



SUMMARY OF THE 2015 MEETING OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: 26 JUNE - 8 JULY 2015

The 2015 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) took place from 26 June - 8 July 2015, at UN Headquarters in New York. The theme of this year's meeting was "Strengthening integration, implementation and review – the HLPF after 2015." The meeting brought together nearly 1800 delegates, including Member States, Major Groups and other stakeholders, and intergovernmental and UN organizations.

Following a brief opening plenary, during its first five days, 26 June - 2 July, the HLPF held moderated dialogues, addressing: Shaping the world for 2030—from vision to transformative action; The role of business in implementation; Supporting national action through HLPF outcomes; Keeping science involved in Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) implementation; The Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) as a bridge between the SDGs and the scientific communities; Changing approaches to policy making—the role of the SDGs; Regional support to national action; The SAMOA Pathway—translating vision into action; Reaching out to the world—communicating the agenda; Reaching out to the world—training and learning for sustainable development; Sustainable consumption and production (SCP); Investing in the future we want—what will it require; and Tracking progress through existing mechanisms. A short wrap-up session closed the five-day segment. Morning meetings convened with representatives of social and natural sciences on "how science can inform policy making" and with representatives of Major Groups and other stakeholders on "reinforcing Major Groups and other stakeholders' participation."

The HLPF ministerial segment convened from 6-8 July. Following an opening plenary, the launch of the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) report and a report on the five-day segment of the HLPF, the ministerial segment convened moderated dialogues on: A transformative integrated agenda—how can governments, societies and the UN rise to the challenge; Thinking ahead—emerging issues that will matter

in the future; Communicating and implementing a universal agenda at home; Our HLPF in the next 15 years; Reviewing and monitoring progress—what have we learned and how can it advance implementation; and Realizing the SDGs—matching ambitions with commensurate means of implementation (MOI)—resources, technology and capacities. A closing plenary adopted the report of the HLPF and the HLPF Ministerial Declaration.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HLPF

The HLPF was called for by the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20 or UNCSD) in June 2012 in its outcome document, "The Future We Want." Paragraph 84 states: "We decide to establish a universal intergovernmental high-level political forum, building on the strengths, experiences, resources and inclusive participation modalities of the Commission on Sustainable Development, and subsequently replacing the Commission. The high-level political forum shall follow up on the implementation of sustainable development and should avoid overlap with existing structures, bodies and entities in a cost-effective manner."

UNGA-67: The 67th session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted a resolution on the implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of Rio+20 (A/RES/67/203), which outlined the negotiation process for the creation of the HLPF. The text also called for the Open Working Group on

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SDGs to report to the UNGA at its 68th session and to report regularly, taking into account the convening of the first HLPF. It further called for a special event in 2013 to follow up on efforts towards achieving the MDGs.

RESOLUTION 67/290: The President of the 67th UNGA called on ambassadors from Brazil and Italy to conduct informal consultations on the format and organizational modalities of the HLPF. These consultations began in January 2013 and concluded with the adoption of resolution 67/290 on 9 July 2013. Resolution 67/290 decided that the HLPF, consistent with its intergovernmental universal character, will:

- provide political leadership, guidance, and recommendations for sustainable development;
- follow-up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments;
- enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development; and
- have a focused, dynamic, and action-oriented agenda, ensuring the appropriate consideration of new and emerging sustainable development challenges.

The resolution called for the meetings of the Forum to be convened:

- every four years under the auspices of the UNGA at the level of Heads of State and Government—for two days at the beginning of the UNGA session; and
- every year under the auspices of ECOSOC—for eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment.

Both meetings will adopt negotiated declarations.

The Forum, under the auspices of ECOSOC, will conduct regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives, including those related to MOI, within the context of the post-2015 development agenda.

FIRST SESSION OF THE HLPF: The inaugural session of the HLPF on 24 September 2013 took place under the auspices of the UNGA at UN Headquarters in New York. The session theme was “building the future we want from Rio+20 to the post-2015 development agenda.” The session was divided into several segments that featured keynote presentations from Heads of State and Government and Ministers and remarks from the floor on the following themes: “from vision to action”; “global partnerships for development to create jobs and improve sustainable lifestyles”; and “mapping the way forward for eradicating poverty and achieving sustainable development.”

SECOND SESSION OF THE HLPF: The second session of the HLPF took place from 30 June - 9 July 2014, at UN Headquarters in New York. The session, on the theme “achieving the MDGs and charting the way for an ambitious post-2015 development agenda including the SDGs,” adopted a Ministerial Declaration that, *inter alia*: called for urgent implementation of all commitments under the global partnership for development to overcome gaps identified in the MDGs Gap Task Force reports; emphasized accelerating progress towards the target of 0.7% of gross national income as official development assistance (ODA) by 2015; committed to establishing a strong, ambitious, inclusive, and people-centered post-2015 development agenda; reaffirmed all principles of the Rio Declaration, including,

common but differentiated responsibilities; reaffirmed that poverty eradication shall be central to the post-2015 development agenda; and called for a transparent intergovernmental process that will include inputs from all stakeholders.

HLPF 2015 SUMMARY

On Friday, 26 June, ECOSOC President Martin Sajdik, Austria, opened the HLPF session, sending condolences to Kuwait and Tunisia for the recent terror attacks. He introduced the agenda (E/HLPF/2015/1), which was adopted by acclamation.

Noting that 2015 is a crucial juncture for sustainable development, Sajdik underscored the current HLPF session is imperative in preparing for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, saying that the HLPF can assist implementation so that “we hit the ground running.”

Rudolf Hundstorfer, Federal Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection, Austria, and Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), on behalf of Wu Hongbo, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, said that the HLPF should play a key oversight role in implementing the SDGs. Gass also underscored the importance of stakeholder involvement.

Kadir Topbaş, Mayor of Istanbul, Turkey, highlighted the commitment of local governments and sub-national authorities to implement the post-2015 development agenda and its follow-up and review. He outlined the importance of multilevel cooperation and coordination.

Frances Zainoeddin, Grey Panthers NY, US, representing aging stakeholders, emphasized the need to account for people of all ages in the HLPF agenda through strong stakeholder consultation, stressing “all people count and should be counted.”

To ensure a sustainable future for all generations, Hiroataka Koike, Japan Youth Platform for Post-2015, for Children and Youth, conveyed the importance of taking ecological footprints and planetary boundaries into account in the implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 development agenda.

An in-depth summary of the opening session is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3311e.html>

MODERATED DISCUSSIONS

“SHAPING THE WORLD FOR 2030: FROM VISION TO TRANSFORMATIVE ACTION”: On Friday, 26 June, noting that the SDGs will be universal, David Donoghue, Co-Facilitator of the Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda and Permanent Representative of Ireland to the UN, stated that the HLPF is at the “apex” of a global SDG review process. He underscored that the HLPF should be inclusive and its work be informed by annual progress reports and the GSDR.

Moderator Henry Bonsu, International Broadcaster, Ghana, asked panelists to address: capturing the level of ambition required in intergovernmental processes; identifying key issues for the success of the global vision and transformative action; and supporting the HLPF’s work at the country level.

Juan Manuel Gómez Robledo, Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs and Human Rights, Mexico, emphasized regional

approaches and the importance of national- and local-level policy evaluation.

Mayacine Camara, Ministry of Economy, Finance and Planning, Senegal, and Chair of the African Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, underscored that although the MDGs have contributed to achieving goals, inequalities nonetheless persist.

Babatunde Osotimehin, Executive Director, UN Population Fund, outlined ways to address youth issues in the post-2015 development agenda, including developing comprehensive data to support implementation and monitoring.

Discussant Marwan Bishtawi, Pax Romana, for Children and Youth, highlighted the importance of monitoring and accountability to ensure sustainable development becomes a reality.

During discussions, Post-2015 Co-Facilitator Donoghue said inputs from Major Groups and other stakeholders have been vital to the post-2015 development agenda discussions. Osotimehin said that country-level coordination is vital for tangible outcomes.

Robledo, on the future function of the HLPF, suggested that following national-level implementation reviews, the HLPF could be used as a platform to exchange best practices.

Camara noted the need for financial assistance to implement the post-2015 development agenda, but called for assessing funding gaps.

During discussions, participants stressed, *inter alia*: stakeholder engagement, including of youth, in preparatory processes and national- and local-level participatory processes; the interests of developing countries and the most vulnerable; ways to translate goals into action without losing meaning or depth; and how to streamline follow-up and review.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3311e.html>

“THE ROLE OF BUSINESS IN IMPLEMENTATION”:

On Friday, 26 June, ECOSOC President Sajdik opened the session, noting the important role of business and industry in shaping “the sustainable future we want.”

Moderator Amina Mohammed, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, introduced the panel discussion.

Mark Moody-Stuart, Chairman, Foundation for the Global Compact, called for regulations encouraging business creativity and for recognizing that the market has limits in delivering this agenda.

Toshio Arima, Director and Executive Advisor to the Board, Fuji Xerox, Japan, emphasized close links with customers and NGOs as fundamental for developing collective action opportunities for companies to contribute to sustainable development.

Jeff Seabright, Chief Sustainability Officer, Unilever, UK, outlined the critical role of the private sector in realizing the SDGs both as an engine of innovation and as a large source of global capital.

Jean-François Zinsou, Permanent Representative of Benin to the UN, and Chair of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) Group, recognized the need for investment in clean technology

and technology transfer and effective public investment complemented by private sector investment.

Annika Lindblom, Ministry of the Environment, Finland, said interactions with business on sustainable development used to be defensive, but now governments and the private sector see themselves as allies in the battle for sustainable development.

Discussant Francis Gurry, Director General, World Intellectual Property Organization, addressed challenges, calling for identifying ways to join the imperatives of UN sustainable development processes with assurances for the private sector regarding involvement.

Discussant Diego Azzi, International Trade Union Confederation, Brazil, stated that a key point is how business can create decent work, noting that public and private sector interests are not always aligned.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates raised issues, including: ways to incentivize companies to join initiatives; how to ensure voluntary approaches do not result in human rights abuses; how to develop management capabilities for multi-stakeholder organizations; and transparency standards.

ECOSOC President Sajdik restated that the private sector is needed “to break through the walls” to make the post-2015 development agenda a real success.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3311e.html>

“SUPPORTING NATIONAL ACTION THROUGH HLPF OUTCOMES”: On Monday, 29 June, ECOSOC Vice-President María Emma Mejía Vélez, Colombia, introduced the panel, highlighting, with Moderator Aisa Kirabo Kacyira, Deputy Executive Director, UN-Habitat, the importance of integrated planning and implementation, and policy coherence to achieve the SDGs.

Moderator Kacyira urged delegates to look at the “bigger picture” in a critical and less diplomatic manner, stressing that success at the local level can only be achieved if the sustainable development agenda is met.

Pio Wennubst, Assistant Director General, Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC), called for cohesion and incentives, saying that cohesion should be built upon trust, with clear “rules of the game,” to better address challenging political issues.

Gustavo Adolfo Meza-Cuadra Velásquez, Permanent Representative of Peru to the UN, and Chair, Committee of the Whole, UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, stressed the need for human-centered development with local, citizen-led, multi-stakeholder, participatory processes driven by incentives.

Manish Bapna, Executive Vice President and Managing Director, World Resources Institute, suggested that steps to deliver coherence include: bold political leadership; new institutions; active local-actor engagement; flexible funding mechanisms; and quick, early wins.

Evelyn Terundu Ugbe, Women Environmental Programme, Nigeria, for Women, urged the HLPF to, *inter alia*, support national-level implementation through technology transfer that is, among others, gender sensitive.

During discussions, on the issue of implementation, delegates emphasized the roles of: parliaments; technology as an enabling factor; communication of the agenda at national and local levels; and inclusive, transparent and accountable national-level public deliberations.

On follow-up and review, discussions highlighted: follow-up and review of MOI; peer review systems; incorporation of youth; coherence, especially in review and monitoring processes with common indicators across countries; support for national-level capacity building, including on data collection and analysis that ensures data disaggregation of gender; inclusion of local processes within national progress reports; and the need for both incentives and accountability mechanisms.

Delegates also stressed the need for partnerships with the suggestion to hold an HLPF session exclusively on partnerships.

ECOSOC Vice-President Mejía underscored the importance of political will at local and parliamentary levels.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3312e.html>

“KEEPING SCIENCE INVOLVED IN SDG IMPLEMENTATION”: On Monday, 29 June, ECOSOC President Sajdik stressed the need for integrated science and policy approaches.

Gabriel Vallejo López, Minister of Environment and Sustainable Development, Colombia, highlighted the importance of integrating science into local and regional decisions to address sustainable development.

Highlighting the GSDR’s timely release for decision-making in this historical year, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Wu Hongbo emphasized the importance of integrated science and policy approaches to achieve ambitious, transformational pathways towards sustainable development.

Panel Moderator Paul Shrivastava, Executive Director, Future Earth Secretariat, noted that the main mechanism for involving science in the SDGs is the science-policy interface.

Lucilla Spini, International Council for Science (ICSU), underscored that the scientific and technological community is ready to work with the HLPF to “ensure the voice of science in the SDGs.”

Luis Augusto Galvão, Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), provided an outline of the sustainable development challenges faced by the health sector, calling for new mechanisms to address inequality and noting the need for a common language.

Maria Ivanova, University of Massachusetts Boston, and Member of the UN Secretary-General’s Scientific Advisory Board, reported that the analysis of the implementation of ten global environmental conventions reveals higher reporting rates with highly engaged Secretariats and when Member States feel their reports actually count.

In the ensuing discussion, on the role of science in sustainable development processes, delegates called for continuous UN-level dialogue between scientists and policy makers that goes beyond the HLPF, noting the zero draft of the post-2015 development agenda presents an opportunity to strengthen the science-policy interface.

On technology, delegates discussed the structure and implementation of the proposed Technology Facilitation Mechanism and the development of a new paradigm for knowledge communities that is not solely technology based.

On the role of science, delegates noted the need to: use science as a tool to analyze progress, inform policy at all levels, and provide disaggregated data; use evidence-based results for effective interventions; encourage scientific collaboration across countries and disciplines; create expert groups to support HLPF processes; and work on science and policy at a practical level.

In closing, Shrivastava stressed that there is clearly a need for a different kind of science that is impactful, holistic, respects differences, and engages all stakeholders.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3312e.html>

“THE GSDR AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN THE SDGS AND THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITIES”: On Monday, 29 June, Moderator Patrick Paul Walsh, University College Dublin, Ireland, and Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), highlighted, *inter alia*, the importance of more bottom-up contributions to the GSDR and that the report should energize global participation.

William Colglazier, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), suggested, *inter alia*, analyzing each SDG for challenges, actions that can make a difference and potential innovative solutions, and developing knowledge-based societies.

Lucilla Spini, ICSU, stressed that the GSDR has advanced sustainability science while acting as an important evidence-based decision-making tool. She stated the GSDR also plays a role as a mechanism to involve science, policy and practice actors in implementing the SDGs and identifying science and policy gaps.

In the ensuing discussion, participants elaborated on the scope, purpose and content of the GSDR, noting that the report should be an “assessment of assessments,” be collaborative, and easily communicate key messages. Others underscored that the report should use the latest available science and identify new and emerging issues.

Delegates also raised issues on: linkages with other processes and related reports in order to create synergies and avoid duplication; outreach to educators; and outreach to the scientific and technological communities so the report is credible, legitimate and transparent.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3312e.html>

“CHANGING APPROACHES TO POLICY MAKING: THE ROLE OF THE SDGS”: On Tuesday, 30 June, ECOSOC Vice-President Vladimir Drobnjak, Croatia, highlighted the interdependencies between the SDGs, calling for integrated approaches and policy coherence.

Moderator Debapriya Bhattacharya, Centre for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh, and Chair, Southern Voice on Post-MDG International Development Goals, noted the importance of linking action with broader development concerns.

Karel van Oosterom, Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the UN, for the Chair of the 66th session of

the UN Economic Commission for Europe, said strengthening regional effectiveness requires partnerships and inclusion of all relevant actors, in particular youth.

Patrick Birungi, National Planning Authority, Uganda, noted the difficulties posed by trying to formulate implementation plans for the SDGs while discussions are ongoing.

Jaroslava Jermanova, First Vice-President, Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament, Czech Republic, underscored the need for different perspectives, in particular those of women.

Pak Y.W. Junardy, President Commissioner, PT Rajawali Corporation, and President, Indonesia Global Compact Network, underscored the key role companies and businesses can play in advancing sustainable development.

Galina Angarova, Tebtebba, for Indigenous Peoples, underscored the importance of traditional knowledge in all aspects of sustainable development.

The ensuing discussion touched on points related to the SDGs, education, translation of vision to action, and the goal of creating change.

On translating vision to action, delegates variously called for: viewing the economy as a subset of the environment; adopting multi-stakeholder, bottom-up approaches; sketching a roadmap that integrates growth, inclusion and sustainability; avoiding “silos”; and adequate resources for MOI.

Responding to participants, panel members stressed: creating the right conditions for integration; developing strong institutions and mechanisms; having a few, smart multi-dimensional indicators to measure various targets; and respecting national circumstances to achieve a balanced, consensual sustainable development agenda.

Converging around the ultimate goal of creating change, discussions addressed: establishing a bureau or secretariat to move the agenda forward; developing effective governance and implementing bodies at local and national levels; fostering integration and inclusion within Major Groups’ and other stakeholders’ processes; and acknowledging the challenge of achieving both awareness and mindset change.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3313e.html>

“REGIONAL SUPPORT TO NATIONAL ACTION”: On Tuesday, 30 June, ECOSOC Vice-President Mejía emphasized the importance of regional inputs for strong national responses.

Moderator Ximena Ponce, Member of Parliament, Ecuador, reflected on the roles of the regions and how to set out, through policy, new definitions and structures to tackle the SDGs at the local and regional levels.

Vajira Narampanawa, Secretary, State Ministry of Environment, Sri Lanka, and Vice-Chair, Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development, reported the outcomes of the Asia-Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development held in Bangkok in May 2015, noting these include the need to focus on more inclusive growth paths, holistic approaches and obtaining a balance between the three pillars of sustainable development.

Mohamed Ashraf Rashed, Member, African Peer Review Panel of Eminent Persons, highlighted the potential of the African Peer Review Mechanism as a regional follow-up and review mechanism for the SDGs.

Christian Brodhag, Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF), described the OIF peer review process, outlining three phases: organization and implementation; “context report” preparation; and hosting a review workshop.

Discussants Paul Ladd, UN Development Programme (UNDP), and Roula Majdalani, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), both highlighted the importance of regional processes and organizations to link the local level to the global level. Majdalani called for drawing on multi-stakeholder platforms and South-South cooperation. Ladd further stressed the importance of national-level monitoring and review processes.

Delegates highlighted the significance of partnerships for regional-level reviews. They also noted the critical role regional-level mechanisms play in transitioning from MDGs to SDGs. Discussions underscored: regional instruments as leaders in HLPF annual review processes; national reporting to inform regional reviews; a specific HLPF session for regional reviews; and inclusion of Major Groups and other stakeholders at national and regional levels.

Delegates then discussed the need for innovative financing mechanisms for regional and national processes, and called for: political will and commitment to progress; transparent dialogues and spaces to share knowledge and best practices; subsidiarity and complementarity at all levels; creation of linkages between statistical agencies and planning ministries; and the effective use of statistics and indicators.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3313e.html>

“THE SAMOA PATHWAY: TRANSLATING VISION INTO ACTION”: On Wednesday, 1 July, ECOSOC President Sajdik welcomed delegates, reminding them that the HLPF is tasked with reviewing the implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

Moderator Ronald Jumeau, Ambassador for Climate Change and SIDS Issues, Seychelles, said that SIDS believe strong, intelligent partnerships are imperative for them to achieve sustainable development.

Azeema Adam, Governor, Maldives Monetary Authority, cited sustainable development hurdles faced by SIDS, including a lack of funding for infrastructure and difficulties in data collection to meet international obligations.

Ali’ioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative of Samoa to the UN, emphasized the importance of spreading the SIDS’ message through a strong, clear voice and suggested holding SIDS partnership dialogues rather than SIDS days.

Andrew Downes, Pro Vice-Chancellor, University of the West Indies, Barbados, noted that the higher education sector has a strong role to play in meeting the challenges faced by the SIDS.

Ben Glass, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Altaeros Energies, US, highlighted the natural fit of mission-driven startups and small- and medium-sized enterprises in addressing SIDS’ unique challenges, and supported the proposal of a SIDS global business network.

Discussant Gustavo Fonseca, Global Environment Facility (GEF), said to deliver the SDGs there is a need to identify partnership gaps, streamline the SAMOA Pathway into the post-

2015 development agenda, and harmonize, *inter alia*, modalities and indicators.

Florence Pignolet-Tardan, Network of Regional Governments for Sustainable Development, La Réunion, France, stressed the value of regional cooperation and exchange, suggesting the establishment of regional bodies that can review country-level actions.

In the ensuing discussion, participants said the HLPF should be a forum for reviewing and following up on the Barbados Programme of Action, the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation and the SAMOA Pathway.

Delegates also discussed: SIDS as a special case for sustainable development; a SIDS forum within the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States; and integration of climate change and disaster risk reduction (DRR) policies.

Delegates called for: improving access to finance for SIDS; building SIDS' disaster preparedness, risk management, and resilience capacity in the face of climate change; strengthening regional cooperation; and addressing the "middle income trap" issue faced by many SIDS.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3314e.html>

"REACHING OUT TO THE WORLD": Communicating the Agenda: On Wednesday, 1 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Oh Joon, Republic of Korea, said that the post-2015 development agenda must be communicated so that it inspires and gives hope.

Moderator Cristina Gallach, UN Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, outlined the role of the UN Department of Public Information in communicating the post-2015 development agenda.

Francis Lorenzo, Honorary President, South-South News, underscored the need to build journalists' capacity so they have the necessary tools to properly communicate the SDGs.

Grammenos Mastrojeni, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Italy, called for leveraging interlinkages between the SDGs to communicate how the goals relate to individuals and their communities.

Mitchell Toomey, Director, Millennium Campaign, highlighted that combining direct civil society engagement and multimedia tools can generate two-way communication of global issues at the local level.

Noting constant competition for time, David Droga, Founder, Droga5, said the SDGs must be translated into something interesting and tangible for the public.

Edith Lederer, Associated Press, said that the most difficult part to sell is the SDGs' name, urging delegates to tell a story that ordinary people can actually understand.

Discussant Maria Melinda Ando, Asian-Pacific Resource and Research Centre for Women, for Women, stressed the need for transparency, accountability and access to information, in particular internet access for the four billion offline people in developing countries.

Mary-Jane Ncube, Transparency International Zimbabwe, called for communicating in simple terms so that all groups can understand it.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates addressed: "repackaging" the SDGs; using communication as a tool for inclusion and

transparency; communicating a joint message that includes presenting the SDGs as solvable and inspiring; leveraging communication to maintain HLPF participation over the next 15 years; and recognizing that changing mindsets requires local and national ownership of communication.

In closing, the panelists said the post-2015 development agenda is an agenda of the people and that governments must find ways to turn it into local conversations. They also noted the need for a chain reaction towards participation.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3314e.html>

Training and Learning for Sustainable Development: On Wednesday, 1 July, ECOSOC President Sajdik said training, learning and education should ensure actions and decisions are informed, based on evidence, and reflect the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Moderator Jafar Javan, Director, UN System Staff College, said the session would focus on ensuring that training institutions have the capacity to build sustainable development awareness, and identifying contributions of interdisciplinary learning to implementation of the SDGs.

Hans Winkler, Director, Diplomatic Academy of Vienna, Austria, noted the importance of reaching legislators and parliamentarians, as well as activists, and of finding the right balance between a sound academic basis and practical skills.

Romain Murenzi, Executive Director, The World Academy of Sciences, noted that science training institutions in developing countries and LDCs are inadequately equipped to support implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

Marianne Beisheim, Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, Germany, stressed that partnerships must be bottom-up, needs-based, and engage with local communities "right from the start."

Discussions considered: facilitating learning and training through partnerships; supporting tertiary education through South-South cooperation; using informal education; linking training programmes with green job creation, especially for youth; and using ECOSOC's forum to develop partnership criteria. Furthermore, discussions addressed the role of the HLPF, including: reviewing partnerships; facilitating experience sharing; and providing training for partnerships.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3314e.html>

"SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION": On Thursday, 2 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Mejía said SCP is a cross-cutting issue and a key aspect in achieving sustainable development. She called for support for further implementation.

Ulf Jaeckel, Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Germany, and Chair, 10-Year Framework of Programmes on SCP (10YFP) Board, described the 10YFP as a concrete structure for implementation, underscoring remaining challenges, including: strengthening high-level national political support; accessing adequate funding for programmes and activities; and strongly engaging stakeholders.

Carolina Tohá Morales, Mayor, Santiago, Chile, emphasized the need for local governments as drivers of change in SCP and

for public policies that focus on citizen involvement and promote shifts in cultural mindsets.

László Borbély, President, Committee for Foreign Policy, Romanian Parliament, said it is now essential to identify how to implement SCP. He noted that through education SCP can become more understandable.

Discussant Swati Shresth, Center for Grassroots Development, and The Global Forest Coalition, for Women, reiterated the need for national and global political support, and called for prioritizing marginalized groups, including women.

In the ensuing discussion, one delegate noted the multi-stakeholder nature of the 10YFP, stating that the programme can be used to help deliver more integrated SDGs. Another underscored the relevance of the 10YFP to SIDS, outlining efforts to mainstream the SCP agenda. Delegates also highlighted how SCP can be used to relate global SDGs to local levels.

Other topics addressed included the need for: SCP to become business-as-usual; information dissemination; flexible programmes that take national circumstances into account; replication of successful models; and green infrastructure to support implementation.

Discussions also highlighted suggestions for implementing SCP, including an additional programme under the 10YFP on sustainable food systems and a new economic model based on well-being and sustainability, in addition to growth.

In response to questions, 10YFP Board Chair Jaeckel stressed avoiding “one size fits all” approaches, noting that the HLPF is a good platform to exchange views, identify opportunities and scale-up solutions. Tohá underscored education and awareness-raising on SCP. Borbély emphasized cooperation, political will, accountability and communication.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3315e.html>

“INVESTING IN THE FUTURE WE WANT: WHAT WILL IT REQUIRE?”: On Thursday, 2 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Mohamed Khaled Khiari, Tunisia, introduced the session.

Moderator James Zhan, UN Conference on Trade and Development, noted numerous demands for financial resources, highlighting a study stating that US\$3.9 trillion is needed for developing countries to achieve the SDGs, but that only US\$1.4 trillion is currently available.

Hazem Fahmy, Secretary General, Egyptian Agency of Partnership for Development, stressed the importance of partnerships, and South-South and triangular cooperation for achieving the SDGs. He said that successful models of partnership do not need large amounts of financial resources.

Hildegard Lingnau, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), stated that financing to achieve the SDGs cannot solely be in the form of grants, but loans and other forms of finance must be sought.

Discussant Stefano Prato, Managing Director, Society for International Development, Italy, emphasized the need to transform the global economy by investing in “vibrant” and localized economies and that the involvement of the private sector must be subject to accountability.

Delegates then discussed: that ODA should be an enabler for achieving the SDGs; the challenges of illicit flows of capital from developing to developed countries; clear guidelines for, and assessment of, private investment; and how to link regional- and national-level accountability.

Discussions also stressed how to leverage private funds to complement domestic funds and ODA, and called for a global body to follow-up on taxation issues.

In response, panelists stressed the HLPF represents an opportunity to debate unresolved issues, and queried how to leverage other resources, better direct investments, and ensure the private sector pays taxes.

In closing, Moderator Zhan suggested technical assistance supported by a multi-UN agency and multilateral development bank consortium to advise and help countries to establish policies and programmes to mobilize and channel funds into SDG sectors.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3315e.html>

“TRACKING PROGRESS THROUGH EXISTING MECHANISMS”: On Thursday, 2 June, ECOSOC Vice-President Oh emphasized that coherence and linkages between different platforms are needed to track implementation of, and organize effective review for, the SDGs.

Moderator Thomas Gass, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs, UN DESA, described the HLPF as the “apex” or core platform for tracking implementation of the SDGs, underscoring that the UN system plays an important role in supporting inclusive thematic reviews conducted by the HLPF and that ECOSOC can foster coherence between different review platforms.

Gerda Verburg, Chair, UN Committee on Food Security (CFS), and Permanent Representative of the Netherlands to the Rome-based UN Agencies, drew on the experience of the CFS to demonstrate that review platforms can be inclusive and transparent.

Adam Bouloukos, Director, UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, emphasized that the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework interlink with the SDGs, highlighting that several SDGs touch on DRR.

Petra Bayr, Member of Parliament, Austria, said that strong, well-equipped parliaments enshrine effective institutions that can play a role in post-2015 development agenda implementation.

Charles Radcliffe, Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, noted lessons from existing human rights review mechanisms and standards, such as the Human Rights Council Universal Periodic Review.

Discussant Caleb Otto, Permanent Representative of Palau to the UN, outlined actions taken by the Pacific Islands to monitor implementation of sustainable development policies.

Discussant Louise Kantrow, International Chamber of Commerce, called for continued inclusion of the business community in agenda setting and implementation.

Delegates addressed how to integrate cross-cutting issues, including DRR and gender. Effectively addressing “orphan issues,” such as oceans, was also raised, with one delegate supporting the call for a global oceans conference.

Panelists then highlighted: the role and function of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators; the value of shadow reports and peer reviews for parliamentarians; and ways to capture and interconnect all available information.

Panelists further noted the SDGs should not be silos and called for minimizing the reporting burden.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3315e.html>

WRAP UP SESSION: On Thursday, 2 July, closing the five-day segment of the HLPF, ECOSOC President Sajdik emphasized the HLPF should not be over-burdened, stressing that its central objective is to provide high-level political guidance, and should use ECOSOC to mobilize the rest of the UN system around various agendas.

MORNING MEETINGS

The morning meetings brought together representatives from social and natural sciences to discuss “How science can inform policy making” and representatives from Major Groups and other stakeholders on “Reinforcing Major Groups and other stakeholders’ participation.” These meetings allowed these groups to engage with delegates on these issues.

“HOW SCIENCE CAN INFORM POLICY MAKING”:

On Monday, 29 June, ECOSOC President Sajdik noted that discussions aimed to address practical measures and recommendations for enabling scientists to engage with policy makers.

Lucilla Spini, ICSU, urged governments and institutions to interact with organizations like ICSU. William Colglazier, AAAS, called for scientists to be clear on what science “can or cannot say” when providing advice to policy makers.

Patrick Paul Walsh, University College Dublin, Ireland, and SDSN, lauded the GSDR as an interface between scientists and policy makers. Paul Shrivastava, Executive Director, Future Earth Secretariat, lamented that the science discourse can be quite fragmented.

Luis Augusto Galvão, PAHO, urged using science to establish guidelines for policy making. Maria Ivanova, University of Massachusetts Boston, and Member, UN Secretary-General’s Scientific Advisory Board, suggested greater involvement of scientists in the HLPF.

Guilherme de Aguiar Patriota, Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the UN, noted that in Brazil scientists are a part of the political arena and help shape and form the debate.

In the ensuing discussion, participants addressed: the possibility of holding a science-policy forum back-to-back with HLPF sessions; mechanisms to ensure mutual benefits; research funding; capacity building; and the potential for harmonization of science.

In closing, Nikhil Seth, Director, Division for Sustainable Development (DSD), UN DESA, urged, *inter alia*, for dialogue to “go beyond those taking place during intersessional periods” and to take place at all levels.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3312e.html>

“REINFORCING MAJOR GROUPS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS’ PARTICIPATION”: On Tuesday, 30 June, ECOSOC President Sajdik highlighted an unprecedented openness and opportunity for Major Groups and other stakeholders to engage.

Hanna Hansson, CIVICUS, presented the outcomes of the online survey on the HLPF and post-2015 development agenda governance, conducted jointly with the HLPF Working Group of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders, focusing on the function of the HLPF and how to shape an inclusive process. She said different degrees of knowledge on the HLPF were observed, ranging from good to no knowledge, which indicated the need for more information sharing, awareness raising and capacity building.

Hansson noted respondents to the survey highlighted priorities, including the need for: responsibility resting with Member States; a global comparative index to highlight progress; support for citizen-led monitoring; participation of stakeholders in follow-up and review; an active role for youth, including in the official review itself; and that the HLPF global review should clearly link with other UN processes.

Further, Hansson highlighted that the outcomes also underscore that: Major Groups and other stakeholders should have access to information in a timely manner at all stages; all HLPF meetings should be open; and Major Groups and other stakeholders should have the right to make oral and written contributions.

In the ensuing discussion, representatives from Major Groups and other stakeholders further emphasized the issue of inclusion, raising: mechanisms to ensure participation of all groups and constituencies; recognition of local and subnational authorities in governance; and respect for human rights and environmental justice.

On participation in the HLPF, delegates called for: participation that goes beyond “speaking slots” to involve agenda setting; co-management approaches; and funds to support participation.

On follow-up and review, delegates stressed: transparent and robust mechanisms at all levels; accountability mechanisms and reviews of financial mechanisms; disaggregated data; citizen data; global and regional peer reviews; building on existing reviews; and free access to public data.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3313e.html>

MINISTERIAL SEGMENT

On Monday, 6 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Oh opened the ministerial segment, highlighting opportunities for the HLPF, as the “apex” for follow-up and review, to act as a “vibrant” new platform under ECOSOC and the UNGA.

UNGA President Sam Kahamba Kutesa, Uganda, underscored the imperative for all countries to work together constructively to adopt and implement the post-2015 development agenda.

UN Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson stressed that the HLPF should be both visionary and practical, noting that it provides an opportunity to make ECOSOC and the UN system more effective in facilitating and assessing implementation.

Vladimir Cuk, Executive Director, International Disability Alliance, for Major Groups and other stakeholders, called for recognizing Major Groups and other stakeholders not just as beneficiaries, but as partners.

An in-depth summary of the opening of the ministerial segment is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3316e.html>

LAUNCH OF THE MDG REPORT: On Monday, 6 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Oh said the MDGs set in motion extraordinary efforts involving all countries and stakeholders at all levels.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, President Paul Kagame, Rwanda, and Prime Minister Erna Solberg, Norway, who spoke via video link, and Jeffrey Sachs, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary-General, and Director, Earth Institute, Columbia University, emphasized the value of the MDGs and called for “finishing the job.” An in-depth summary of the launch is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3316e.html>

MESSAGES FROM THE FIVE-DAY SEGMENT OF THE HLPF: Courtenay Rattray, Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the UN, Paul Seger, Permanent Representative of Switzerland to the UN, and ESCWA Executive Secretary Rima Khalaf presented the key messages of the five-day segment of the HLPF. An in-depth summary of the messages is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3316e.html>

“A TRANSFORMATIVE INTEGRATED AGENDA: HOW CAN GOVERNMENTS, SOCIETIES AND THE UN RISE TO THE CHALLENGE?”: Moderator Scott Vaughan, President and CEO, International Institute for Sustainable Development, highlighted the need for a bold and ambitious agenda based on transformative and integrated policies, and for coherent intergovernmental processes.

Karmenu Vella, EU Commissioner for the Environment, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, emphasized the need for one overarching framework covering all SDGs and their review, in order to ensure accountability, and to define the role of the HLPF.

Salifou Dembélé, Minister for Youth, Professional Training and Employment, Burkina Faso, underscored the importance of transformative programmes addressing sustainable employment for youth.

Lisel Alamilla, Minister of Forestry, Fisheries and Sustainable Development, Belize, said that Belize has to investigate economic growth opportunities while addressing how to use resources sustainably and recognizing limitations exist.

Joseph Severe, Union des Amis Socio Culturels d’Action en Développement, Haiti, called for focusing on achieving development that is attainable and applicable, and urged for a transformative, integrated post-2015 development agenda.

The ensuing discussion addressed: integrating the SDGs into governments’ plans; providing funds for implementation; being realistic about what is achievable with available resources; focusing on subnational levels; recognizing the key roles of private sector investment and public-private partnerships in implementation; and recognizing the challenge of policy coherence.

During discussions, delegates underscored: the need for political awareness and political will to ensure sustainability is taken into account; ways to articulate institutional arrangements to involve stakeholders and implement the SDGs; and the mobilization of domestic resources versus accessing ODA.

They further noted that: children and youth should be involved in drafting the post-2015 development agenda; affordable water and sanitation should be a right; targeted funding arrangements need to be established; and gender equality is a cross-cutting issue.

Responding to comments, EU Commissioner Vella noted the economic possibilities for the sustainable use of oceans. Minister Dembélé highlighted mobilization of resources and finance, in particular through taxes. Minister Alamilla said the implementation framework will vary according to national circumstances.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3316e.html>

“THINKING AHEAD: EMERGING ISSUES THAT WILL MATTER IN THE FUTURE”: On Monday, 6 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Drobnyak introduced the session. Keynote speaker Kazuyuki Nakane, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japan, said prior investment in DRR and emergency response and recovery is essential for sustainable development.

Moderator Irene Khan, Director-General, International Development Law Organization, noted emerging issues such as demographic challenges and war-induced migration, and social inclusion and social justice.

Rita Schwarzelühr-Sutter, Parliamentary State Secretary for the Federal Minister for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety, Germany, described how scientific findings can support policy making and help ensure ecological justice, develop sustainable lifestyles, decarbonize the world and provide healthy lives for children.

Abdul Hamid Zakri, Science Adviser to the Prime Minister of Malaysia, and Chair, Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES), suggested that the HLPF is in a key position to leverage resources and make the UN system more “impactful” when dealing with emerging issues.

Alfred Kammer, Deputy Director, Middle East and Central Asia Department, International Monetary Fund, noted an increasingly fragmented global landscape and suggested the possible necessity of a new “multilateralism” that addresses regional cooperation and global governance.

Discussant Ibrahim Thiaw, Deputy Executive Director, UN Environment Programme (UNEP), underscored some of the challenges the SDGs should address, emphasizing that the HLPF should become a mechanism to align governance to facilitate sustainable development, instead of just being a series of meetings.

Discussant Risnawati Utami, CBM, and Chair, Indonesian National Consortium for Disability Rights, emphasized accounting for the disabled and elderly, especially in the context of DRR. She also highlighted the need for the HLPF to be a truly participatory global monitoring platform.

During discussions, panelists called for strengthening dialogue with the scientific community, and encouraging their participation and contribution to the HLPF.

Delegates also discussed: migration, war-induced migration and refugees, and how it is reflected in the SDGs; best practices for sustainable agriculture; and a programme of action to promote efficient integration of landlocked countries into global markets.

Panelists further addressed inequality, empowerment of women, social justice and inclusion, how to achieve implementation of the SDGs on the ground, and the need for new multilateralism in decision making.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3316e.html>

“COMMUNICATING AND IMPLEMENTING A UNIVERSAL AGENDA AT HOME”: On Tuesday, 7 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Khiari stressed the need for a narrative to inspire people to support implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

Moderator Laura Trevelyan, BBC Anchor, described the SDGs as being a more inclusive “child” of the MDGs, noting the challenge of translating them into concrete impacts.

Carlos Alvarado Quesada, Minister of Human Development and Social Inclusion, Costa Rica, urged making poverty visible through clear frameworks and indicators, in particular fighting the “opacity of averages” as “no one experiences reality in aggregates.”

Thomas Silberhorn, Parliamentary State Secretary for the Federal Minister for Economic Cooperation and Development, Germany, called for a paradigm shift so that sustainability is internalized into national goals.

Piotr Otawski, Deputy Minister of the Environment, Poland, said there is no contradiction between the post-2015 development agenda and national policies, but that sustainable development challenges require cooperation.

Jim Clarken, CEO, Oxfam Ireland, stated that investment in communication at all levels is required.

Discussant Joško Klisović, Deputy Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Croatia, underscored that communication should facilitate individuals’ ownership of the process, with the government addressing conflicts of interest and managing finance to enable implementation.

Discussant Peter Davies, Commissioner for Sustainable Futures, Wales, UK, highlighted the value of public consultation and engagement, and small steps leading to practical action.

Discussant Gitta Trauernicht, SOS Children’s Villages International, highlighted the importance of effectively communicating the complex development agenda and fostering engagement throughout the process.

On communication, discussions addressed how to: relate the SDGs to the well-being of individual citizens; frame the SDGs in terms that can be effectively communicated at the national level; make messages concise and simple; and communicate an “exciting and inspiring” future.

Delegates highlighted women and gender as a crosscutting issue, and considered ways to integrate the SDGs into national policies, debating the role of stakeholder consultation in this

process. Responding on whether the SDGs are flexible enough to accommodate migration, panelists noted cooperation is needed to address refugee crises.

Delegates also raised: the importance of involving children and youth at all levels; how to address inequities between and within countries; and the difficulty of prioritizing the SDGs in terms of national implementation.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3317e.html>

“OUR HLPF IN THE NEXT 15 YEARS”: On Tuesday, 7 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Oh recalled the main mandates of the HLPF, highlighting outstanding questions regarding the HLPF’s functions.

Oyun Sanjaasuren, President, UN Environment Assembly (UNEA), and Minister of Environment and Green Development, Mongolia, highlighted the scope for UNEA and the HLPF to work together. She said that the HLPF must consolidate its work, create linkages and forge partnerships.

Tun Tun Naing, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of National Planning and Economic Development, Myanmar, stressed the review of implementation and progress needs to build on practical and country-level experiences.

Riaz Hamidullah, Director General of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Bangladesh, said that at the global level, the HLPF should balance the expectations of its outcomes.

Silvana Koch-Mehrin, Founder and Chairperson, Women in Parliaments Global Forum, cautioned that the SDGs need to be seen “from a different angle” to engage members of parliament.

Discussant Pio Wennubst, Assistant Director General, SDC, noted that the HLPF meeting in 2016 should, *inter alia*, create space for sharing experiences and lessons between Member States, including national plans.

Discussant Lakshmi Puri, UN Assistant Secretary-General, and Deputy Executive Director, Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships Bureau, UN-Women, underscored that the follow-up and review of implementation must include gender equality commitments.

Discussant Daniel Lang, Sutherland Global Services Inc., stressed key commitments for responsible sourcing in the areas of: human dignity; social impact; and environmental protection.

Discussant Naiara Garcia da Costa Chaves, Beyond 2015, Brazil, said that the HLPF should be people-centered and people-owned.

In the ensuing discussion, delegates, on follow-up and review, addressed: supporting and promoting UN-system wide coherence in the review process; developing new and innovative indicators; and carefully assessing regional indicators.

Delegates discussed thematic approaches to establish the HLPF’s agenda, with one suggesting looking at organization of thematic layers and clusters under the HLPF.

On the structure of the HLPF, delegates variously proposed: an independent bureau functioning year-round; a single, integrated secretariat to organize HLPF sessions; and utilizing existing structures, for example UNEA, through partnerships.

One delegate questioned how to address and coordinate targets with no formalized platforms. Others cautioned against increased bureaucracy and reporting burdens, and supported an

HLPF that is “positive, not punitive.” Discussions also addressed development of a roadmap for a successful programme of work.

Delegates recognized that it will take time before the HLPF is fully functioning, with some calling for a progressive, but quick, approach to build capacity for the HLPF and to assess how ECOSOC and the HLPF will be organized in the long term.

An in-depth summary of the moderated discussion is available at: <http://www.iisd.ca/vol33/enb3317e.html>

“REVIEWING AND MONITORING PROGRESS: WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED AND HOW CAN IT ADVANCE IMPLEMENTATION?”

On Wednesday, 8 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Drobnyak introduced the session.

Former Prime Minister of Australia Julia Gillard, Board Chair, Global Partnership for Education, in a keynote speech, noted that the Global Partnership for Education builds on the expertise of partners to maximize the resources allocated to efficient and equitable education for the poor, including in crisis situations.

Session moderator, Nikhil Seth, Director, DSD, UN DESA, underscored that the work toward the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda has gone beyond what was agreed at Rio+20 and that it is about the 5 “Ps”: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership.

Faeqa Bent Saeed Essaleh, Minister of Social Affairs, Bahrain, discussed her country’s transition from the MDGs to the SDGs. She stressed, *inter alia*: an accountability framework; policy integration consistent with the SDGs; and indicators established in line with national capacity and regional guidelines for follow-up and review.

Mario Néstor Oporto, Chair, Commission of Communications and Information Technology of the Congress, Argentina, called for: facilitating a science and technology revolution within the education system; placing knowledge at the core of educational policies; and viewing education as a condition for social equity.

Josef Moser, Secretary General, International Organization of Supreme Audit Institutions, highlighted governance shortcomings, and lack of transparency and accountability as main weaknesses for SDG implementation. He noted the need for a comprehensive mandate and systems to measure accountability.

Discussant Kodjo Menan, Permanent Representative of Togo to the UN, urged, *inter alia*: inclusive economic, environmental and social governance; democracy and rule of law; and increased efficiency of public administration.

Discussant John Romano, Transparency, Accountability and Participation Network, US, made the distinction between inclusion and participation, emphasizing that the active participation of all stakeholders is needed in follow-up and review mechanisms to increase ownership in the process.

During discussions on participation, delegates addressed how to increase participation within the HLPF and in follow-up and review more broadly. Delegates highlighted direct participation by the poor, inclusion of the vulnerable, in particular the disabled and youth, through, *inter alia*, capacity building, remote participation and co-management.

On data and indicators, delegates noted gender budgeting for disaggregation, joint collaborative audits, independent accounting systems and participatory reviews.

On the structure and functions of the HLPF, delegates variously suggested: space and time for countries and regions to share experiences; a relevant, action-oriented HLPF; a road map corresponding to vision; use of existing mechanisms, frameworks and partnerships; and promotion of real dialogue rather than simply receiving reports.

On education, Former Prime Minister Gillard highlighted that the SDG on education focusing on early childhood fits well with scientific findings. Delegates addressed the need to foster science and technology in education. Oporto underscored the importance of ensuring early education for all for an equalitarian society.

“REALIZING THE SDGS: MATCHING AMBITIONS WITH COMMENSURATE MOI – RESOURCES, TECHNOLOGY AND CAPACITIES”: On Wednesday, 8 July, ECOSOC Vice-President Mejía opened the session, saying the challenge is to match the transformative agenda with adequate MOI, in other words how to mobilize the funding, know-how and other means to achieve the SDGs.

Moderator Jos Verbeek, Adviser, Office of the World Bank Group President’s Special Envoy on Post-2015 Development Issues, called for focusing on what MOI is needed, ways to use technology, how to ensure effective cooperation at all levels and the role multi-stakeholder partnerships can play in delivering the SDGs.

Endah Murniningtyas, Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Environment, Ministry of National Development Planning, National Development Planning Agency, Indonesia, said the HLPF should remain flexible and address challenges in a coherent and effective manner.

Shin Dong-ik, Deputy Minister for Multilateral and Global Affairs, Republic of Korea, highlighted the need for: mobilization of private sector resources, in addition to public; technology transfer drawing on multi-stakeholder partnerships; and capacity building supported by sound policies and effective institutions.

Evgeny Velikhov, President, Kurchatov Institute, and Member, Russian President’s Defense Council, outlined the process of establishing an international thermal reactor project. He described how this process has required strong collaboration.

Rolf Heuer, Director-General, European Organization for Nuclear Research, underscored the important role of science and education as a foundation upon which to build the SDGs. He highlighted the need for: public investment in science and technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education; capacity building and knowledge transfer; and investment in research and technological innovations.

Discussant Aldo Lale-Demoz, Deputy Executive Director, UN Office on Drugs and Crime, highlighted that weak rule of law, economic crime, and corruption lead to inequitable societies and undermine the implementation of the SDGs.

Discussant Megan Haddock, Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies, US, highlighted the “UN Handbook on Nonprofit Institutions in the System of National Accounts” and the “International Labour Organization Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work” as guidelines to identify and report on volunteer and civil society organizations’ work.

Discussions addressed: improving cross-border transportation and regional connectivity to drive economic growth and employment; further unlocking the potential of youth involvement including in discussions on employment; using science and technology in a timely manner to achieve the SDGs; and properly recognizing and using the power of information technology and communication. In response, the panelists highlighted ways to interest youth in science and to further involve them in the implementation of the development agenda.

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

On Wednesday, 8 July, Co-Facilitator of the Negotiations on the Post-2015 Development Agenda Macharia Kamau, Permanent Representative of Kenya to the UN, explained the importance of the HLPF in realizing the SDGs, framing the HLPF as the means to move along the path outlined in the post-2015 development agenda. He outlined important developments needed over the next six to twelve months, *inter alia*, obtaining funding for the HLPF, and for implementation at international and national levels.

ECOSOC Vice-President Khiari presented the Report of the HLPF for 2015 (E/HLPF/2015/L.1) and the Ministerial Declaration of the HLPF (E/HLPF/2015/L.2), which were adopted by acclamation. He summarized the proceedings of the HLPF and closed the meeting at 4:51 pm.

Final Outcome: The Ministerial Declaration of the HLPF on the Theme of “Strengthening Integration, Implementation and Review—the HLPF After 2015,” *inter alia*:

- welcomes what has been achieved through implementation of the MDGs, as well as progress made in the ongoing processes for the upcoming Third International Conference of Financing for Development (FfD3) and the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda;
- commits to establishing a strong, universal, ambitious, inclusive and people-centered post-2015 development agenda that will build on the foundations laid and experiences gained during the MDGs process, complete the unfinished business, and respond to new challenges; and
- requests the President of ECOSOC, on an exceptional basis and without setting a precedent, to issue summaries of the discussions held during the high-level segment and the HLPF as a contribution to FfD3 and the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF HLPF 2015

“Let us not waste our time in idle discourse! Let us do something, while we have the chance! It is not every day that we are needed.... To all mankind they were addressed, those cries for help still ringing in our ears! But at this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us, whether we like it or not. Let us make the most of it, before it is too late!” – Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot

Delegates to the 2015 meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development convened under the theme “Strengthening integration, implementation and review—the HLPF after 2015,” for a meeting that many believed was

circumscribed by expectations and realities, along with a growing urgency constrained by the inability to do much other than wait.

Indeed, some of those arriving to the meeting had called for its suspension until after the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in September 2015, and even the most optimistic acknowledged that the meeting was a placeholder.

Others hoped, however, that in spite of the long wait for the outcomes of the post-2015 negotiations process, this meeting was supposed to progress on follow up and review of the 2014 SAMOA Pathway from the Third SIDS Conference, as well as the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production. It was also tasked with further clarifying the structure and functions of the HLPF and discussing the role of Major Groups and other stakeholders, including the role of the scientific and technological communities. This brief analysis will examine whether HLPF 2015 languished in “idle discourse” during this meeting, while it continues to wait for the decisions necessary to fulfill its mandate of enhancing the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda.

QUESTIONS AND QUESTIONS

“But that is not the question. Why are we here that is the question. And we are blessed in this that we happen to know the answer. Yes, in this immense confusion one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come.” – Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot

The function and structure of the HLPF is defined, to an extent, in UNGA resolution 67/290 as well as in the outcome of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, “The Future We Want.” Both these documents call for a high-level political forum, which would provide, *inter alia*, political leadership and follow-up and review of the outcomes of major UN conferences that have already taken place, in addition to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda once adopted.

Over the course of the negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda, more specifically the sixth session of the Post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations, held in late June, these roles and functions have been further “fleshed” out with a wish list from Member States coming to the fore. They have called for ensuring follow-up and review of, *inter alia*: means of implementation; the outcomes of major UN conferences; and the post-2015 global commitments. They have also urged that the HLPF be a platform for exchanging best practices, lessons learned, and strengthening the science-policy interface.

During the eight-day session, a number of questions regarding the HLPF arose. One of the most frequently asked was, given the depth and breadth of the post-2015 development agenda, as well as the number of major UN conferences that affect at least one of the three pillars of sustainable development, how is the HLPF going to perform the necessary follow-up and review functions?

Discussions over the course of the HLPF’s ministerial segment touched on this topic as the merits of thematic reviews based on a four-year cycle—these would be undertaken in conjunction with other follow-up and review mechanisms to avoid “siloeing”—were mentioned by panelists, Member States,

Major Groups and other stakeholders. Delegates also wondered whether it was better to address sets of SDGs or, given the interlinkages among the SDGs, cross-cutting themes.

As these debates continued, one delegate was heard wondering whether the large amount of work the HLPF was expected to take on would instead turn the HLPF into a “house of cards” rather than provide a concrete foundation to ensure the success of the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs. And with concrete proposals largely eluding delegates, ECOSOC President Martin Sajdik reminded delegates that “the HLPF should not be overburdened,” recalling that “its central objective is to provide high-level political guidance and it should use ECOSOC to mobilize the rest of the UN system around various agendas.”

Whatever the final decision taken regarding how the HLPF should approach the wide variety of tasks currently under consideration, the question of modalities arises. While specific modalities were not discussed during the course of the meeting, delegates’ statements indicated a general agreement that more work was needed to be able to fully operationalize a body with such complex tasks and structures.

On the question of modalities, some Major Groups and other stakeholders were heard questioning how the HLPF would function under its two masters—ECOSOC and the UNGA—suggesting that this may “muddy the waters.” And while Major Groups and other stakeholders were concerned about whether there was a clear enough delineation of tasks between the two bodies, in addition to clarification on what decisions both the UNGA and the ECOSOC would be expected to take, many Member States were heard saying that this issue is not as “big” as it may seem, provided that ECOSOC and its Secretariat undertake the bulk of the work. Since this issue was never directly discussed during the HLPF, and rather addressed on the sidelines and in the corridors, it thus becomes one of the aspects that will be left for further clarification at a later date.

QUANTITY OR QUALITY

“The tears of the world are a constant quantity. For each one who begins to weep somewhere else another stops. The same is true of the laugh.” – Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot

The role of science and technology, and of the Major Groups and other stakeholders, were regular themes of interventions during the HLPF, with many questioning how to increase participation and meet the mandate to expand the role of the scientific community. While interventions repeatedly emphasized the need to increase participation, questions remain, including how to give science and technology an expanded role in the HLPF, and what that role should be, while ensuring that other stakeholders are not left behind.

Delegates broadly welcomed the increased inclusiveness of Major Groups and other stakeholders at all levels in the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda, including the SDGs and their follow-up and review. Many were heard commenting and encouraging this kind of participation, as stakeholder participation is seen as essential for effective implementation at all levels and across all regions—integration that is imperative to “leave no-one behind.” The caveat, they

said, is how to achieve it in a logical, yet amenable-to-all fashion. Whether the format of contributions from stakeholders, representing the tears and laughter of the world, will change either the quality, or the quantity of engagement, will thus become another key question among the outstanding issues that need to be addressed in the latter half of 2015.

A PLACEHOLDER IS A PLACEHOLDER

“There’s man all over for you, blaming on his boots the faults of his feet.” – Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot

Major Groups and other stakeholders are not the only participants in the HLPF. Member States form the core of the body, and at this meeting panelists played a key role in driving discussions. While panel themes guided deliberations, many of those who participated throughout the eight-day meeting lamented their circular nature. This was in part due to high turnover of participants, with many panelists flying in for their sessions alone and not engaging with the rest of the Forum’s discussions. This repetition resulted in a debate that lacked substance and any large strides forward, or creative solutions to the lingering questions surrounding the structure and function of the HLPF.

While panel members were generally high-level and diversified, representatives of the Member States in the room, particularly during the five-day segment, were less so, with interns or junior Mission staff comprising the majority of a room that was in some cases difficult to engage in discussion.

The composition and expertise of country delegates and panelists plays a role in the ultimate success or failure of the post-2015 development agenda implementation. One of the key critiques of the HLPF’s predecessor, the Commission on Sustainable Development, was that high-level country delegates, primarily ministers, were mainly ministers of environment, with the other two pillars of sustainable development—economic and social development—woefully under-represented.

While a number of parallel, and related, negotiations that were ongoing during the HLPF, most notably the negotiations on the outcome document for FfD3 and the UNGA President High-Level Event on Climate Change, were said to have diverted attention from the HLPF, others noted the “placeholder” status meant that it was unlikely high-level delegates would have attended anyway.

Indeed challenges related to participation, and even the specific function of this meeting, were however symptomatic of the nature of the meeting as a “placeholder,” while waiting to transform into the expected “apex” body for implementation and follow-up and review, rather a broader problem in and of itself. Any successful analysis of the quality of the boots, i.e. participation, will have to wait until the feet, i.e. the structure and function of the HLPF, have been determined.

TO ACTION

“Let’s go.” “We can’t.” “Why not?” “We’re waiting for Godot.” – Samuel Beckett, Waiting for Godot

As the HLPF session drew to a close, delegates were reminded by Amb. Macharia Kamau, Co-Facilitator of the Post-

2015 Development Agenda Negotiations, that the SDGs have immense political will backing them, and it will be imperative for HLPF to address a number of issues, among which is drive the implementation of the SDGs and the accountability thereof, and to “leave no one behind.”

In spite of the topics addressed, which included moderated discussions to investigate the different modalities for the future operation of the HLPF, as many expected, these did not result in concrete decisions on the function and structure of the HLPF or provide further detail on the modalities. It did, however, provide the space for discussion and debate, allowing delegates to try to establish and expand common ground on the variety of topics.

Yet, in order to make a difference, all the outstanding aspects, questions and details of the HLPF will need to be resolved this year to enable the HLPF to assist implementation so that “we hit the ground running.” The 2016 session of the HLPF, which everyone highlights as the first session to be able to truly carry out its core functions, must be ready to assess and strengthen implementation of sustainable development. Only then will we know if the HLPF is still “waiting for Godot.”

UPCOMING MEETINGS

Third International Conference on Financing for

Development: The Third International Conference on Financing for Development will be held at the “highest possible political level.” It is expected to include Heads of State and Government, ministers for finance, foreign affairs and development cooperation, and other special representatives. **dates:** 13-16 July 2015 **location:** Addis Ababa, Ethiopia **contact:** UN Financing for Development Office **phone:** +1-212-963-4598 **email:** ffdoffice@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/ffd3>

Intergovernmental Negotiations on the Post-2015

Development Agenda – Seventh and Eighth Sessions: The seventh and eighth sessions of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda will focus on negotiating the outcome document. **dates:** 20-31 July 2015 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **phone:** +1-212-963-8102 **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015>

UN Summit to Adopt the Post-2015 Development Agenda:

The Summit is expected to adopt the post-2015 development agenda, including: a declaration; a set of SDGs, targets, and indicators; their MOI and a new Global Partnership for Development; and a framework for follow-up and review. **dates:** 25-27 September 2015 **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Division for Sustainable Development **fax:** +1-212-963-4260 **email:** dsd@un.org **www:** <http://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/summit>

Second Meeting of the IAEG-SDGs: The Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators has been tasked to develop an indicator framework for the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda at the global level, and to support its implementation. **dates:** 26-28 October 2015 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** UN Statistics Division **email:** statistics@un.org **www:** <http://unstats.un.org/sdgs/>

ECOSOC Dialogue on Longer-Term Positioning of the UN Development System – Retreat 2: This is the second of three retreats to be organized as part of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system. It will discuss interlinkages among other issues. The dialogue seeks to inform the outcome of the next UNGA resolution on the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR)—the mechanism through which the UNGA assesses the effectiveness, efficiency, coherence and impact of the UN Development system. Based on ECOSOC resolution 2014/14, it needs to take into account the post-2015 development agenda. **dates:** 2-3 November 2015 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **email:** qcpr@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/qcpr/>

ECOSOC Dialogue on Longer-Term Positioning of the UN Development System – Workshop 5: This is the fifth of seven workshops to be organized as part of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system. It will focus on funding and the funding architecture for the post-2015 development era. **date:** 7 December 2015 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **email:** qcpr@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/qcpr/>

ECOSOC Dialogue on Longer-Term Positioning of UN Development System – Workshop 6: This is the sixth of seven workshops to be organized as part of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system. It will focus on governance and discuss emerging strategic issues and options. **date:** 25 January 2016 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **email:** qcpr@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/qcpr/>

ECOSOC Dialogue on Longer-Term Positioning of the UN Development System – Workshop 7: This is the last of seven workshops to be organized as part of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system. It will focus on capacity, impact, partnership approaches and organizational arrangements. **date:** 22 February 2016 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **email:** qcpr@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/qcpr/>

Second Meeting of the UNEP Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives: The Open-ended Committee of Permanent Representatives will prepare for the next meeting of the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Programme. **dates:** 15-19 February 2016 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies **email:** jorge.laguna-celis@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/>

ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment (OAS) 2016: The 2016 session of the ECOSOC Operational Activities Segment will include a discussion on emerging policy issues, within the context of the ECOSOC dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN Development System. **dates:** 22-23 February 2016 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **email:** ecosocinfo@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/>

47th Session of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC):

UNSC 47 is expected to agree on the indicator framework and set of indicators for the SDGs, among other agenda items. UNSC's Friends of the Chair Group on broader measures of progress will prepare and guide discussions on the development and implementation of the framework. **dates:** 8-11 March 2016 **location:** UN Headquarters New York **contact:** UN Statistics Division **email:** statcom@un.org **www:** <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission.htm>

ECOSOC Dialogue on Longer-Term Positioning of the UN Development System – Retreat 3: This is the last of three retreats to be organized as part of the ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system. The retreat will discuss findings and conclusions related to the areas discussed during the dialogue's process, namely: functions, funding, governance, capacity and impact of the UN development system, partnership approaches and organizational arrangements. **dates:** 4-5 April 2016 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **email:** qcpr@un.org **www:** <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/qcpr/>

Second Meeting of the UN Environment Assembly: The UN Environment Assembly (UNEA) will convene for the second time in 2016. The UNEA of the UNEP represents the highest level of governance of international environmental affairs in the UN system. The Rio+20 conference agreed in June 2012 to strengthen and upgrade UNEP through measures including universal membership of its Governing Council and ensuring the active participation of all relevant stakeholders. In March 2013, the UNGA changed the designation of the Governing Council of UNEP to become UNEA, reflecting the intention to elevate its status. **dates:** 23-27 May 2016 **location:** Nairobi, Kenya **contact:** Jorge Laguna-Celis, Secretary of Governing Bodies **email:** jorge.laguna-celis@unep.org **www:** <http://www.unep.org/about/sgb/>

World Humanitarian Summit: An initiative of UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, this conference managed by UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), will bring together governments, humanitarian organizations, people affected by humanitarian crises and partners, including the private sector, to propose solutions to humanitarian challenges and set an agenda to keep "humanitarian action fit for the future." **dates:** 26-27 May 2016 **location:** Istanbul, Turkey **contact:** World Humanitarian Summit **email:** info@whsummit.org **www:** https://www.worldhumanitariansummit.org/whs_about

HLPF 2016: The fourth session of the HLPF, taking place in 2016, will be the first meeting of the HLPF after the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs. **dates:** July 2016 [tentative] **location:** UN Headquarters, New York **contact:** Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination **email:** ecosocinfo@un.org **www:** <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf>

For additional meetings, see <http://sd.iisd.org/>

GLOSSARY

10YFP	10-Year Framework of Programmes for SCP
AAAS	American Association for the Advancement of Science
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
DESA	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs
DRR	Disaster risk reduction
DSD	UN Division for Sustainable Development
ECOSOC	UN Economic and Social Council
ESCWA	UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FfD3	Third International Conference on Financing for Development
GSDR	Global Sustainable Development Report
HLPF	High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
ICSU	International Council for Science
LDCs	Least developed countries
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MOI	Means of implementation
ODA	Official development assistance
PAHO	Pan American Health Organization
Rio+20	UN Conference on Sustainable Development
SCP	Sustainable consumption and production
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SDSN	Sustainable Development Solutions Network
SIDS	Small island developing states
UNEA	UN Environment Assembly
UNEP	UN Environment Programme
UNGA	UN General Assembly