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Integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on critical milestones towards coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level**

##### ***Summary***

Meeting at a special summit at the United Nations in September 2015 World Leaders committed to an ambitious global agenda, *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, with the overarching goal to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development. The Agenda is a plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership. All States and all stakeholders recognized their respective responsibilities for the implementation of this Agenda. Governments also underscored that a “robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated follow-up and review framework will make a vital contribution to implementation”<sup>1</sup>. It will “promote accountability to citizens, support active international cooperation in achieving this Agenda and foster exchange of best practices and mutual learning”<sup>2</sup>. This report explores how to put in place a coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review system at the global level, within the mandates outlined in the Agenda. It does not attempt to describe or prescribe how to implement the 2030 Agenda, the primary responsibility for which lies at the national level; nor does it attempt to describe the wide array of possible multilateral support mechanisms to such implementation efforts.

<sup>1</sup> Agenda 2030, paragraph 72

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 73

| <b>Contents</b>   | <i>Paragraphs</i> |
|---|-------------------|
| I. Introduction   | 1-6               |
| II. A review system oriented towards supporting national implementation               | 7-9               |
| III. Working coherently with the institutions we have                                 | 10-17             |
| a) The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development                          | 18-35             |
| b) The General Assembly   | 36-39             |
| c) The Economic and Social Council  | 40-43             |
| d) Functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums               | 44-54             |
| e) The UN Regional Commissions and other regional bodies                              | 55-58             |
| IV. Assessments by non-UN organizations   | 59-62             |
| V. Ensuring inclusiveness of global reviews   | 63-68             |
| VI. Ensuring that high quality data supports the reviews                              | 69-71             |
| VII. Ensuring ambition and impact of HLPF Voluntary National Reviews                  |                   |
| a) National and sub-national reviews  | 72-74             |
| b) Incentives for countries to participate in Voluntary National Reviews by HLPF      | 75-76             |
| c) Periodicity and number of Voluntary National Reviews by the HLPF                   | 77-79             |
| d) Featuring and discussing Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF                    | 80-82             |
| e) Building on existing mechanisms  | 83-84             |
| f) Follow-up to national reviews at HLPF  | 85-86             |
| g) Recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines                           | 87-89             |
| VIII. Annual theme of the HLPF and sequence of thematic reviews over the 4-year cycle | 90-99             |
| IX. Link between the annual theme of the HLPF and the theme of ECOSOC                 | 100-103           |
| X. Reporting by major groups, other stakeholders and partnerships                     | 104-107           |
| XI. Milestones and way forward  | 108-136           |

## I. INTRODUCTION

1. From Sendai<sup>3</sup> to Addis Ababa<sup>4</sup> and from New York<sup>5</sup> to Paris<sup>6</sup>, 2015 was a momentous year for multilateralism and international policy shaping. *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* adopted in New York in September 2015 is the ambitious shared vision that will guide our efforts to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development over the next 15 years. Seventeen sustainable development goals (SDGs) and their accompanying targets are at its heart. The SDGs were developed by UN Member States, in a broad consultative process that included unprecedented engagement with civil society. The broad ownership of the 2030 Agenda must translate into a strong commitment by all stakeholders to implement the Agenda and achieve the Goals.
2. The UN Member States clearly expressed their resolve to buttress the implementation of the SDGs with a robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent, and integrated follow-up and review of progress<sup>7</sup>.
3. The follow-up and review framework must carry forward the spirit of partnership and the enthusiastic civil society and business sector engagement that have led to the successful elaboration of the Agenda. It must institutionalize the principles defined in the Agenda and address the new areas, including the resolve to leave no one behind and tackle climate change and the aspiration for peaceful societies and effective institutions. It must reflect the integrated nature of the Agenda and be geared towards supporting implementation. It should inspire a multistakeholder approach to implementation.
4. The present report was prepared in response to paragraph 90 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Paragraph 90 requests “the Secretary General, in consultation with Member States, to prepare a report, for consideration at the 70th session of the General Assembly in preparation for the 2016 meeting of the HLPF, which outlines critical milestones towards coherent, efficient, and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level. This report should include a proposal on the organizational arrangements for state-led reviews at the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC, including recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines. It should clarify institutional responsibilities and provide guidance on annual themes, on a sequence of thematic reviews, and on options for periodic reviews for the HLPF”.

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<sup>3</sup> Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, 2015-2030

<sup>4</sup> Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development

<sup>5</sup> A/Res/70/1

<sup>6</sup> Paris Agreement on Climate Change

5. This report reflects my analysis and proposals, drawing from the responses of 119 Member States to a questionnaire circulated by the Secretariat<sup>8</sup>. UN system organizations and Major Groups and other stakeholders also provided their views.
6. My proposals aim to help Member States ensure that global follow-up and review is anchored in the realities of people's lives and builds on effective reviews at the national and regional levels. They suggest ways to fully use the potential of the new high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) as the central follow-up and review platform. They reflect on how it can rally all international intergovernmental platforms within the UN system and beyond around the 2030 Agenda, instill coherence in their work and derive political guidance from their conclusions. My proposals also aim to clarify the respective roles of the UN General Assembly (UNGA), ECOSOC and other platforms. They underline that we should work in each and every platform to integrate the SDGs and reflect the principles of the Agenda. Above all, my proposals start from the premise that whatever we do should be country-led, people-centred, gender-sensitive, pragmatic, open, participatory, and useful to all countries and people.

## **II. A review system oriented towards supporting national implementation**

7. While committing to the systematic follow-up and review of progress at the national, regional and global levels<sup>9</sup>, Member States have underscored that the lynchpin of follow-up and review in implementing the SDGs will be the national level.
8. Follow-up and review processes at the global level must complement and support national and regional reviews and be guided by the principles defined in the 2030 Agenda.<sup>10</sup> Those include among others their voluntary and state-led nature, their respect for national ownership and the Agenda's characteristics, their emphasis on means of implementation, their inclusiveness, their use of existing platforms, and their rigorous, data and evidence-based nature.
9. The ultimate purpose of global follow-up and review is to accelerate progress towards the eradication of poverty and hunger and other SDGs.

## **III. Working coherently with the institutions we have**

10. At the global level, the main building blocks of the review architecture are already in place. This architecture will be centred around the High Level Political Forum

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<sup>8</sup> —Including AOSIS, CARICOM, EU, G7 and PSIDS - <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/follow-up>

<sup>9</sup> Para 47

<sup>10</sup> para 74

(HLPF), which will provide political guidance and recommendations on the basis of a global common appraisal of progress towards the SDGs.

11. The HLPF is the culmination of a network of follow-up and review processes at the global level. Its “thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues”, will be supported by functional commissions of ECOSOC and other intergovernmental bodies and forums<sup>11</sup>. The 2030 Agenda offers an overarching vision and a framework which can truly mobilize and integrate the work of these separate bodies and forums around the SDGs and ensure that they work as essential building blocks of a cohesive review system while respecting their diverse mandates and governance. Building on these forums will ensure an expert and cohesive, but also an efficient system underpinning the HLPF.
12. Equally important, the HLPF, in fulfilling its role, will work coherently with and benefit from the guidance and support of the UN General Assembly (UNGA) and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) under whose auspices it meets.
13. Global action and review are only valuable if they build on national and regional efforts. Regional political, economic and sectoral institutions are thus great sources of expertise and inspiration for following up on the Agenda at all levels. In this regard, the regional commissions can play an important role.
14. In addition, a wealth of organizations and actors outside the UN system are planning to review progress in areas related to the SDGs. Provided they are rigorous and independent, they may inform and enrich intergovernmental work within the UN.
15. Major groups of civil society and other stakeholders, including business, must participate in all parts of the follow-up and review architecture. The HLPF should champion innovative practices to engage non-state actors. People should know about its work and understand and relate to its conclusions.
16. Overall, ensuring effective global review is about determining how existing institutions can embrace the principles of the 2030 Agenda and reinforce each other’s work within a common review architecture. It is about ensuring a stronger engagement between states and their people and an inclusive approach to realize the transformations entailed by the SDGs. It is about creating opportunities for identifying success factors, gaps, lessons learned and for reflecting, sharing and mutual learning.
17. The integrated and indivisible nature of the SDGs should lead to a review system that promotes a cross-cutting understanding of the significant interlinkages across the goals and targets. This should foster at the HLPF, integrated and holistic

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<sup>11</sup> Paragraph 85

perspectives on progress and obstacles, while precluding any single institution or forum from claiming exclusive ownership of or responsibility for the review of a specific goal.

**a) The High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

18. The HLPF is expected to take a holistic view of implementation. It is tasked with “assessing progress, achievements and challenges faced by developed and developing countries” and ensuring “that the Agenda remains relevant and ambitious”<sup>12</sup>. Member States have underscored that it should thus draw high-level political attention to gaps or areas where we are lagging behind and provide “political leadership, guidance and recommendations for follow-up” to accelerate progress on the most important issues, based on good practices and scientific findings.

*Meetings under the auspices of the UNGA and meetings under the auspices of ECOSOC:*

19. The annual meetings of the HLPF, held under the auspices of ECOSOC, should pave the way for its quadrennial meeting under the auspices of the UNGA. This means that all seventeen SDGs should be reviewed in the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC within a period of four years.
20. At the HLPF meeting under the UNGA, Heads of State and Government will then provide political guidance at the highest level on the Agenda and its implementation, identify progress and emerging challenges and mobilize further actions to accelerate implementation.<sup>13</sup> These meetings will be the moment to review progress in implementing the entire Agenda, in a holistic and integrated way and to give political impetus at the highest level to policies and cooperation to accelerate progress and bridge gaps, building on the outcomes of the four preceding annual HLPF meetings. They will also allow to recommit to the 2030 Agenda and provide directions on how to mobilize the necessary Means of Implementation overall, drawing from the discussions at the UNGA High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development. Importantly, HLPF meetings under the UNGA will also be the moment to determine whether there is need for any adjustment to ensure that the Agenda “remains relevant and ambitious”<sup>14</sup>. Given the importance of such decisions by Heads of State and Government, they should be based on solid evidence and in-depth analysis in the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), and SDG progress report.

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<sup>12</sup> para 82

<sup>13</sup> para 87

<sup>14</sup> Para 82

*Contributing to reviews at the HLPF when meeting under ECOSOC auspices:*

21. Concretely, the Annual HLPF could typically include four parts: (i) Review of overall progress, with the review of the SDG progress report, National Reviews, and Regional Reviews; (ii) Review of progress in specific areas, with thematic review on the Theme and In-depth Reviews of a subset of SDGs; (iii) Review of SDG 17 and other inputs on the implementation of the AAAA; and (iv) new and emerging issues and looking to the long term.

Review of overall progress:

22. One of the core elements of the follow-up and review framework of the 2030 Agenda is Voluntary National Reviews by the HLPF when it meets under the auspices of ECOSOC. As with the forum's thematic reviews of SDGs and its examination of the report on global progress towards the SDGs, these reviews will assess progress in implementing the universal goals and targets, including the means of implementation. Their focus should be the whole of the Agenda.
23. Regional reviews will also be conducted and provide the HLPF with a critical overview of progress and major policy issues in each region. The regional forums on sustainable development have an important role and could help bring together existing review mechanisms. Regional review outcomes would need to be discussed in a dedicated HLPF part on Regional Reviews.
24. In addition to the SDG progress report, the 2030 Agenda defines the GSDR as a tool to inform the HLPF and strengthen the science-policy interface<sup>15</sup>. It will be a critical tool to anchor the regular reviews of the HLPF in scientific findings and analysis, enabling the HLPF to take a long-term perspective, complementing the SDG progress report. The HLPF will use the progress reviews of SDGs as a scorecard to identify where we are lagging behind.

Review of progress in specific areas:

25. The HLPF thematic review should also be conducted in a dedicated part.

Review of Means of implementation related targets and other inputs on the implementation of the AAAA:

26. To ensure a holistic approach and build synergies, reviews of means of implementation could be held not only in connection to national and thematic reviews, but also at a dedicated part of the HLPF. This part would consider the

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<sup>15</sup> Para 83

outcomes of the implementation of Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), while also reviewing progress annually towards Means of implementation related targets.

27. The HLPF will thus be informed by several forums dedicated to reviewing components of the AAAA. It will be informed by the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of ECOSOC Financing for Development (FFD) Forum<sup>16</sup>, the summary of the Multistakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI). It should also receive the President's summary of ECOSOC Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), as well as inputs from other relevant forums such as the Infrastructure Forum led by the multilateral development banks, and the meetings of the international financial institutions or the Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation. These forums could provide insights on the situation regarding means of implementation and identify gaps and possible solutions to be further addressed by the HLPF.

New and emerging issues:

28. A critical mandate for the HLPF is to address new and emerging issues. This will help ensure the continued relevance of the Agenda. Member States and other stakeholders could draw the attention of the ECOSOC President to such new and emerging issues in advance of the HLPF. The HLPF itself might also launch further work on new issues to be addressed at its next session.

29. The HLPF must look at the impact of today's trends and policy choices on the SDGs – 10, 15 or 30 years from now – and serve as the platform for identifying and addressing new and emerging trends, linkages and challenges in a manner that addresses all dimensions of development and that looks to the long term.

30. Currently, a “Dialogue with Executive Secretaries of Regional Commissions” and a “High-level Dialogue with the Heads of Financial and Trade Institutions”, are held during the ECOSOC High Level Segment (HLS). As an option, the Bureau of ECOSOC could consider moving these dialogues to become part of the HLPF discussions on regional reviews and on Means of Implementation, respectively, while preserving the reporting link of regional commissions to ECOSOC. Such an arrangement would enhance the impact of the ECOSOC HLS, which also includes the HLPF ministerial days.

31. The HLPF could also be informed by and benefit from several specific ECOSOC forums covering cross-cutting issues in the context of the SDGs, including the existing forums on Partnerships, Youth and others.

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<sup>16</sup> Para 86



32. In addition, a forum for countries in special situations, including SIDS, LDCs and LLDCs, could be held immediately prior to the HLPF. This forum could review the implications of SDG progress for the action agendas on countries in special situations. Such a forum could constitute a part of ECOSOC Integration segment. Attention should also be given to countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict countries.
33. To ensure that the HLPF gives adequate consideration to vulnerable peoples, the Commission for Social Development, the Human Rights Council and other forums, for example, on specific population groups such as on migrants or indigenous people could also contribute to HLPF discussions through dedicated inputs.
34. The HLPF Ministerial Declaration would capture the essence of the vision and policy recommendations of the multiple platforms, parts, and discussions, as well as lessons learned, and translate them into political guidance on further action. It should also draw critical conclusions from ministerial and other discussions conducted by the HLPF during the session. It would therefore be necessary to finalize the Declaration during the three ministerial days of the HLPF so as to benefit from ministerial guidance.
35. In addition to the broad elements provided by the HLPF Ministerial Declaration, it would be important to capture in greater detail the conclusions and possible recommendations emanating from the reviews, as well as possible commitments made with regard to means of implementation and partnerships. This could be done through a HLPF Summary by the President of ECOSOC. It would serve as proceedings of the discussions of the HLPF, facilitating follow-up and review in subsequent years and supporting the further development of the format of reviews.

#### **b) The General Assembly**

36. The General Assembly is the chief deliberative and policy making organ of the UN. It will be able to take an integrated view of the messages emanating from the HLPF, ECOSOC, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Security Council and other relevant bodies such as UNEA and the Human Rights Council.
37. In order to take an integrated approach to the 2030 Agenda, the UNGA main committees would translate the findings and broad political guidance of the HLPF into more detailed high-level guidance on the issues on the UNGA agenda, including the specific major UN international conferences and summits the UNGA follows.
38. The UNGA, supported by ECOSOC, is also the main platform for reviewing the UN system's contribution to the implementation of the Agenda. Future comprehensive policy reviews of UN system operational activities (QCPR) should not only look at how the UN system works, but also review how it performs on helping Member

States in implementing the 2030 Agenda. This is a major challenge for the UN system, as it requires new ways of working and preserving the various elements and overall balance of the Agenda. ECOSOC has a critical role to support the GA in this regard, through its annual assessment of progress in implementing the QCPR. In that vein, the Secretary-General's report on mainstreaming sustainable development (A/Res/70/75) could support future QCPRs along with the regular SG report for the QCPR.

39. The UNGA will also need to ensure that the 2030 Agenda is adequately addressed in its agenda and shapes the way it conducts its business. While the agenda of the UNGA is broader than the 2030 Agenda, various aspects of the SDGs are addressed in the UNGA plenary and in all its main committee. The President of the UNGA has indicated his willingness to spearhead a review of the way the UNGA addresses the 2030 Agenda, which could be done by the working group on the revitalization of the UNGA.

### **c) The Economic and Social Council**

40. As one of the main organs established by the UN Charter, ECOSOC, under the authority of the UNGA, discharges UN functions in the area of international economic and social cooperation and coordinates the work of the UN system and its own subsidiary machinery. Rio+20 referred to its “key role in achieving a balanced integration of economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development”.
41. The integrated nature of the Agenda will require ECOSOC subsidiary bodies to harmonise their work programmes and agendas with the annual theme of ECOSOC, with which the HLPF theme is in line. This annual theme of ECOSOC provides an opportunity to make system-wide review more coherent. It could be addressed in each segment of ECOSOC in order to ensure that it is reviewed from multiple perspectives. As noted previously, ECOSOC can also provide several important forums in which highly relevant cross-cutting issues to the SDGs can be reviewed, including on MOIs.
42. Under the guidance of ECOSOC, the functional commissions and other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC will need to integrate the 2030 Agenda in their review work, adhering to the principles identified in the 2030 Agenda and contributing to the HLPF as the central follow-up and review platform<sup>17</sup>. ECOSOC could also request its other subsidiary bodies to make expert contributions to the HLPF, including the Committee of Experts on Public Administration and the Committee on Development Policy. The reporting link of all subsidiary bodies to ECOSOC will be unchanged.
43. ECOSOC also has critical responsibilities in the follow-up to the Addis Ababa Conference on Financing for Development through the new FFD Forum, the STI forum and the DCF (see paragraph 11-13), all of which inform the discussions of goal 17 at the HLPF.
44. ECOSOC could strengthen its interaction with the Peacebuilding Commission and utilize its Operational or Humanitarian segments to review development, peace and humanitarian issues as a nexus, thus addressing related aspects of the 2030 Agenda.

### **d) Functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums**

45. The Functional commissions of ECOSOC and other intergovernmental and similar bodies and forums will support HLPF Thematic Reviews of progress in achieving the SDGs<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>17</sup> Para 85 relates to this issue

<sup>18</sup> para 85

46. An inventory conducted by the UN system Technical Support Team<sup>19</sup> showed that many intergovernmental UN bodies and forums review progress and discuss policies in specific areas addressed by the SDGs. Those include, in addition to ECOSOC functional and regional commissions and subsidiary bodies, intergovernmental bodies supported by the UN system specialized agencies and other organizations -- such as the UN Environment Assembly, the World Education Forum, the World Health Assembly, the International Labour Conference, the Conference of the FAO, UNCTAD, UNIDO, the Committee on World Food Security, the Human Rights Council along with the Annual Meetings of World Bank Group and IMF and numerous other assemblies and treaty bodies.
47. The 2030 Agenda can give new impetus to this network of intergovernmental bodies and forums, providing opportunities to feature their work prominently at the HLPF. It will be important that each forum seizes this opportunity, participates in the review of the 2030 Agenda in accordance with its mandate and follows-up on guidance provided by the HLPF with regard to their contribution to its work. It should be understood that contributing to the HLPF review does not imply or create a formal reporting link to the HLPF or modify a forum's mandate or governance. All forums will be invited to contribute to the HLPF, with the decision on whether and how to contribute left to those forums.
48. Three important steps are recommended to enable functional commissions and other intergovernmental forums to support the HLPF: First, they should reflect on the implications of the 2030 Agenda for their respective areas of work, bearing in mind the integrated nature of the Agenda. Second, they should examine their agendas and methods of work to ensure that they are able to respond to requests for voluntary inputs by the HLPF as needed and within the scope of their regular meetings. Third, they should reflect on their ability to convene and engage the critical actors relevant to their contributions to the 2030 Agenda, including scientists, local governments, business, and representatives of the most vulnerable people, as has been done by the Committee on World Food Security. The secretariats of the functional commissions and other intergovernmental forums will play a role in supporting these forums in undertaking these tasks.
49. It would be necessary for the themes of the HLPF to be decided well in advance of the beginning of its four year cycle. This is critical to provide the necessary predictability to the various intergovernmental forums, institutional actors and stakeholders to facilitate timely and effective contributions to the thematic reviews.
50. The thematic reviews of the HLPF will help link the various parts of the UN system intergovernmental architecture. It will allow intergovernmental forums to contribute to the work of the HLPF on any theme and alert about emerging issues or gaps. For

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<sup>19</sup> <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/7186Short%20matrix%20-%20revised%2029.5..pdf>

example, the global and regional Platforms for Disaster Risk Reduction could be expected to provide a dedicated contribution to the HLPF when it discusses SDG targets or themes related to Disaster Risk Reduction, and, in doing so keep track of the SDGs and Sendai Framework in a more integrated fashion.<sup>20</sup>

51. By including an SDG on climate change, the SDGs bridged the gap that has long existed between the development agenda and action on climate change, while respecting the role of the UNFCCC as the platform for climate change negotiations. Consequently, the UNFCCC COP could be invited to make a contribution to the HLPF review of SDG 13 and other related SDGs and targets. Similarly, SDGs 14 and 15 are directly relevant to UNCBD, and Goals 2 and 15 intersect with the remit of UNCCD.
52. While it is important for each forum to have flexibility to decide on its own approach, contributions by intergovernmental forums to the HLPF can be in different forms, including that of a negotiated outcome. A summary of the discussions, as one of the options, might also enable the HLPF to benefit from the review results of these forums and their expertise.
53. It is critical that gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls be included throughout global review.
54. Inputs to HLPF might follow a simple template covering: (i) an assessment of areas of progress and setback at the global level; (ii) the identification of areas requiring urgent attention; (iii) valuable lessons learned; (iv) emerging issues; (v) areas where political guidance by the HLPF is required; and (vi) policy recommendations and tools to accelerate progress.
55. The various contributions could be assembled and consolidated into a database for open reviewing and commenting. The key messages and findings could then be compiled by the Secretariat through a collaborative process to support the thematic review and also be made available on the database. It will be important to help the HLPF to derive political guidance from the multiple inputs it will receive. The secretariats of the various UN system intergovernmental bodies must work coherently to support effective global review.

#### **e) The regional perspective**

56. The 2030 Agenda recognized the importance of dialogue and review at the regional and sub-regional levels. Important progress has been achieved in various regions on the follow-up and review architecture including through regional forums on sustainable development convened by the regional commissions. The main benefits of regional review

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<sup>20</sup> 2015 GSDR, Ch. 4

activities must be felt at the level of the region and countries. Regional reviews – peer learning and assessments of progress and policies- will allow for discussions on overall trends, gaps, lessons learned, best practices, and issues specific to the region- whether they relate to MOIs, the thematic review or other- as well as boost regional cooperation and partnerships. Where gaps are noted, additional consultations could help define appropriate responses.

57. Regional reviews supported by the regional commissions, other regional organizations, UN system entities and the Global Compact, for example, can provide important inputs to countries of the region as well as to the HLPF.
58. There are a number of regions where peer review mechanisms exist. They can provide potential valuable lessons. It is important that the UN regional commissions and other regional organizations continue working closely together and build on each other's work.
59. The outcomes of reviews conducted in regional fora may be provided to the HLPF in an aggregated form. Countries having undergone peer or other reviews at the regional level could be encouraged to use them in their preparation for national reviews at the HLPF.

#### **IV. Assessments by non-UN organizations**

60. Many international and regional organizations beyond the UN plan to review implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Many Member States have recognized their important role, while also pointing to the potential risk of duplicating efforts.
61. Examples include the African Peer Review Mechanism, the peer reviews of the Pacific Island Forum or the OECD initiative, whose peer and other reviews already cover many thematic aspects of the 2030 Agenda. The work of such platforms outside the UN can strengthen global follow-up and review and reflect the universal nature of the Agenda.
62. While conclusions from those reviews may be provided to the HLPF – or regional forums – in an aggregate form or by the countries concerned, it is important to ensure that all reviews fed to the HLPF are consistent with the principles set out in the 2030 Agenda regarding content, approach, ambition, breadth and rigour of the review of SDGs.
63. A variety of coalitions, non-governmental organizations and think tanks also work at the global and regional levels to collect data and information on trends and policies. Some multi-stakeholder partnerships likewise conduct stock-taking, collect lessons learned and provide feedback, all of which can be useful to the HLPF.

#### **V. Ensuring inclusiveness of global reviews**

64. Heads of State and Government decided that all reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be “open, inclusive, participatory and transparent for all people and will support reporting by all relevant stakeholders”.
65. It is critical to engage major groups and other stakeholders throughout the review process, including at the national and subnational level. It will thus be beneficial to the review that governments ensure inclusiveness and participation through the appropriate mechanisms. Progress in doing so could also be highlighted in national reviews at the HLPF.
66. The 2030 Agenda also envisages strong participation of non-state actors in UN intergovernmental forums and bodies. The ECOSOC system in particular provides a space for multiple development actors to come together to review implementation. The 2030 Agenda also gives a central role for the HLPF in spurring inclusiveness in follow-up and review at the global level<sup>21</sup>. Stakeholders engaged in cutting-edge work - business, scientists, academia, parliamentarians, local governments, youth representatives and other major groups and stakeholders - should find relevance in the work of the HLPF and be able to contribute to it. Only by hearing multiple perspectives, ideas and evidence can the HLPF break new ground.
67. The President of ECOSOC, who also chairs the HLPF, should aim to promote innovative ways to operationalize the extensive arrangements approved by UNGA resolution 67/290 for major groups and other relevant stakeholders to participate in the HLPF work. They should be able to access the documentation of the HLPF and to provide comments and inputs through an on-line engagement platform as done during the negotiations on the Agenda as well as during HLPF meetings. Their input should be actively solicited through calls for evidence and invitations to present at the HLPF. Multistakeholder dialogues, such as those held during the negotiations on the 2030 Agenda could be used more frequently within the scope of regular official meetings.
68. Non-Governmental Organizations, business and other major groups and other stakeholders could also be encouraged to announce their commitments for achieving the SDGs, with measurable milestones and deliverables. Major commitments could be compiled and made available through a database accessible to all and be followed up. Ample space should also be given to non-state actors to organize events before and during the HLPF, with links to official meetings.
69. Bearing in mind the principles highlighted in the 2030 Agenda, I encourage countries that carry out Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF to invite civil society and the private sector to engage in their preparations including in national and subnational reviews. The UN system stands ready to support this process if Member States so wish.

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<sup>21</sup> Paragraph 89

## **VI. Ensuring that high quality data supports the reviews**

70. The Secretary-General's Annual Progress Report on SDGs will be produced in cooperation with the UN system based on the global indicator framework. Building on the model of MDG progress reports, it will depict and analyze trends in a factual manner, drawing on already existing in-depth technical analysis and datasets, while also clearly highlighting aspects deserving the attention of the HLPF.
71. Regarding financing for development, the inter-agency task force will prepare its annual report on progress in implementing the AAAA and the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and "advise the intergovernmental follow-up thereto on progress, implementation gaps and recommendations for corrective action, while taking into consideration the national and regional dimensions".
72. The availability and access to high quality data is essential to measuring and achieving the SDGs. The relevant provisions on data in the 2030 Agenda need to be followed up. The UN Statistical Commission makes important recommendations in this regard. Ideas can also be drawn from the UN Data Revolution report "A World That Counts". The HLPF will need to provide adequate space for assessing whether the necessary measures are in place to produce the data necessary to underpin the review of SDGs.

## **VII. Ensuring ambition and impact of HLPF Voluntary National Reviews**

### **a) National and sub-national reviews**

73. The 2030 Agenda encourages Member States to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven<sup>22</sup>. The success of the review system will ultimately be determined by its ability to help translate the Agenda into a nationally owned vision and objectives, leading to transformative action. This can only happen if reviews building on existing structures draw on contributions from all stakeholder groups.
74. The 2030 Agenda does not stipulate a frequency for the national and sub-national reviews. However, more frequent reviews, grounded in a national context, will support stronger national engagement. The UN system stands ready to provide coherent support to the conduct of national reviews, including for strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices, data systems and evaluation bodies.
75. Such regular national reviews are expected to serve as a basis for the Voluntary National Reviews by the HLPF.

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<sup>22</sup> Paragraph 79



### **b) Incentives for countries to participate in Voluntary National Reviews by HLPF**

76. Above all, HLPF Voluntary National Reviews must be geared towards accelerating implementation. They aim to enable mutual learning across countries and regions and help all countries, in particular the countries being reviewed, to enhance their national policies and institutional frameworks and mobilize necessary support and partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs. The value of a unified and universal approach to such reviews can be seen in the WTO Trade Policy Review Mechanism and the Universal Periodic Review in the area of human rights.<sup>23</sup> Those also provide useful insights on how to organize and support voluntary universal reviews.
77. Country-level reviews and preparations are, in and by themselves, useful, as they can reveal challenges at the domestic level and enhance cooperation across ministries and institutions. They can help reduce silos and identify gaps and areas where support is needed. Some Member States see an opportunity for the HLPF to be a “matchmaking market place” and the Secretariat is ready to support the necessary arrangements<sup>24</sup>.

### **c) Periodicity and number of Voluntary National Reviews by the HLPF**

78. The 2030 Agenda does not provide details on the periodicity of Voluntary National Reviews. Experiences from existing mechanisms suggest that it is important to have regular reviews in order to enable all countries to learn from the process over time and to identify trends, patterns and lessons learned. As the 2030 Agenda is a universal agenda, all countries would be expected to regularly carry out reviews at the HLPF.
79. Each country could thus consider carrying out up to two Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF between now and 2030. Those reviews will be timed by countries so that they are most useful to their own national policy making process. Reviews at each HLPF session will need to strive for an equitable geographical distribution of countries and include countries at different stages of development, including countries in special situations as well as countries in post-conflict situations.
80. Regional reviews can help to keep track of how the conclusions of the HLPF reviews are being followed up. Conducting national reviews at the HLPF itself will allow an interregional exchange of experiences.

### **d) Featuring and discussing Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF**

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<sup>24</sup> ECOSOC (2015) “President’s Summary of the High-level segment of the 2015 session of the Economic and Social Council and high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Council”

81. Given the limited time allocated to its meetings, the HLPF will not be able to listen to a long series of comprehensive presentations on national reviews. With this in mind, some Member States have suggested that as an alternative, comprehensive reviews be synthesized ahead of the HLPF session.
82. It will thus be important to give guidance to the ministers of the volunteering countries presenting their reviews at the formal meeting of the HLPF. Presentations should have a time limit. They could highlight two or three good practices identified by their country-level review; two or three major challenges their country is currently facing in implementing the Agenda and any lessons it learned in trying to address those; two or three areas where it needs to hear about other countries' good practices; as well as two or three areas where it needs support from other countries and actors in terms of finance, capacity building, technology, or partnerships. At the end of the HLPF, each Minister could outline the main messages and recommendations the country took from the discussions and the next steps it intends to take. On the margins of the HLPF, or during informal preparatory meetings, volunteering countries would be able to showcase their reviews at dedicated workshops discussing also prospective partnerships and cooperation to address key challenges in implementation.
83. Volunteering countries should also be able to present a more focused written national report highlighting the conclusions and main messages of their national review of progress. The report could be based on a voluntary template, including the country's SDG statistical annex.

#### **e) Building on existing mechanisms**

84. The 2030 Agenda cautions against overburdening countries with the national reviews, especially those with limited capacities and resources. Member States are already subject to reporting obligations in many areas related to the SDGs, both to UN bodies -such as the Human Rights Council, treaty monitoring bodies and specialized agencies -and non-UN bodies<sup>25/26</sup>. The follow-up and review of the implementation of the SDGs should build on such existing reporting mechanisms as recommended by the 2030 Agenda. Fostering coordination at the domestic, regional and global level is therefore crucial.
85. The Secretariat intends to develop an on-line platform to support and document the reviews of the HLPF. The webcast, documents and content of HLPF Voluntary National Reviews could be made available, along with the reports countries have submitted to other

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<sup>25</sup> These include, for example, national reports that countries submit to the Universal Periodic Review to the Human Rights Council; the Human Rights Committee; the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change; the Convention on Biological Diversity; Basel Convention on Waste and to the ILO Supervisory mechanisms on the application of International Labour Standards..

<sup>26</sup> E.g. Trade Policy Reviews at World Trade Organisation, African Union peer reviews at regional level.

reporting mechanisms. Countries would be able to upload summaries of their national and sub-national reviews: related information, documents, comments or requests for advice. The platform will also highlight areas where countries seek support in the form of resources, technology transfer, capacity development or partnerships as well as record commitments made to respond to those needs. There could be a related dedicated space for major groups and other stakeholders to submit comments through a moderator from the Secretariat and/or Major Groups.

**f) Follow-up to national reviews at HLPF**

86. There are various views among Member States as to whether national reviews should lead to an outcome beyond the general guidance reflected in the ministerial declaration of the HLPF. The President, in his summary of the discussion of the HLPF, could capture the key messages from the discussions on national reviews at the HLPF as well as at its preparatory meetings. He could highlight the lessons learned and best practices, emerging trends and innovations, outstanding challenges and gaps, conclusions and recommendations, areas requiring support, commitments made by countries or other actors with regard to offering support as well as the next steps outlined by each country being reviewed.
87. When presenting for the second time at the HLPF, and/or when conducting a review at the regional level, countries could refer to the main conclusions identified at their first HLPF review. The follow-up and review process should be seen as a cycle through which States continuously review national implementation of the 2030 Agenda, learn and mobilize support and advice through regular reporting at regional and global levels, and update their implementation strategies.

**g) Recommendations on voluntary common reporting guidelines**

88. Experiences from existing review mechanisms show that, where there is limited comparability between reviews of different countries, it is difficult to aggregate lessons from the reviews. Voluntary common reporting guidelines may prove helpful to allow for comparability, enabling a discussion of good practices and the tracking of global trends. They should also ensure flexibility, as countries' capacities vary, and reviews must be state-led and state-owned.
89. The guidelines should uphold the principles identified in the 2030 Agenda<sup>27</sup> and aim to support the HLPF in addressing achievements and progress, gaps and challenges, and emerging trends.
90. Above all, such reporting guidelines should not become a cap on the ambition of countries. Each country is encouraged to champion innovative, ambitious and inclusive

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<sup>27</sup> Paragraph 74

approaches to these reviews. For example, small groups of countries could volunteer for championing voluntary peer reviews starting in July 2016, building on existing arrangements and practices.

### VIII. Annual theme of the HLPF and sequence of thematic reviews over the 4-year cycle

91. The General Assembly decided that the HLPF, when meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC "... Shall have a thematic focus reflecting the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development, in line with the thematic focus of the activities of the Council and consistent with the post-2015 development agenda"<sup>28</sup>. In practice, the usual breadth of ECOSOC themes leaves ample room to find a theme for the HLPF that addresses specific components or characteristics of the 2030 Agenda and the three dimensions of sustainable development.<sup>29</sup>
92. Examples of such possible HLPF themes provided by Member States included "Governance for sustainable development: a means and an end"; "empowering women and girls for sustainable development"; "integrating sustainable development into plans and processes"; "Giving effect to the 2030 Agenda; eradication of poverty in all its form and dimensions"; "integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development"; "strengthening and renewal of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development"; "science and technology and productive diversification for sustainable development"; and "crosscutting enablers of sustainable development: culture and the rule of law". Some also suggested organizing the work programme around People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships as contained in the 2030 Agenda.
93. Other possible cross-cutting themes could also relate to people in protracted crises, disaster prevention through risk management, climate change adaptation, the rights of children and youth, etc.
94. The 2030 Agenda decided that the HLPF will carry out thematic reviews of progress on "the SDGs including cross-cutting issues". There are various options for reviewing the SDGs.
95. A first option is, in any given year, to have a comprehensive review of all the SDGs through the lens of the theme. Such an option will help examine the linkages and synergies among the goals and targets. This however may restrict the depth of the treatment of the SDGs during the HLPF, given the number of meeting days.
96. As a second option, the HLPF could look not only at all 17 goals through the lens of the theme for that year, but also, in addition, carry out an in-depth Goal by Goal review of a few SDGs.

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<sup>28</sup> UNGA resolution 67/290

<sup>29</sup> For example, in 2015-16, the annual theme of ECOSOC is "Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to result"<sup>29</sup>

97. This would allow thematic reviews to cover all SDGs within four years, in preparation for the comprehensive review to be conducted at the HLPF under the UNGA. The choice of goals for a given year would not be mutually exclusive, and Member States could bring other goals and targets into the discussions.

98. The following table provides illustrative examples for a possible sequence of broad cross-cutting themes and thematic reviews that the HLPF could cover over a period of four years when meeting under ECOSOC, building up to the comprehensive review of all the SDGs under the UNGA. It is based on the proposal of the President of ECOSOC that the theme of the HLPF for 2016 will be “Ensuring that no one is left behind”, and that SDGs 1, 6, 8, 10 and 17 will be selected for thematic reviews. It should be noted in this regard that the theme and focus for the 2016 HLPF will be decided after this report is issued.

99. Under each option, SDG 17 would be addressed every year. The subsets of goals in the two examples were chosen to echo the theme for that year as much as possible, bearing in mind that the themes chosen for the HLPF would, in essence, cut across all the SDGs.

|  | 2016                                | 2017   | 2018   | 2019   |
|--|-------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Theme of the HLPF  | Ensuring that no one is left behind | Ensuring food security on a safe planet by 2030  | Making cities sustainable and building productive capacities   | Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness: peaceful and inclusive societies, human capital development, and gender equality |
| Suggested non-exclusive subset of SDGs for (thematic review) | SDGs 1, 6, 8, 10<br>SDG 17          | SDGs 2, 13, 14,<br>15<br>SDG 17  | SDGs 7, 9, 11, 12<br>SDG 17  | SDGs 3, 4, 5, 16<br>SDG 17   |
| Comment on the choice of SDGs for review                     |                                     | The subset would address the theme through the angle of food security, climate change, terrestrial ecosystems and oceans | The subset would look at the linkages between energy, cities, and industrialization, and sustainable patterns of consumption and production. | The subset would look at the relationships between peaceful and inclusive societies, gender equality, education and health     |

100. The themes and thematic reviews for the next HLPF cycle should: (i) enable the HLPF to deliver on its mandated functions; (ii) support substantive policy discussions in order to enable the HLPF to provide effective policy guidance, taking into account exchange of experience and lessons learned; (iii) inspire and enable UN organizations to

contribute substantially to follow-up and review; and (iv) incentivise high-level representation from various sectors at HLPF each year, from different policy areas. The order of the themes/SDG subsets can be chosen, for example, to contribute to the preparation or follow-up of a major UN conference or to use data recently generated by a review mechanism.

## **IX. Link between the annual theme of the HLPF and the theme of ECOSOC**

101. Ensuring that the theme of the HLPF is in line with the thematic focus of the activities of ECOSOC, as mandated, is an important way to ensure coherence and complementarity in their work<sup>30</sup>.

102. A possible approach would be that the HLPF focuses on reviewing progress in implementing the SDGs, as mandated in the 2030 Agenda, bringing together the components of the 2030 Agenda and providing high level political guidance. ECOSOC for its part could build on its mandates, institutional strengths and authority and examine how the UN development system can be mobilized and transformed in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as part of its operational segment's work on the follow-up to the QCPR and on the long term positioning of the UN system - as well as in other segments.

103. Ensuring that the HLPF and ECOSOC address implementation from mutually complementary angles and closely align their thematic focus, along with ensuring predictability through the early adoption of a four-year programme of work, will facilitate the organization of work of functional commissions and other bodies in support of the 2030 Agenda.

## **X. Reporting by major groups, other stakeholders and partnerships**

104. In an innovative provision<sup>31</sup>, the 2030 Agenda called on major groups and other relevant stakeholders to report on *their* contribution to implementation. This provision is particularly important for the voluntary reporting and accountability by non-governmental actors who manage significant resources or assets, and therefore play an important role in the achievement of individual SDGs and targets on the ground. These could include for example business, NGOs, specific partnerships and alliances, large cities, and others. To ensure comparability, reports from such stakeholders could build on a voluntary template based on existing tools and models.

105. Reporting on partnerships and voluntary commitments for sustainable development, including to the HLPF, also needs to be strengthened to enhance visibility of successful examples and foster accountability. On-line platforms could play a unique role in this endeavour. The UN Partnerships for SDGs online platform will be further developed to

keep track of how partnerships are delivering on their commitments to support implementation. The SIDS Partnership Framework, recently created by the UNGA, is piloting an innovative approach to overseeing how partnerships are being held accountable and deliver on their commitments<sup>32</sup>.

106. The ECOSOC Partnership Forum can serve as the platform for drawing attention to areas requiring policy attention in regard to partnerships' contribution to implementation. Reviews of partnerships engaging the UN system will help promote accountability, build trust and transparency of partnership efforts and ensure UN's values and mandates are preserved.

107. Voluntary reports by non-governmental actors and partnerships to the HLPF could be supplemented by a more general report on the major group or other stakeholder's aggregated contribution in a specific focus area. Such a report could for example be prepared by the Global Compact in the case of business. These various reports could be considered by the HLPF during a dedicated multi-stakeholder session. Opportunities could also be created on the margin of the HLPF for further reporting. This would be in addition to the position papers that major groups and other stakeholder constituencies submit to the HLPF annually.

## **XI. Milestones and way forward**

108. The recommendations below may help the General Assembly in considering further steps to ensure coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review at the global level.

109. The General Assembly could:

### *Theme and thematic reviews*

110. Based on the above options, take a decision on:

- The themes for the meetings of the HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC in 2017, 2018 and 2019, leading to a holistic review of progress in implementing the Agenda at the meeting of the HLPF under the UNGA in 2019 and
- A sequence of thematic reviews for the same period that support the annual HLPF themes; with SDG 17 reviewed every year.
- Invite ECOSOC to decide on its annual themes for these same years, bearing in mind the link with the theme of the HLPF.

### *HLPF Voluntary National reviews*



111. Encourage all Member States to volunteer to carry out up to two Voluntary National Reviews by the HLPF by 2030. Reviews at the regional level may provide the opportunity to prepare and follow up on HLPF national reviews;
112. Encourage the HLPF to adopt innovative organizational arrangements for its national reviews, bearing in mind the principles defined in the 2030 Agenda. Encourage Member States to support the convening of (ad hoc, informal) meetings to prepare the review and presentations at the HLPF, including through financial contributions;
113. Encourage all countries to champion inclusive and rigorous approaches to HLPF reviews, including where appropriate, conducting peer reviews and reviews among groups of countries facing similar situations, taking into account existing arrangements and practices;
114. Invite the President of ECOSOC to prepare, in consultations with Member States, a summary of the discussions of the HLPF meetings including an account of the discussions on follow-up and review;
115. Invite the Secretary-General to further elaborate voluntary guidelines for the national reviews at the HLPF, based on the principles outlined in the 2030 Agenda and the elements contained in the Annex to the present report, and to keep updating those guidelines in light of experience gained;
116. Invite the UN system to support countries conducting reviews at the HLPF upon request.

*Work of the UNGA*

117. Decide to review its working methods and agenda to reflect the approaches and priorities of the 2030 Agenda, through its Ad hoc working group on the revitalization of the UNGA;
118. Decide, as part of the QCPR, to review UN system's support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda based on the Secretary-General's existing reports on the QCPR and on mainstreaming the SDGs in the UN.

*Work of ECOSOC*

119. Call on ECOSOC to ensure that its subsidiary bodies reflect on the implications of the Agenda for their work and contribute to the review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in a coherent, effective and inclusive manner, consistent with the principles established in Agenda 2030, and that they provide adequate contributions to the global HLPF reviews;

120. Invite ECOSOC to review the calendar of conferences to ensure that it allows the various intergovernmental bodies to contribute to HLPF review;

121. Invite ECOSOC to hold its DCF before the HLPF to facilitate its contribution to the HLPF;

*Functional commissions, and other intergovernmental bodies and forums including those convened by specialized agencies*

122. Call on functional commissions and other intergovernmental bodies and forums to (i) to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; (ii) to this end, review their working methods and agendas in order to ensure that they address the implementation of the 2030 Agenda within their respective area of expertise and mandate; and (iii) enhance the engagement of non-state actors in their work and ensure that all relevant actors have the opportunity to contribute;

123. Note that no single institution or forum can claim exclusive ownership of or responsibility for the review of a specific goal. Also note that contributing to the HLPF thematic reviews does not imply or create any formal reporting link to the HLPF nor modifies a forum's mandate or governance.

*Follow-up to conferences on countries in special situation*

124. Invite ECOSOC, as part of its integration segment, to review progress in the the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for countries in special situation; and invite the Secretary-General to support these reviews within existing mandates;

*Regional reviews*

125. Invite the Regional Commissions, through their intergovernmental process, to consider a common format for conveying the results of the regional forums on sustainable development to the HLPF;

126. Invites Regional Commissions, through their intergovernmental process, to consider how they could best support regional reviews.

*Non-UN organizations*

127. Invite non-UN intergovernmental regional and international organizations to consider contributing to follow-up and review at the HLPF;

128. Invite the Secretary-General, in preparing his reports for the HLPF, to take into account assessments and conclusions from reviews conducted by relevant non-UN organizations;

129. Invite countries carrying out reviews in such platforms to use them in their preparations for national reviews at the HLPF;

*Major groups and other stakeholders and partnerships*

130. Welcome the many reviews of progress in specific areas of the 2030 Agenda undertaken by think tanks, civil society and other organizations, scientists and partnership initiatives such as the Global Compact, drawing attention to the principles defined in paragraph 74 of the Agenda;

131. Call on major groups and other stakeholders to continue reviewing implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda at all levels;

132. Invite Member States to create the necessary opportunities and modalities for their engagement in State-led reviews and preparations and conduct of review and follow-up at the HLPF;

133. Encourages the private sector and civil society to inform the UN of their commitments to implement the SDGs as part of their contributions to follow-up and review;

134. Invite major groups and other stakeholder to self-organize and volunteer to carry out comparable rigorous reviews at the HLPF on their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and regularly report to the HLPF;

*Way forward*

135. Decide to review progress in implementing this resolution and GA resolution 67/290 on the format and organizational modalities of the HLPF at its 74<sup>th</sup> session instead of its 73<sup>rd</sup> session, in order to benefit from lessons from the 2019 meeting of the HLPF under the auspices of the GA;

***Annex: Proposal for voluntary common reporting guidelines for Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF***

The 2030 Agenda decided that the HLPF, when it meets under the auspices of ECOSOC, shall carry out regular voluntary reviews. Those reviews will “include developed and developing countries as well as relevant UN entities and other stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector. They shall be state-led, involving ministerial and other relevant high-level participants. They shall provide a platform for partnerships, including

through the participation of major groups and other relevant stakeholders”<sup>33</sup>. The Agenda also encourages Member States to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels which are country-led and country-driven. Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF will likely build on such reviews.

The following components are suggested as a way to help countries frame the preparations for Voluntary National Reviews at the HLPF, bearing in mind that each country will decide on the scope of their review and the format in which they want to present their findings.

The expectation is that each country being reviewed may present a focused report to the HLPF and make brief presentations during the HLPF meeting.

1. **Opening statement:** An opening statement by the Head of State or Government, a Minister or other high-ranking Government official could highlight the key messages from the review and touch on critical issues in implementation of sustainable development that the country wishes to highlight.
2. **Summary:** a one-to-two page synthesis of the process and findings of the review highlighting two or three good practices the country wishes to share, two or three lessons it has learned in trying to accelerate implementation, two or three challenges on which it wishes to hear about other countries’ good practices and two or three areas where it would need support in terms of finance, capacity building, technology, partnerships etc.
3. **Introduction:** The context and objectives of the review could be presented here. The introduction may briefly describe key features of the country context as it pertains to the 2030 Agenda, with a discussion of national priorities and targets for sustainable development and their relations to the SDGs, and a discussion of critical challenges.
4. **Methodology and Process for Preparation of the Review:** This section may discuss the methodology that was adopted for the review, including its scope, depth and limitations. Information on the process for preparation of the national review may be presented, including, for example, how different levels and sectors of Government contributed to the review, whether parliaments were engaged, whether national evaluation/oversight institutions contributed, how stakeholders from civil society, academia and the business sector were involved, which consultations took place, and possibly whether another Member State or institutions contributed to the review, etc. Lastly, the country may indicate what support it received. The sources used for the review may be discussed. This could include, as per paragraph 74(f) of Agenda 2030, how existing platforms and processes have been built on, as well as how existing national reports have been used in the process.

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<sup>33</sup> Paragraph 84

## 5. Policy and Enabling Environment

- (a) *Creating ownership of the SDGs.* The review could outline efforts made towards all stakeholders to inform them on and involve them in the SDGs and targets, including national and local government, legislative bodies, the public, civil society and the private sector. It could indicate how it is planned to keep the SDGs under review at the national level and, including the possible dissemination of reviews and their findings.
- (b) *Incorporation of the SDGs in national frameworks:* The review could outline critical initiatives that the country has undertaken to adapt the SDGs and targets to its national circumstances, and to advance their implementation. It may describe national efforts made to integrate the SDGs into the country's legislation, policies, plans and programmes, including the sustainable development strategy if there is one. The review could indicate the main challenges and difficulties experienced in implementing the SDGs as a whole. It could also highlight additional goals, beyond the SDGs, which are national priorities. Countries could consider referring to major efforts undertaken by local authorities and non-state actors to implement the SDGs, including partnerships.
- (c) *Integration of the three dimensions:* The review might discuss how the three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, social and environmental) are being integrated and how sustainable development policies are being designed and implemented to reflect such integration. The review could also assess how other principles of the 2030 Agenda, for example leaving no one behind, have been mainstreamed in the implementation of SDGs.
- (d) *Goals and targets:* The review may provide brief information on progress and the status of all SDGs, and critical difficulties encountered in reaching them, making reference, when appropriate, to data provided in the statistical annex (see section 8 below). The review may indicate whether a baseline for the SDGs has been defined and remaining obstacles to doing so. The review may also provide a more in-depth analysis on a few selected SDG and targets. Those may be chosen by the country in light of its priorities but also because they were tackled through innovative policies, are relevant to other Member States, and can be addressed in an international context. The discussion could focus on trends, successes, challenges, emerging issues, and lessons learned, and describe what actions have been taken to address existing gaps and challenges. It could support the identification of gaps, solutions, best practices and areas requiring advice and support. The review may examine the agreed global indicators for those goals and targets identified as priorities. Countries may choose to refer to complementary national and regional indicators.

- (e) *Thematic analysis*: As appropriate for the country, the review could include an analysis of progress and initiatives related to the HLPF's thematic focus for that year.
- (f) *Institutional mechanisms*: The review could provide information on how the country has adapted its institutional framework in order to implement the 2030 Agenda. This could include information on how the views of different ministries, agencies, levels of government and non-governmental stakeholders are taken into account and on the institution in charge of coordination and integration. The review could consider highlighting efforts to mobilize institutions around the SDGs, improve their functioning, and promote change. Information may also be provided on how responsibility is allocated amongst various levels of Government (national, sub-national and local) for coherent implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda. It would be useful to highlight how the country intends to review progress in implementing the SDGs including possible plans regarding the conduct of national reviews.
6. **Means of implementation**: Based on the above challenges and trends highlighted, the review may discuss how means of implementation are mobilised, what difficulties this process faces, and what additional resources are needed to implement the 2030 Agenda, including in terms of financing, capacity development needs, including for data and statistics knowledge sharing, technology and partnerships.
7. **Next steps**: The review could outline what steps the country is taking or planning to take to enhance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
8. **Statistical Annex**: Countries may include an annex with data, using the global SDG indicators to be proposed by the Statistical Commission as a starting point and adding priority indicators identified at the regional and national levels. They may highlight whether statistics were collected from the national statistical system and pinpoint major gaps in official statistics on indicators.
9. **Conclusion**: This section may present a summary of the analysis, findings and policy implications. It may discuss new or emerging issues identified by the review. Lastly, the country may indicate what lessons it has learned from the review process, what support it would need in the future for preparing such reviews and any adjustment it believes should be made to the guidelines to ensure that they are useful.
10. The report could have a link to more in-depth national reports and reviews through the dedicated UN Secretariat website.