilitate monitoring of implementation at national level, ensuring that no one is left behind and that no goal or target is considered achieved unless it has

been met for everyone? What strategies can be developed to ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups are reached?

2. How can the global indicator framework drive ambitious programs, while drawing on lessons learned from the MDGs, evidence-based analysis of what is most effective, and connecting to appropriate regional, national, local and thematic indicators to ensure monitoring and accountability at all levels?
3. How can data collection, use, analysis and sharing be strengthened in the public and private sectors to ensure transparent and effective collaboration between stakeholders at all levels?

Roundtable 3: Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development

To implement the post-2015 development agenda, strong political will and leadership is needed at all levels. The means of implementation that will be required – finances, technology development and transfer as well as capacity building – will be substantial in developing and developed countries, covering the social, economic and environmental dimensions. To mobilize the scale of resources needed, a renewed global partnership will be critical. Key issues to be discussed include: mobilisation of the resources needed and their effective use; policy coherence; identifying and further improving existing best practices; strengthening capacities and enabling environments; facilitation of technology transfer; definition of principles for multi-stakeholder partnerships; and how to address challenges and gaps in implementation.

Many States and stakeholders have specified that implementation strategies must be inclusive. It will be important to ensure meaningful participation of populations that have been marginalized and/or are vulnerable in the design of these strategies, and to ensure fair and equitable benefit-sharing. Transparent, evidence-based decision-making processes, and clear roles and responsibilities will be essential to achieve the post-2015 agenda's objectives.

Guiding Questions

1. How can increased financial resources both public and private, domestic and external be mobilized and complement each other for the implementation of the post-2015 agenda, taking into account the scale and diversity of challenges, and the options for new, additional, and innovative financing mechanisms?

2. What mechanisms can ensure meaningful and inclusive participation of stakeholders, as well as multi-stakeholder partnerships, for the implementation of the post-2015 agenda?
3. What structural reforms, capacity-building efforts, and technology facilitation mechanisms need to be implemented for the achievement of post-2015 development agenda, and the sustainable development goals in particular?
4. How can the outcomes of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development support implementation of the Post-2015 development agenda and how can coherence between the two processes be achieved?

Roundtable Discussion 4: Follow up and Review

To support achievement of the aspirations of the post-2015 development agenda, an effective mechanism is needed for follow up and review of implementation at all levels, by Member States and other stakeholders, including international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society. Best practices in existing mechanisms for monitoring and review can be affirmed and built upon. Further, the review process could facilitate responses to new and emerging challenges in implementation, such as rising inequalities, insecurity, climate change, disasters, and resource constraints. Public participation in follow up and review mechanisms has been recognized as vital at all levels, including through the continued engagement of major groups and all other stakeholders.

Guiding Questions

1. How can awareness and understanding about the post-2015 development agenda be built to support a more effective follow up and review of the agenda?
2. What mechanisms and institutional arrangements are needed to ensure accountability for inclusive, rights-based and timely implementation of the full agenda at the local, national, regional and global levels with involvement of all?
3. How can the UN High-Level Political Forum and other UN processes and entities effectively track progress on implementation of the agenda?

Provisional Programme

DAY 1

10:00-11:00am - High-level Opening Ceremony

Statements by: President of the General Assembly, the UN Secretary-General, Co-Facilitators, representatives of civil society organizations, major groups, and the private sector.

11:00am-1:00pm - Roundtable Discussion 1

Theme: *Declaration*

Moderator, with 2 panellists, including Member State respondents. There will be 2 designated Member State respondents (5 min) and 2 designated civil society/private sector respondents (3 min)

3:00pm-6:00pm - Roundtable Discussion 2

Theme: *Goals, Targets and Indicators*

Moderator, with 4 panellists. There will be 2 designated Member State respondents (5 min) and 2 designated civil society/private sector respondents (3 min)

DAY 2

10:00am-1:00pm - Roundtable Discussion 3

Theme: *MOI and a new global partnership*

Moderator, with 4 panellists. There will be 2 designated Member State respondents (5 min) and 2 designated civil society/private sector respondents (3 min)

3:00pm-5:30pm - Roundtable Discussion 4

Theme: *Monitoring, review and follow-up*

Moderator, with 2 panellists, including one Member State. There will be 2 designated Member State respondents (5 min) and 2 designated civil society/private sector respondents (3 min)

5:30pm-6:00pm - High-level Closing Ceremony

Remarks by: President of the General Assembly, Co-Facilitators, and representatives of civil society/major groups/private sector.