

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

MR. WU HONGBO
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Opening Remarks
ECESA Plus meeting with UN system Principals

Tuesday, 19 July 2016, 8.30 – 9.45 am
Conference Room 11, United Nations Headquarters, NY

Dear Colleagues,

It is my pleasure to welcome you. Thank you for your participation in this meeting of ECESA Plus.

You all received the background notes and agenda of our meeting.

If there is no comment on the agenda, then I propose to proceed.

A lot has happened since our last meeting and we have taken a number of very important steps together. I shall begin with a few pertinent points on the agenda items before opening the floor.

Agenda item I. [\[Follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development\]](#)

Let me start with an overview of the ongoing follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

DRAFT GA RESOLUTION ON FOLLOW-UP AND REVIEW

The consultation on draft GA resolution on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda is still pending, with one particular political issue. However, Member States have reached consensus on a number of specific decisions that will help guide the follow-up and review until 2019. Among other actions, Member States decided the following:

- **The High-level Political Forum (HLPF) meeting under the auspices of the ECOSOC, without prejudice to the inter-linked nature of SDGs, will consider the following themes: (i) (2017) *Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world*, reviewing in depth SDGs 1, 2, 3, 5, 9, 14; (ii) (2018) *Transformation toward sustainable and resilient societies*, reviewing in depth SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, 15; and (iii) (2019) *Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality*, reviewing in depth 4, 8, 10, 13, 16.**
- **Means of implementation, including goal 17, will be reviewed annually.**
- **The Secretary-General is to update the *voluntary common reporting guidelines* as provided for in the annex to his report (A/70/684), and to make them available to Member States in preparation for voluntary national reviews.**

- **The President of ECOSOC is to jointly convene the high-level segment of the Council and the three ministerial days of the HLPF, in order to avoid duplication, enhance efficiency, and strengthen complementarity and synergy.**
- **The General Assembly is to review progress in implementing its resolution on follow-up and review and resolution 67/290 on the format and organizational aspects of the HLPF at its seventy-fourth session.**

VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEWS

For the 2016 session of the HLPF, 22 countries have agreed to undertake voluntary national reviews.

The first year of voluntary national reviews is primarily about how countries are preparing for and managing their transition towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Preparations for these reviews benefited from regional expert group meetings in Bangkok, Cairo and Geneva, with the support of the regional commissions.

REGIONAL INPUTS

The regional commissions organised regional forums on sustainable development. The outcomes of these forums have enriched the discussion on regional experience.

I thank colleagues from the Regional Commissions for your support.

TECHNOLOGY FACILITATION MECHANISM AND SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION (STI) FORUM

Overall, preparations for the HLPF benefited from significant contributions from the ECESA member entities on many fronts, including the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the STI Forum held last month.

The Forum identified and examined technology needs and gaps. This will help facilitate development, transfer and dissemination of relevant technologies for the SDGs. The Co-chair's summary was presented at HLPF last week.

SG'S REPORT ON PROGRESS TOWARDS THE SDGS

Many of you have also supported the preparation of the Secretary-General's first report on progress towards the SDGs.

As mandated by Member States, the report informs the follow-up and review of the SDGs in the context of the HLPF.

GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT REPORT (GSDR) 2016

In addition, you have widely contributed to the preparation of the 2016 edition of the GSDR. The report helped galvanize discussions on the science-policy interface for sustainable development.

These contributions are much appreciated. Indeed, the programme of the HLPF itself is testimony of the broad engagement of ECESA members.

With the themes for the next sessions identified in the recent follow-up and review resolution (yet to be adopted), I am confident that we will continue to strengthen your engagement in support of the HLPF.

As for the future GSDR, Member States have decided that the GSDR will be prepared once every four years for the meetings of the HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly.

Member States have designed a three-tier mechanism for the preparation of the report, which comprises 15 eminent expert scientists to write the report, supported by a task team co-led by several parts of the UN system, and of course the scientific community.

Agenda item II. [\[Follow-up to Addis Ababa Action Agenda\]](#)

ECOSOC FORUM ON FFD FOLLOW-UP

The inaugural ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up (FfD Forum) in April provided a dedicated and inclusive platform for substantive deliberations on Financing for Development.

I thank all Members of ECESA Plus for their support in preparation of the Forum. Special thanks go to the principals and deputies , who attended the forum in person.

Despite the recent adoption of the Addis Agenda, consultations on the outcome document revealed a deep divide between developed and developing countries regarding the scope and priorities of financing for development follow-up.

The preparations for the next FfD Forum will provide opportunities for Member States to improve mutual understanding and build trust on these relevant issues.

INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE

I thank all of you for the active participation of your agencies in the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development.

Member States formally welcomed the monitoring approach of the Task Force, which includes: (i) a discussion of the global context and its implications for the follow-up process; (ii) an overview of progress in implementation of the Addis Agenda, while covering the broader set of

commitments and action items in an on-line annex, and (iii) analysis of thematic issues.

The Task Force has begun its work for the 2017 cycle. Task Force members are preparing Issue Briefs on the state of affairs in areas they contributed to for the 2016 report.

I look forward to continuing our excellent cooperation as we proceed toward the 2017 cycle.

Agenda item III. [\[Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators\]](#)

GLOBAL INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

The Statistical Commission of ECOSOC, at its 47th session, held this year agreed on a global indicator framework for the follow-up and review of the implementation of the SDGs at global level. The framework includes 230 global indicators.

The proposal was prepared by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG indicators following an intensive consultation process with all stakeholders.

The framework is a practical starting point. It will be reviewed and refined along the way.

The indicator framework is a set of indicators of global ambition. This does not imply that all the indicators will fit nicely with each and every country's unique situation. Therefore, national governments are encouraged to streamline or improve their local indicators based on their own priorities.

DATA DISAGGREGATION

The 2030 Agenda underlines the need for “quality, accessible, timely and reliable disaggregated data”. The Inter-Agency and Expert Group has established a work stream on data disaggregation to ensure that the principle of “no one left behind” is fully reflected in the global SDG indicators.

The implementation of the indicator framework presents a challenge to the statistical community, especially in developing countries.

UN agencies and related organizations need to work together closely to support countries to strengthen national statistical capacities.

Availability of disaggregated data is critical. Often, at the national level data available is general. For example, on poverty eradication, while there may exist data on the number of poor, but there is a lack of information on why they are poor. Such information will be vital for policy and decision making.

HIGH LEVEL GROUP FOR PARTNERSHIP, COORDINATION AND CAPACITY-BUILDING FOR STATISTICS FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

The High-level Group established by the Statistical Commission is developing a Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data.

This Global Action Plan will provide a roadmap for the modernization of statistical systems, including plans to strengthen national statistical capacities.

The High-level Group is also overseeing the organization of the UN World Forum on Sustainable Development Data. The Forum will be held in January 2017 in Cape Town, South Africa.

The Data Forum will be an opportunity for all stakeholders to engage in an interactive dialogue and identify innovative solutions and partnerships for data.

Agenda item IV. [\[Any Other Business\]](#)

ECOSOC DIALOGUE

The ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system concluded on the 7th of July. The purpose of the Dialogue was to discuss how the UN development system will need to adapt in order to respond to the requirements of the 2030 Agenda.

As you know, the Independent Team of Advisers established by the ECOSOC Bureau has presented a number of proposals to enhance system-wide coherence, effectiveness and efficiency.

This included calling for a mapping exercise and mandate review of the various entities and coordination mechanisms.

Member States were generally of the view that a middle of the road approach that strikes a balance between ambition and feasibility is needed.

The outcome of the Dialogue has been captured in a Summary Report of the ECOSOC Vice President on behalf of the ECOSOC Bureau. It is being carefully considered in the preparation of the update to the Secretary-General's report on the QCPR.

QCPR PREPARATIONS

The Secretary-General's update to his report on progress in the implementation of the 2012 Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review will be released soon as I mentioned earlier.

This update will contain the Secretary-General's recommendations for a UN development system that is fit to deliver on the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda.

It will be informed by the ECOSOC Dialogue process, the progress report presented at the ECOSOC Segment on Operational Activities, and the proposals received from the Independent Team of Advisors and the UN Development Group.

Drafts have been shared for comments from the UN development system. The system's input is critical to get this right.

I look forward to working closely with you as we enter this new development era.

LOOKING AHEAD

Going forward, we have our work cut out. I hope we will continue in the same spirit of collaboration, partnership and transparency. We have the following key events coming up which will need coordinated support from the UN Development System:

- **United Nations Summit for Refugees and Migrants to be held on 19 September 2016 in New York**
- **Global Sustainable Transport Conference to be convened by the Secretary-General on 26-27 November 2016 in Ashgabat, Turkmenistan**
- **High-level United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: to be held in Fiji in June 2017. The conference will coincide with World Oceans Day to support implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14.**

I look forward to working with you on these important conferences and will keep you posted on any developments.

I would now like to open the floor for discussions and request you speak on how best ECESA Plus can provide support to intergovernmental mandates.