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UN SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS: SATURDAY, 26 SEPTEMBER 2015

The UN Sustainable Development Summit continued on Saturday, 26 September 2015, as delegates continued with statements in a general plenary that ran through the day and into the evening. Interactive dialogues on “Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth, Transformation and Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production,” and “Delivering on a Revitalized Global Partnership” took place in the morning and afternoon. Many side events convened in and around the conference venue, including the UN Global Compact’s Private Sector Forum, and events organized by the UN Secretary-General’s Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All) initiative and the Global Environment Facility.

PLENARY HIGHLIGHTS

Throughout the day, heads of State and Government and other dignitaries addressed the plenary. Speakers noted the accomplishments as well as the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), including their uneven achievement across the world. They urged building on this experience to enhance the implementation of SDGs. Many speakers highlighted the broad consultative process by which the goals were developed. They stressed the need to engage with actors at the national level to ensure country ownership for implementation. Speakers also highlighted the importance of engaging youth in implementing the SDGs.

China, the Republic of Korea and other countries announced concrete commitments to provide support to developing countries to achieve the SDGs. The Republic of Korea announced the Better Life for Girls Initiative, which will support vulnerable girls in developing countries with US\$200 million dollars over the next five years. China announced the establishment of a US\$2 billion assistance fund for South-South cooperation to implement the SDGs, as well as increasing investment in LDCs to US\$12 billion by 2030, among other commitments.

Speakers noted the continued importance of official development assistance (ODA), and urged developed countries to fulfill their existing commitments. Some speakers also noted the need to address illicit financial flows, tax evasion, debt sustainability, and benefit-sharing contracts in areas such as mining.

Many speakers stressed the need to agree on a durable and ambitious climate change agreement in Paris, this December. Others highlighted the particular role played by climate change

in achieving sustainable development outcomes given its cross-cutting nature. Leaders from small island developing states (SIDS) stressed the importance of this issue to their existence.

Speakers highlighted the ongoing refugee crisis in Europe as an example of the continued need for international cooperation and the importance of tackling the root causes of poverty and vulnerability. Many leaders provided examples of how the SDGs are being integrated into national plans. They also urged making greater effort to integrate small island states into the global economy and fostering resilience in the spirit of leaving no one behind.

Iceland and Sweden made pledges to attain carbon neutrality and a fossil-fuel-free economy, respectively.

Leaders welcomed the launch of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism, noting the SDGs provide a blueprint for “innovation-driven development.” Some speakers called for increasing women’s representation at all levels of government, universal access to sexual and reproductive health, and partnering with actors at all levels. Others called for robust accountability mechanisms and pointed to the critical role of monitoring progress in the implementation of the SDGs. Speakers also discussed: the role of businesses; the importance of achieving land degradation neutrality; the multidimensional nature of poverty and the need to tackle all dimensions; synergies with the African Union’s Agenda 2063; and the importance of addressing governance, transparency and corruption issues.

A full account of the plenary will appear in the ENB summary report of the UN Sustainable Development Summit, available Wednesday, 30 September.

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUES

Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth, Transformation and Promoting Sustainable Consumption and Production:

Miro Charles Michel, Prime Minister, Belgium, and Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister, Bangladesh, co-chaired the dialogue. Prime Minister Hasina said consumption patterns must demonstrate commitment to global sustainability. Prime Minister Michel emphasized the need to move towards a circular economy concept.

Michael Higgins, President, Ireland, said that, in its focus on access to land, technology transfer, and finance and tax regulation, the 2030 Agenda addresses the structural causes of inequality.

Lars Lokke Rasmussen, Prime Minister, Denmark, stressed the importance of free trade rather than a narrow focus on aid, noting developing countries are requesting access to markets and

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technologies. Australia prioritized embracing innovation in aid programmes and giving women access to finance.

Akinwumi Adesina, President, African Development Bank, noted that Africa has massive resources for renewable and conventional energy sources, which would enable factories to work at full capacity to produce value-added products.

Carlos Lopes, Executive Secretary, UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), stressed that agribusiness has the potential to produce job and economic growth and is critical for building value chains.

John Dramani Mahama, President, Ghana, noting the SDGs' prioritization of agriculture and energy, said the green revolution had bypassed Africa, whereas modernized agricultural investments offer the promise of jobs for a growing population.

Several developing countries, including Bangladesh, Kyrgyzstan and Burundi, highlighted national efforts to address poverty, including through investment in education, health care and decarbonizing the national economy. Cote d'Ivoire said sustainable growth efforts in his country have focused on promotion of inclusive learning, mandatory schooling from the ages of six to 16, and a roadmap for promotion of the green economy.

Several, including Madagascar, highlighted needs like financing, technology transfer, regional integration and access to markets, while the Dominican Republic said that countries must rethink the old models of development, as the pattern of recent decades is incompatible with the 2030 goals and targets. Jim Ovia, Chairman, Zenith Bank, emphasized the importance of technology for the African region. Senegal advised governments in the developing world to create sovereign wealth funds that can own and raise capital from "dormant assets" like land.

Irwin LaRocque, Secretary-General, Caribbean Community (CARICOM), supported considering countries' vulnerabilities when making decisions on graduation from concessional financing, and he commended the ECLAC proposal to alleviate debt burden.

Austria called for education and vocational training, the creation of decent jobs, and technology and innovation as means of promoting sustainable consumption and production (SCP).

Slovakia, noting its forthcoming presidency of the European Union (EU) in 2016, said sustainable development and sustainable economic growth must be the basis of a new agenda that is measured by the number of jobs and new technologies created.

Kailash Satyarthi, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, called on everyone to end child slavery, and urged corporate leaders to safeguard children through their supply and value chains.

Guy Ryder, International Labour Organization (ILO), declared the ILO's commitment to support Member States in promoting the formalization of work, productivity and sustainable enterprises, enhancing investment in technical and vocational skills, and equipping current and future generations with skills for decent jobs.

The United Kingdom anticipated rising demand for jobs due to the "youth bulge" in many countries, and stressed the importance of women's economic empowerment.

Adnan Amin, Director-General, International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), highlighted "tremendous opportunity" for renewable energy, reporting 14% growth in renewables over the previous year, and a 75% fall in the cost of photovoltaics in the past five years.

Nkosazana Clarice Dlamini-Zuma, Chair, African Union Commission, highlighted the importance of skill development and education for Africa's young population, called for empowering women with education, land rights and access to

capital and technology, and emphasized oceans as a previously neglected resource.

Stefan Löfven, Prime Minister, Sweden, proposed a "global deal" to achieve SDG 8 (sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work), based on decent work and cooperation among: states, who would ratify and respect ILO principles including the right to organize, negotiate and strike; employers and companies, who would bear in mind their social responsibilities; and trade unions, who would contribute to the overall development of companies. He said the ILO, OECD, World Bank, IMF, WTO and B-20 coalition can all play important roles in this.

Margaret Chan, Director-General, World Health Organization, called for: investing in women's health; quantifying the status of women in terms of health and labor statistics; and ending violence against women.

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) Board Chairman Dmitry Pankin stressed the importance of transport and energy infrastructure for this region.

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) said Agenda 2030 will be won or lost on what happens in the LDCs.

UN-Habitat Executive Director Joan Clos highlighted that the SDGs recognize urbanization as a tool for development.

Paul Quintos, Campaign for People's Goals for Sustainable Development, stressed the need to democratize decision making and institute workplace democracy. Patricia Iglecias, Local Authorities Major Group, pointed out that local authorities, working at the subnational and local levels, are the closest to citizens.

Mark Zuckerberg, CEO, Facebook, said the internet is the essential driver of social and economic progress of our time, and told delegates, "If we want to unite the nations of the world, let's begin by connecting the world."

International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Secretary-General Fang Liu said global air traffic, which is projected to double by 2030, should be accompanied by coherent policies on tourism, trade and investment.

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) said rural people must be at the heart of achieving the SDGs and we must pay attention to the needs of rural women.

The World Bank highlighted growth and jobs, within an inclusive framework, as the two most important ways of achieving the SDGs. He declared the Bank's readiness to support country initiatives, based on evidence and data.

The Republic of the Congo said that, while the country has rich natural resources, developing economies should be able to participate in global trade as general players, not only providers of commodities. He highlighted the right of States to intervene in their own economies.

Delivering on a Revitalized Global Partnership: Macky Sall, President, Senegal, and Ahmet Davutoğlu, Prime Minister, Turkey, co-chaired the dialogue. President Sall noted the continuing "quest for resources" to implement the SDGs, including environmentally-friendly technologies. Prime Minister Davutoğlu said the AAAA, 2030 Agenda, and the outcome of the Paris Climate Change Conference in December, taken together, will establish the framework of the global development agenda for the next 15 years. He called for putting wellbeing and prosperity "within people's reach, so they don't have to chase them somewhere else."

Prince Albert II, Monaco, expressed support for a three-yearly conference to follow up on commitments to oceans and seas. He expressed his desire to end human trafficking, piracy, drug trafficking and slavery on the Mediterranean Sea.

Angel Gurría, Secretary-General, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), outlined initiatives carried out by the OECD to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including: Paris21, a mechanism to upgrade statistical capacities of developing countries; the Automatic Exchange of Information on taxes; and Tax Inspectors Without Borders, a collaboration with UNDP.

Sato Kilman, Prime Minister, Vanuatu, noted that for small economies like Vanuatu, creating development partnerships remains a challenge. He outlined the importance of: open data; transparency; deviating from the business-as-usual approach; and directing resources to economic infrastructures to implement the SDGs.

Nepal called for: ODA to be steady, predictable and free from conditionalities; policy coherence, including on finance technology, debt and capacity building; and mechanisms to monitor development commitments.

Werner Hoyer, President, European Investment Bank (EIB), said implementation is “the name of the game” from now on. He said EIB should continue attracting financial resources and facilitating risk sharing. The refugee crisis is a reminder of the urgency of a global sustainable growth strategy, he added.

Ranja Sengupta, Third World Network and Asia Pacific CSO Engagement Mechanism, called for a global partnership led by governments and supported by everyone. She highlighted the dedicated review forum for the AAAA and 2030 Agenda MOI as a breakthrough.

John Danilovich, Secretary-General, International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), said the international community must ratify and implement the WTO trade facilitation agreement, conclude the Doha round, and ease the flow of trade finance to SMEs in developing countries.

Tunisia stressed the need for: coordination and avoiding duplication of efforts on financing for sustainable development; fulfilling ODA commitments; combating illicit financial flows; micro-financing; technology transfer; capacity building; and South-South cooperation as complementary to North-South cooperation.

Paraguay outlined the need to nationalize and localize the agenda, and noted that its implementation should be based on: effective national plans; appropriate coordination between local, national and international actors; and effective tools for monitoring.

Sivananthi Thanenthiran, Women’s Major Group, said the success of the SDGs will rest on the Global Partnership, which should be based on resilience, social cohesion and local and global leadership, and support human rights, non-discrimination, and good governance. She also called for: bottom-up approaches; standing up for reproductive rights; and recognizing women’s rights organizations.

Indonesia said a conducive investment environment is one that prevents recurrent financial crises and curbs price volatility.

The Russian Federation highlighted the eradication of poverty and inequality as his country’s primary priority for international development assistance, and pledged to steadily increase assistance to developing countries.

Mireille Ballestrazzi, President, INTERPOL, described its partnership with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime on issues related to Goal 16 (peaceful and inclusive societies), including a joint plan of action on transnational organized crime, violence against women and children, and cyber-threats, among other issues.

Jennifer Vinas-Forcade, Youth Major Group, noted the importance of: being aware of conflicting interests; letting

civil society be part of developing indicators; and ensuring transparency and democratic decision-making processes.

Philippe Zaouti, CEO, Mirova Société Anonyme, outlined initiatives taken by his company in collaboration with other investors, including developing: social and environmental standards for sustainable infrastructure, and investment reporting standards.

Martin Kreutner, Dean, International Anti-Corruption Academy, observed that the proper implementation of SDGs can only be achieved if the rule of law and strong anti-corruption measures are considered, and noted that in some regions a considerable portion of ODA is lost in corruption.

Shamshad Akhtar, Executive Secretary, ESCAP, said Agenda 2030 will require new forms of partnerships, and strengthened institutional capacities. She stressed that “the status quo” on global partnership did not work for the MDGs, and is not going to work for the SDGs either.

Anne Simpson, California Pension System (CalPERS), said the SDGs address risks that threaten the finance sector’s ability to meet its liabilities, such as climate change.

Dalia Hamou, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), highlighted WIPO Re:Search, a platform for developing medical products for neglected tropical diseases.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said the Fund focuses concessional financing on those who are the most in need, and will: enhance capacity building support to boost domestic revenue mobilization; help strengthen the voice of developing countries in international debates on tax-related issues; and deepen policy advice on inclusion aspects.

Judith Karel, Executive Secretary, UN Capital Development Fund, stressed the importance of ODA, public resources, and investing in financial inclusion.

Peter Bakker, President and CEO of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, said the SDG Compass launched Saturday at the UN Private Sector Forum will help organizations to report on progress in meeting the goals. He noted the importance of carbon pricing for sustainable development.

Alison Schneider, AIMCo, said investors are increasingly interested in infrastructure, but are bound by low risk parameters. She said that if international development banks invest first, private investors will be happy to invest five or ten years later.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Heads of State and other VIPs began leaving their seats to pose with a true celebrity at the dialogue on economic growth Saturday morning: Mark Zuckerberg. “I didn’t recognize you in a suit,” the Co-Chair said, before introducing the youthful Facebook CEO, who made brief remarks to the group, without his signature hoodie.

Bono, rock star and philanthropist, attended the Private Sector Forum at the summit, while football player and World Food Programme Ambassador Kaká spoke at a side event on “Mobilizing Generation Zero Hunger.” While summit participants spotted other celebrities around the UN Secretariat corridors it was the World Bank that brought in arguably the world’s most recognizable TV star, to the Global Citizen Festival taking place in parallel with the summit. Large, yellow and feathered, alongside World Bank President Jim Kim, there was no mistaking Big Bird from Sesame Street.

ENB SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS: The *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* summary and analysis of the UN Sustainable Development Summit will be available on Wednesday, 30 September 2015, online at: <http://www.iisd.ca/post2015/summit/enb/>