



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

28 March 2019

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to forward herewith a letter dated 27 March 2019 from H.E. Mrs. Maria Helena Lopes De Jesus Pires, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste and H.E. Mrs. Marie Chatardová, Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Czech Republic, co-facilitators of the process to lead intergovernmental consultations aimed at enhancing synergies and coherence and reducing overlap where it is found to exist in the agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies, as well as the high-level political forum and other related forums in light of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The co-facilitators are convening the second meeting of the intergovernmental process on Wednesday, 3 April 2019, at 3:00 p.m., in the Trusteeship Council Chamber. The co-facilitators are also sharing a background note with supportive Annexes I and II.

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

M. ESPINOSA
Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés

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



Permanent Mission of the Czech Republic
to the United Nations



27 March 2019

Excellency,

We wish to refer to our first informal intergovernmental consultations on 18 March 2019 related to the General Assembly resolution 72/313 of 20 September 2018, entitled "*Revitalization of the work of the General Assembly*", in particular paragraphs 29, 30 and 31 related to the need to "enhance synergies and coherence and reduce overlap where it is found to exist in the agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies, as well as the high-level political forum and other related forums in light of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

Further to these first consultations, we are pleased to share with you a Note of the Co-facilitators with supportive Annexes I and II. These are intended to facilitate our further reflection and consideration at the second informal intergovernmental consultations on Wednesday, 3 April 2019, at 3:00 pm in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

During this second consultation, we look forward to listening to your views on the ideas and questions in the note, including the way forward for our work on alignment.

Kindly also note that, following our consultations on 3 April, our third informal consultations will be convened on Thursday, 9 May, 10:00 am, in the ECOSOC Chamber, and our fourth informal consultations will be convened on Tuesday, 18 June, 10:00 am, in the Trusteeship Council Chamber.

We look forward to your inputs and engagement.

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

Marie Chatardová

Permanent Representative of the Czech
Republic to the United Nations

Maria Helena Lopes De Jesus Pires

Permanent Representative of Timor-Leste to
the United Nations

TO: The President of the General Assembly
New York

27 March 2019

Enhancing synergies and coherence and reducing overlap where it is found to exist in the agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies, as well as the high-level political forum and other related forums in light of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda

Note of the Co-facilitators

This note is prepared further to the first informal consultations of the General Assembly, convened on Monday, 18 March 2019, and in preparation for the second informal consultations, scheduled on Wednesday, 3 April 2019, to enhance synergies and coherence, address gaps in their coverage of the 2030 Agenda and reduce overlap where it is found to exist in the agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies, as well as the high-level political forum and other related forums in light of the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The alignment of the agendas of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and other bodies has been addressed through informal consultations over several recent sessions of the General Assembly. There is thus already a rich history of consultations and analysis on which to build. Member States have agreed during past sessions that the work of United Nations intergovernmental bodies needs to fully reflect the 2030 Agenda. Member States also shared an understanding that there remains a need to agree upon a framework to identify and address overlaps in the agendas of the UN bodies and gaps in their coverage of the 2030 Agenda. These two dimensions characterize what is meant by the alignment process.

The focus of the first informal consultations on 18 March was to hear the initial views of Member States. During the consultations, delegations reiterated the importance they attach to the alignment process. The full and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was seen to be of the utmost importance, with a special focus on the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, which remains the highest priority. The roots of the alignment process were recalled, and references were also made to the perspectives and contributions on alignment by Member States offered during the joint briefing convened by the PGA and the President of ECOSOC on January. It was noted that the current timing, which includes the upcoming HLPF under the auspices of the General Assembly at the level of Heads of State and Government in September 2019, may offer momentum for alignment. We also heard many valuable messages on the ownership and leadership of Member States, synergies and coherence, and overlap and gaps in their coverage of the 2030 Agenda.

Gaps in addressing the 2030 Agenda

During the 18 March consultations, we heard from delegations that it would be useful to build on the mapping assessment developed under the leadership of the Permanent Representative of Colombia, who led informal consultations on alignment during the 70th session of the General Assembly. An updated mapping was seen as a concrete next step.

In light of this, we wish to share with you two documents. The first is a brief Overview of how the agendas of the General Assembly and ECOSOC address the various SDGs, presented in Annex I of this Note. This Overview has been prepared by the Secretariat, drawing from the updated detailed mapping of Colombia. This chart in Annex I focuses on how the substance from each target is addressed in the agendas of the General Assembly, its

Committees and of ECOSOC and its Commissions, going beyond the mere titles of agenda items.

The second is the updated Mapping assessment of SDGs and targets based on agenda items of the 73rd session of General Assembly and the ECOSOC system, which is presented in Annex II. The Mapping assessment was originally prepared during the work led by Colombia during the 70th session of the General Assembly, which focused on how the substance from each target is addressed in the Agenda of the General Assembly, its Committees and the ECOSOC and its Commissions, going beyond the mere titles of agenda items. A group of Permanent Missions worked on this exercise and offered options for further discussion. It should be noted that the mapping did not reflect the work of the HLPF, which reviews all SDGs over a four-year period, nor the work of some ECOSOC Forums.

Annex II is a technical update of the original mapping and updates the agenda items, through the 73rd session of the General Assembly, carried out by the Secretariat.

We trust that the information contained in these Annexes will contribute towards evidence-based deliberations at the next informal consultations. We look forward to your further guidance on what could be the approach to ensure that the goals and targets are appropriately addressed in the work of the General Assembly Committees, ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies and the HLPF and other related forums, for addressing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We also seek your guidance on how the greatest potential synergies between the agendas of the various respective bodies be captured and drawn upon.

Overlaps and duplications

Regarding the issue of overlap where it is found to exist, we have listened carefully to the views of delegations on possible ways to identify and address duplication and overlap that could facilitate further reflection. The following points below are the key messages we took from the views expressed during our first consultations this session, as well as past views expressed by Member States that were conveyed by the Permanent Representatives of Belgium and St. Vincent and the Grenadines in their role as Co-facilitators on alignment during the 72nd session.

These include:

- The ownership and leadership of Member States on the analysis of overlaps in both the General Assembly and ECOSOC should be reaffirmed. It is important to safeguard the rights of all States to decide on the action to be taken on overlap, with a consideration that any exercise regarding overlapping must safeguard and strengthen the UNDS. At the same time, duplications should be avoided in the work of intergovernmental bodies so that Member States can spend adequate time to address the critical issues.
- There are various options to be explored for addressing duplication where it is found to exist, while ensuring that no important substance is lost and keeping in mind the phrase that “Duplication does not necessarily mean repetition”.
- There remains a need for a framework to conduct analysis on overlap. To carry out an objective analysis of possible overlaps, there is need to develop criteria as to how to assess overlaps and to address them with a coherent and consistent approach.
- Possible overlaps between the General Assembly and ECOSOC should be evaluated on a

case-by-case basis, analysing items according to these bodies' respective mandates. The assessment should go beyond the titles of agenda items and examine sub-items and the content of resolutions.

- The analysis on overlap should bear in mind the different perspectives from the Second, Third and other Committees as they undertake their work.

With this in view, and to facilitate further reflection during our consultations on Wednesday, 3 April, we wish to offer a few thoughts on possible criteria for delegations to consider in the continuing analysis of the way the SDGs are addressed in intergovernmental bodies.

Such criteria could include:

- The same issue is considered in the two bodies (e.g., the title of the item is the same)
- There is overlap not only in the title of the item but also in the content of the SG's reports and resolutions considered under this item
- The two bodies consider the issue from a similar angle (as opposed to each body looking at the interlinkages of the issue with a specific area within their purview for example)
- No body has an oversight function over the other (For example, ECOSOC adopts the reports of its subsidiary bodies so needs to have an item for this purpose with the exact same title as the name of the subsidiary body)
- The mandates and functions of the two bodies could justify that both consider the same issue from a different perspective (this is the example from operational activities, where the GA adopts policy guidance and ECOSOC reviews its implementation, so there is no overlap).
- The item is not a "mainstreaming item", i.e., it does not reflect an issue that needs to be mainstreamed in the work of all bodies (e.g., gender mainstreaming, possibly countries in special situation).

Possible way forward:

We would like to note that there are various ways to carry forward the work on alignment, some of which were suggested during the informal consultations. We propose to continue the work in the current format of informal consultations chaired by the Co-Facilitators and supported by the Secretariat and a continued outreach with Member States. We also plan to convene informal informals at expert level between the sessions of informal consultations to give more space and time for an in-depth discussion on the mapping assessment of SDGs and targets as well as the criteria to identify overlaps and duplications. Based on the outcomes of these discussions, we propose to reflect on potential solutions for addressing gaps and overlaps.

Possible questions for discussion:

Based on the above, we would like to suggest the following further questions for possible consideration at our next informal consultations on 3 April:

- What are your views on the updated technical mapping assessment of SDGs and targets against the agenda of the UN bodies? Could this document be accepted by the Member States as a reference document for further deliberations? What could be the next steps in considering goals and targets that are insufficiently addressed in the agendas of the General Assembly and ECOSOC?

- What are your views on the possible methodology for examining overlaps and duplications on a case-by-case basis?
- What are your views on our proposal for the way forward?