



Earth Negotiations Bulletin

HLPF-2

#5

iisd Reporting Services

A Reporting Service for Environment and Development Negotiations

Online at <http://www.iisd.ca/hlpf/hlpf2/>

Vol. 33 No. 6

Published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Monday, 7 July 2014

HLPF-2 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 3 JULY 2014

On the fourth day of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF-2) under the auspices of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), a moderated inter-regional dialogue took place in the morning on unlocking and reshaping development and enhancing implementation: the regional context. This was followed by a moderated dialogue on shaping the forum for post-2015 in the afternoon. The first week of the meeting concluded with a wrap-up session on messages for the ministerial segment, which will take place during the second week.

MODERATED INTER-REGIONAL DIALOGUE: “UNLOCKING AND RESHAPING DEVELOPMENT AND ENHANCING IMPLEMENTATION: THE REGIONAL CONTEXT”

Introducing the panelists, Ambassador Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), ECOSOC Vice-President, highlighted the importance of acquiring regional perspectives in formulating a bottom-up, inclusive sustainable development agenda.

Moderator Amina Mohammed, Special Advisor of the UN Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, invited panelists to share key priorities that have emerged from regional consultations.

Alicia Bárcena, UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and current Coordinator of the Regional Commissions, identified eradicating extreme poverty and tackling inequality as key priorities. She also emphasized the importance of natural resource governance in generating resources for education and health.

Rima Khalaf, UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, highlighted: achieving social justice by alleviating poverty and reducing inequality and unemployment; and peace and security, including ending foreign occupations and reducing conflict related human suffering. She called for a universal social protection system.

Shamshad Akhtar, UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, highlighted the need for ensuring stronger, sustainable, inclusive and resilient economic growth, and for promoting resource efficiency coupled with effective natural resource management.

Carlos Lopes, UN Economic Commission for Africa, stressed that value addition was a key priority for Africa to achieve structural transformation.

Andrey Vasilyev, UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), identified key regional priorities as: reducing inequalities, particularly within countries; addressing gender disparities in the labor market; and designing a universal sustainable development agenda with commitments for all countries.

Panelists then described regional policies to address key priorities. Lopes stressed that Africa needs to: revolutionize agricultural productivity to address poverty; transform the

service industry to consolidate gains from urbanization and a growing middle class; and become a solution-provider for climate change.

Akhtar prioritized structural reform and economic diversification; the adoption of demand and supply-side measures to address balanced regional growth; widening social protection; mainstreaming sustainable development into private sector practices; and enhancing science, policy, and innovation in the region.

Khalaf identified four focus areas for the region: addressing vertical and horizontal inequalities; enhancing social protection; economic restructuring towards higher value addition; and regional integration.

Bárcena called for a paradigm shift in consumer patterns, away from purely market-driven policies. She also called for: a fiscal compact to address resource redistribution; an investment compact to increase value addition across the value chain; a natural resource compact focusing on ecosystems and agriculturally biodiverse areas that need protection; and a sustainable cities compact.

Vasilyev listed the critical sectors for sustainable development integration, including sustainable cities, transport, forests, water, and sustainable energy. He urged cross-sectoral cooperation as well as local and sub-regional policies to achieve this integration.

Shahira Wahbi, League of Arab States, drew attention to common priorities among the regions, particularly peace and security, regional integration, technology transfer, job creation, and social protection systems. She highlighted the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

ZAMBIA highlighted poverty as a common issue, noting hunger, unemployment, and land degradation contribute to poverty. He recommended developing a robust monitoring and evaluation system for the post-2015 agenda. Noting industrialization projects have either failed or created “white elephants” in Africa, BENIN urged consideration of how to do things differently in the future.

CUBA emphasized the need to consider how decreased official development assistance (ODA) to Middle Income Countries (MICs) will affect achievement of development priorities. The REPUBLIC OF KOREA said monitoring and assessment of the implementation of the post-2015 agenda is critical.

TANZANIA said priorities for Africa include income generation, enabling the private sector, and governance. The RUSSIAN FEDERATION underlined the important role of regional economic commissions, and expressed concern over attempts to reduce the status of the ECE and weaken its links with ECOSOC.

Mohammed then called on panelists to address means of implementation (MOI), including potential sources of finance.

Bárcena identified global taxes on speculative financial flows, debt swaps, a regional financial security mechanism, and an institution for global financial governance as essential elements

This issue of the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* © <enb@iisd.org> is written and edited by Rishikesh Ram Bhandary, Tallash Kantai, Anju Sharma, and Catherine Wahlén, Ph.D. The Digital Editor is Francis Dejon. The Editor is Pamela Chasek, Ph.D. <pam@iisd.org>. The Director of IISD Reporting Services is Langston James “Kimo” Goree VI <kimo@iisd.org>. The Sustaining Donors of the *Bulletin* are the European Commission (DG-ENV and DG-CLIMATE) and the Government of Switzerland (the Swiss Federal Office for the Environment (FOEN) and the Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation (SDC). General Support for the *Bulletin* during 2014 is provided by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety (BMUB), the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SWAN International, the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Environment (through the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies - IGES), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Specific funding for the coverage of this meeting has been provided by the German Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation, Building and Nuclear Safety. Funding for translation of the *Bulletin* into French has been provided by the Government of France, the Wallonia, Québec, and the International Organization of La Francophonie/Institute for Sustainable Development of La Francophonie (IOF/IFDD). The opinions expressed in the *Bulletin* are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of IISD or other donors. Excerpts from the *Bulletin* may be used in non-commercial publications with appropriate academic citation. For information on the *Bulletin*, including requests to provide reporting services, contact the Director of IISD Reporting Services at <kimo@iisd.org>, +1-646-536-7556 or 300 East 56th St., 11D, New York, NY 10022 USA. The ENB team at HLPF-2 can be contacted by e-mail at <anju@iisd.org>.



<http://enb.iisd.mobi/>

of MOI. Khalaf highlighted the mobilization of domestic resources by: increasing the tax base; migrant remittances with diaspora bonds; Arab sovereign wealth funds coupled with improvements in investment laws in the region; and curbing illicit financial flows.

Lopes drew attention to: illicit financial flows in Africa due to price-fixing; addressing intellectual property rights; and acknowledging the potential sector-specific challenges for African countries.

Noting that the Asia-Pacific region needs up to US\$ 2.4 trillion to address infrastructure gaps and US\$ 750 million to address natural disasters, Akhtar proposed several sources, including taxes.

Vasilyev underscored the potential of well-managed public-private partnerships. He highlighted the establishment of standards for agricultural produce to allow easier entry into the European markets, and the potential of cooperation among the regional economic communities as a channel for MOI.

Daniel Tygel, Intercontinental Network for the Promotion of Social Solidarity Economy, emphasized a human rights-based approach. COSTA RICA stressed the need to measure the multiple dimensions of poverty and focus on the needs of MICs. COLOMBIA called for measurements beyond GDP, measuring MICs' capacity, and addressing structural gaps.

Expressing dissatisfaction with the development process and unequal economic growth among countries and social groups, GUATEMALA called for more importance to States than markets.

RWANDA said MOI must be generated locally for human-centered, inclusive and sustainable growth. BENIN said 50% of ODA should be allocated to Least Developed Countries.

On monitoring and accountability for the post-2015 development agenda, Lopes highlighted: efforts to improve data systems; data collection through mobile technology; building networks and capacity; and production of country profiles.

Bárcena emphasized accountability mechanisms at the global and national levels. Akhtar noted that fulfilment of commitments on sustainable development depend on the coherency and consistency of the agenda. Vasilyev noted that while generating disaggregated data is costly, it complements national averages. Osmá Mahomed, Commission on Sustainable Development, Mauritius, called for a human rights-based accountability framework with time bound targets and supportive national plans.

MODERATED DIALOGUE: "SHAPING THE FORUM FOR POST-2015"

This dialogue was chaired by Martin Sajdik, ECOSOC President, and moderated by Amina Mohammed.

Paul Gulleik Larsen, Coordinator for the Post-2015 Process, Norway, stressed that the Forum's agenda should be guided by the SDGs, and identify gaps and challenges in implementation. He said the post-2015 goals and targets must, *inter alia*: be realistic, communicable and capable of mobilising financial support; and address climate change, inequality, and employment.

Elizabeth Thompson, Former Executive Coordinator of the Rio+20 Conference, proposed that the HLPF take on some functions of a think-tank, generating information on relevant issues to be discussed through genuine dialogue in an open setting. She also called for the establishment of a system to translate international sustainable development commitments to national-level policy.

János Pásztor, WWF International, noted that the UN Secretary-General's High Level Panel on Global Sustainability prepared an integrated package to guide the work of the Forum, including, *inter alia*: a basis in science; integrating international and regional financial institutions; and undertaking genuine debate on complex inter-related issues.

Leena Srivastava, The Energy and Resources Institute, suggested the HLPF delegate the review of individual goals to the UN agencies that focus on the subject. Shantal Munro, Executive Coordinator, Caribbean Policy Development Center, stressed, *inter alia*: ensuring national coherence across

ministries; managing expectations, rather than tackling all issues; and providing resources for civil society participation and capacity building.

Michael O'Neill, UN Development Programme, noted the potential of the HLPF to bring together the right stakeholders for a cross-cutting dialogue, and encouraged South-South and triangular cooperation to share best practices.

The CHILDREN AND YOUTH Major Group called for active participation of stakeholders in agenda setting; support for a secretariat and a dedicated bureau for the HLPF; and for the HLPF to adopt ministerial declarations independently from the ECOSOC. The NGO Major Group expressed concern over the integration of the HLPF agenda into the ECOSOC agenda, stating that this could jeopardise the participation of ministers of environment.

ZAMBIA called for an inventory of national processes and coordinated and efficient data collection. The PHILIPPINES identified barriers for the HLPF, including: long-term political commitment; lack of expenditure frameworks to support programming; and data quality. ETHIOPIA stressed the importance of stakeholder engagement at the national level.

SWITZERLAND recommended the Forum be flexible enough to address emerging issues. GERMANY stressed that the Forum will need a strong review and accountability system, and a politically relevant agenda.

In response to comments, Thompson said the Forum should be an innovative body addressing implementation. Larsen underlined domestic resource mobilization as the main source of financing for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Pásztor highlighted integration, participation, accountability, and coordination as important elements for the HLPF.

Mohammed summarized the dialogue, noting calls for, *inter alia*: strengthening the science-policy interface; focusing on results; bringing sectors together; and not overburdening States with multiple layers of complexity. She drew attention to the challenge of ensuring accountability within a voluntary framework.

WRAP-UP SESSION: MESSAGES FOR THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT

Chair Sajdik wrapped up the week's meeting, saying the post-2015 agenda should be integrated, transformative, inclusive, and people-centered. On strengthening the science-policy interface, he noted participants supported: evidence-based policymaking; expanding capabilities of future generations; and multi-stakeholder, multi-sector, and multi-scale approaches. He suggested the Global Sustainable Development Report represents an opportunity to strengthen the science-policy interface.

On countries in special situations, including Small Island Developing States, Sajdik highlighted, *inter alia*: national sustainable development plans; vulnerability indices; changing donor-recipient relationships, including South-South and regional coordination; and conditions for building resilience.

On means of implementation, he emphasized creating a conducive environment, including through good governance, to attract finance for the SDGs. He recognized calls for the HLPF to adopt a review function.

He concluded by informing participants that these messages will be presented to ECOSOC's High-Level Segment when HLPF-2 reconvenes on Monday, 7 July 2014.

IN THE CORRIDORS

As the first week of HLPF-2 drew to a close, stakeholders were not convinced the Forum was walking the talk. Throughout the week, many delegations reiterated the need for inclusive, people-centered approaches with strong monitoring and accountability mechanisms. However, the relegation of the Forum's interaction with stakeholders to a morning meeting with the President was viewed as a step backwards from the more progressive practice of the Commission on Sustainable Development, which devoted two full days to dialogue. Several participants also expressed concern over the HLPF's "weak institutional integrity," suggesting the lack of a designated Bureau or Secretariat could compromise its future effectiveness.