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UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SUMMIT: 25-27 SEPTEMBER 2015

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The UN Sustainable Development Summit opens Friday, 25 September, at UN Headquarters in New York. The summit is expected to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, comprising several elements: a preamble; a declaration; 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 supporting targets; means of implementation (MOI) and the Global Partnership; and a framework for follow-up and review of implementation. This package, titled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” was developed by UN Member States during negotiations that stretched from March 2013 to August 2015.

Approximately 160 Heads of State or Government and 30 ministers are attending the UN Sustainable Development Summit, along with over 9,000 delegates and around 3,000 accredited journalists. The summit is being convened as a High-level Plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly, and co-chaired by the presidencies of the 69th and 70th sessions, Uganda and Denmark, respectively.

Before the opening plenary convenes, Pope Francis will address the UN General Assembly (UNGA). The plenary, when it convenes Friday morning, will hear a message from youth and witness performances by UN Children’s Fund (UNICEF) Goodwill Ambassadors Shakira and Angélique Kidjo. Plenary is then expected to adopt the 2030 Agenda.

Over the three days of the summit, country leaders and high-level representatives will deliver statements at the plenary sessions, and will take part in six interactive dialogues. The dialogues will address: ending poverty and hunger; tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind; fostering sustainable economic growth, transformation and promoting sustainable consumption and production; delivering on a revitalized Global Partnership; building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions to achieve sustainable development; and protecting our planet and combating climate change. The closing plenary will take place on the afternoon of 27 September.

Many events and bilateral meetings will take place alongside the summit, including high-level events organized by the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), the UN Secretary-General’s Sustainable Energy for All initiative (SE4All) and the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The UN Secretary-General is also convening an informal discussion of climate change at the Heads of State and Government level.

The intergovernmental negotiation process on the post-2015 development agenda was first mandated by the UNGA Special Event on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September 2013, which also decided that a Global Summit should be held in September 2015 to adopt a new UN development agenda. The Special Event also called for linkages between the new development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) mandated at Rio+20.

MILLENNIUM SUMMIT AND MDGS: The UN Millennium Summit took place from 6-8 September 2000, at UN Headquarters in New York. Attended by 149 Heads of State and Government and high-ranking officials from over 40 other countries, the main outcome document was the Millennium Declaration. This Declaration contained a statement of values, principles and objectives for the international agenda for the 21st century. Subsequently, the MDGs were elaborated based on consultations among representatives of international institutions. The UN Secretary-General presented the MDGs to the UNGA in 2001, at which point UN Member States recommended that they should be used as a guide to implement the Millennium Declaration, with a deadline for accomplishing the goals set for 2015.

UNCSD: The international community gathered at the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD, or Rio+20), in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in June 2012, agreeing to launch a process to develop a set of SDGs. The Rio+20 outcome called for establishing an Open Working Group (OWG) that would submit a proposal for SDGs. The Rio+20 outcome document outlines, *inter alia*:

- the importance of remaining firmly committed to the full and timely achievement of the MDGs and of respecting all Rio principles, taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and priorities;
- the need to ensure coordination and coherence with the processes considering the post-2015 development agenda, and to receive initial input to the OWG’s work from the UN Secretary-General in consultation with national governments; and
- the need to assess progress towards the achievement of the goals, accompanied by targets and indicators, while taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and levels of development.

The UNGA endorsed the outcome document, titled *The Future We Want*, in resolution 66/288 on 27 July 2012.

UNGA SPECIAL EVENT TO FOLLOW-UP EFFORTS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE MDGS: This Special Event took place on 25 September 2013, at UN Headquarters in New

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York. The Outcome Document called for, *inter alia*: a single framework and set of goals that are universal in nature and applicable to all countries, and that promote peace and security, democratic governance, the rule of law, gender equality and human rights for all; intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 agenda; the Secretary-General to release, by the end of 2014, a synthesis report on all post-2015 development agenda inputs; and adopting the new agenda at a summit in September 2015.

OWG: The OWG on SDGs held its first eight meetings, also referred to as the “input” or “stocktaking” phase, between March 2013 and February 2014 at UN Headquarters in New York. In February 2014, the Co-Chairs, Macharia Kamau (Kenya) and Csaba Körösi (Hungary), released a “stocktaking” document, reviewing the discussions to date, and outlining 19 focus areas as the basis for further discussion. A “zero draft” of the goals and targets was issued on 2 June 2014. After two sessions held primarily in informal consultations, at the conclusion of the 13th session of the OWG, on 19 July 2014, the Group adopted by acclamation a report containing 17 proposed SDGs and 169 targets, and agreed to submit the proposal to the UNGA for consideration and action at its 68th session.

SYNTHESIS REPORT OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL: The UNGA called on the UN Secretary-General, in resolution 68/6 of September 2013, to synthesize inputs on the post-2015 development agenda in a report before the end of 2014, so as to feed into the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon released an advance version of “The Road to Dignity by 2030: Ending Poverty, Transforming All Lives and Protecting the Planet” on 6 December 2014 and formally presented it to UN Member States on 8 January 2015. The report proposes an integrated set of six essential elements: dignity, people, prosperity, planet, justice, and partnership.

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY: A number of UNGA resolutions have established and set parameters for the post-2015 development agenda negotiations and related processes.

On 30 June 2014, the UNGA adopted resolution 68/279, titled “Modalities for the third International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD3).” The resolution included the decision to hold FfD3 and emphasizes the need for effective coordination with the preparations for the summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda.

On 10 September 2014, the UNGA adopted resolution 68/309, by which it: acknowledged the conclusion of the work of the OWG; welcomed its report; and decided that the proposal of the OWG contained in its report shall be the main basis for integrating the SDGs into the post-2015 development agenda, while recognizing that other inputs will also be considered in the intergovernmental negotiating process in 2015.

On 29 December 2014, the UNGA adopted resolution 69/244 on the organization of the UN summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, noting it will take place on 25-27 September 2015, in New York with the 70th session of the UN General Debate beginning on 28 September.

On 16 January 2015, the UNGA adopted a decision on modalities for the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda (A/69/L.46). The decision states, *inter alia*:

- the proposal of the OWG on SDGs will be the main basis for integrating the SDGs into the post-2015 development agenda, while other inputs will also be taken into consideration;
- “every effort shall be made” to ensure effective coordination between the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and the preparatory process for FfD3, and other relevant UN intergovernmental processes;
- the outcome document for adoption at the summit “may include” as main components: a declaration; the SDGs and

- targets; means of implementation and global partnership for sustainable development; and follow-up and review; and
- the initial draft of the outcome document shall be prepared by the Co-Facilitators “on the basis of views provided by Member States,” as well as “taking into account substantive discussions in the process of intergovernmental negotiations,” and issued by May 2015.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL NEGOTIATIONS ON THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA: A series of eight scheduled sessions to prepare the outcome of the UN Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda began in January 2015 at UN Headquarters in New York, and included interactive dialogues with Major Groups and other stakeholders.

The first session, from 19-21 January, conducted a stocktaking of governments’ views on the agenda. On the basis of this session, the Co-Facilitators prepared an Elements Paper for discussion at the second session.

The second session convened from 17-20 February 2015, at UN Headquarters in New York. This session focused on the declaration component of the Summit outcome document. The session also included a briefing with the Director of the UN Statistics Division regarding the development of SDG indicators.

The third session convened from 23-27 March 2015, at UN Headquarters in New York. This meeting focused on: the SDGs and targets; a proposed timeline and roadmap for the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) to create an indicator framework for the SDGs; country experiences in implementing sustainable development; and arrangements for a joint meeting with the FfD3 preparatory process during their April session.

The fourth session convened as a joint meeting with the FfD3 process from 21-24 April 2015, at UN Headquarters in New York. Delegates focused on: the deliberations during the second FfD3 preparatory meeting, which had convened the previous week; a discussion with representatives from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund; proposals for the creation of a technology facilitation mechanism and other science, technology and innovation issues; the relationship between the FfD3 and post-2015 processes; follow-up and review on FfD3 and means of implementation; and coherence between the outcome documents from the two processes, outstanding issues and the way forward.

The fifth session took place from 18-22 May 2015, at UN Headquarters in New York. During the course of the week, delegates discussed: follow-up and review of the post-2015 development agenda; goals, targets and indicators; themes for the interactive dialogues during the post-2015 summit in September; and the way forward. Delegates also adopted the six themes for the interactive dialogues.

The sixth session took place from 22-25 June 2015, at UN Headquarters in New York. Delegations and major groups provided their reactions and amendments to the zero draft, which included a preamble, a political declaration, the 17 SDGs and supporting targets, a section on means of implementation and the Global Partnership, and a section on a framework for follow-up and review.

The final negotiating session began on 20 July 2015, with discussion of a draft outcome document dated 8 July. The session was scheduled to finish on 31 July. The Co-Facilitators produced new drafts on 26, 30 and 31 July. Delegates reviewed a revised text dated 1 August, and adopted this with oral amendments at the closing plenary on Sunday 2 August. The final package, titled “Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” contains the preamble, declaration, 17 SDGs and 169 targets, means of implementation and the Global Partnership, and a framework for follow-up and review of implementation.