



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

28 November 2016

Excellency,

As follow-up to my strategic plan to push forward meaningful progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda's 17 Sustainable Development Goals during the 71st session, I am pleased to inform you that I will convene and chair an informal briefing to Member States on sustainable finance on Wednesday 7 December 2016 at 1:15-2:30pm, in Conference Room 1. Sustainable Finance is the term used to define financial flows, public and private, that are allocated in a way that simultaneously promotes economic growth, social inclusion and environmental stewardship. The informal briefing addresses my commitment under SDG 17 to promote increased alignment of private investments and capital flows with the SDGs, including through greening the financial system and its regulatory mechanisms. In particular, it will showcase the work being done by the UNEP Inquiry into the Design of a Sustainable Financial System (<http://web.unep.org/inquiry>), as well as a recent report by the Brookings Institution, entitled "*Links in the Chain of Sustainable Finance: Accelerating Private Investments for the SDGs, Including Climate*" (<https://www.brookings.edu/research/links-in-the-chain-of-sustainable-finance-accelerating-private-investments-for-the-sdgs-including-climate-action/>).

Aligning the global financial system with the needs of sustainable development is ultimately a policy choice. The UNEP Inquiry into the design of a Sustainable Financial System was established in 2014 to advance policy options to unlock and mobilize capital towards sustainable development. Its work has been based on exploring innovative national experiences by major players such as central banks, financial regulators, public policy makers and standard setters in advancing sustainable finance. The Brookings report is based on the premise that private finance is indispensable to meet all the needs of sustainable development. It focuses on shaping the risks, returns, and other incentives facing market actors to ensure private financing is oriented to support the achievement of the Goals. The report, as well the work of the UNEP Inquiry, were presented at a high level event on September 21, 2016, on the margins of the General Debate of the 71st UNGA.

The goal is to provide Member States with an overview to this work and to point to ways in which interested delegations can follow-up on it. I therefore encourage attendance at the highest level. Attached herewith is a draft program for the informal briefing.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson

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

DRAFT PROGRAM

Informal Briefing on Sustainable Finance

7 December, 2016 – 1:15-2:30pm, CR-1

Program:

- Welcoming remarks by Peter Thomson, President of the 71st General Assembly
- Opening remarks by Ambassador Macharia Kamau, Special Envoy of the PGA for SDG Implementation and Climate Change (TBC)
- Presentation of the work of the UNEP Inquiry into the Design of a Sustainable Financial System, Simon Zadek, Co-director of the UNEP Inquiry
- Presentation of the report “Links in the Chain of Sustainable Finance: Accelerating Private Investments for the SDGs, including Climate Action”, by John McArthur and Homi Kharas, Brookings Institution
- Comments and questions from the floor
- Reaction from the UNEP Inquiry
- Reaction by Brookings Institution
- Conclusion and way forward by Peter Thomson, President of the 71st General Assembly