

Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development

**Regional Ministerial Consultation on Monitoring and Accountability for
the Post-2015 Development Agenda in the ECE region**

15 September 2014, 10:00-11:00am

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

- Thank you for this opportunity to participate in this important meeting. I would like to express appreciation for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the Regional UN Development Group (R-UNDG) for Europe and Central Asia for organizing this event.
- For the past two years, as Special Advisor on Post 2015 Development Planning at the United Nations, I have supported the various streams of the design process and watched it unfold as Member States define a new development agenda to succeed the Millennium Development Goals.
- One thing that remains clear and has resonated above all is that we have before us a unique opportunity for a paradigm shift in international development. An opportunity to put the world on a more sustainable path that ensures a life of dignity for all. A chance

to target ODA to unlock resources and tackle climate change along with a host of new challenges.

- Just last week, the President of General Assembly held a Stocktaking event. One word I heard loud and clear in these two days is: ambition. Indeed the debate on post-2015 is an ambitious one. Much progress is underway and Member States are coming closer to defining a really transformative agenda.
- The breadth and depth of the proposed set of Sustainable Development Goals with 17 goals and 169 targets is unprecedented. Taken in their totality, they reflect an integrated, universal and transformative agenda, which builds and expands on the lessons learned from the MDGs to address the many and interlinked challenges the world faces today.
- In a remarkable shift to a universal agenda, goal 1 commits countries to eradicate extreme poverty for everyone everywhere, with special attention to those living with disabilities, the aged and our youth.
- In addition to reinforcing the commitment to the human development agenda of the unfinished work of the MDGs, the report breaks new ground with goals on inequalities, economic

growth, jobs, urbanization, energy, and sustainable consumption and production, including a target to address fossil fuel subsidies.

- Filling a notable gap in the MDG framework, the environmental dimension of the agenda is properly articulated in goals on oceans and marine resources, and on ecosystems and biodiversity. Against the expectations of many, the report also includes a goal on climate change.
- Finally the framework is underpinned with a goal on promoting peace, justice and institutions and another on global partnerships for the means of implementation of a sustainable development agenda. The last two goals on peace and means of implementation hold up the SDGs.
- The OWG should be lauded for keeping its doors open to all stakeholders. The stakeholders appreciate that the process has been inclusive, open and transparent. The level of ambition could not have been reached without them. This is a marked departure from how the MDGs were conceived. And now, great expectations have been created.
- The incredible work of the Intergovernmental Expert Committee on Sustainable Development Financing Committee has provided us with a set of ‘strategic approaches’ underpinning the financing

framework and a menu of options pertaining to private-public/international-domestic and blended financing to be used within the national SD financing strategy.

- This will no doubt go a long way in supporting countries to plug the enormous financial requirements of this sustainable development agenda.
- The Structured Dialogues on Technology Transfer Mechanisms are providing an important platform to address one of the key issues for the success of the new development agenda. OWG had a robust discussion on technology and climate change for example.

Accountability Mechanism

- Ladies and Gentlemen, we must remember that as a non-legally binding agenda, the power of this new robust agenda will reside in its moral legitimacy, inclusiveness and its capacity to mobilize and persuade. In this regard, it is crucial to have a framework for mutual –horizontal- accountability among member states and all actors.
- This opportunity to include an accountability framework is a notable departure from the MDG framework. Indeed, Monitoring and accountability must be part of the post-2015 development

agenda, not an afterthought. It is a first step and much work will have been done by the time the High-level Political Forum meets.

- At the PGA's Interactive Dialogue on Accountability held in May, Member States discussed the need for this universal and transformative agenda to respond to specific community, local, national and regional realities. This, they affirmed, will require a renewed robust accountability mechanism that is inclusive and has broad-based ownership, participatory from the bottom-up, engaging peoples and citizens, at the community, local, national and global levels.
- Without a proper accountability framework there is little hope that ambitions can turn into reality. This is the new remit that has been given to the sustainable development agenda, so that we are not just making promises but delivering on them.
- A post-2015 global monitoring and accountability frameworks would need to monitor and incentivize voluntary compliance with development commitment; review impact of interventions in delivering sustainable development; and promote mutual learning and exchange of lessons learned. We must build on what we have but make them more inclusive and ambitious.

- In the absence of a legally-binding framework, incentives play a key role. This is one of the main functions of mutual accountability mechanisms at the country, regional and global level. To be effective, the monitoring and accountability framework must be rooted in an inclusive, bottom-up approach.
- Exact arrangements for the overall review of the wide range of commitments remains to be determined, but the broad outlines are there. Review of implementation of conference outcomes, including the post-2015 agenda, will remain a function of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and its machinery. The high-level political forum on sustainable development, which convenes alternatively under the GA and ECOSOC, will need to pick up the challenge to conduct meaningful implementation reviews after the agenda is adopted.
- The expected role of the high-level political forum on sustainable development to monitor and review the Post-2015 development agenda cannot be underscored. The outcome of the last HLPF meeting acknowledged the intent of the body to conduct regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up to and implementation sustainable development agenda.
- The High-level Political Forum (HLPF) will review progress towards sectoral and cross-sectoral issues, complemented by the

functional commissions. It could bring results of national and regional reviews to the global level.

- The Development Cooperation Forum (DCF) can review the development cooperation aspects of a renewed global partnership for development and successor arrangements for MDG8. It can continue reviewing national mutual accountability and transparency and promoting policy coherence among aid and non-aid policies and the three dimensions of sustainable development.
- Further clarity is needed on how a multi-layered framework could work in practice.
- It can build on the goals and targets proposed by the Open Working Group on SDGs. It should also integrate relevant existing accountability mechanisms, for example the efforts, at all levels, to promote mutual accountability in development cooperation.
- The 2014 DCF has provided concrete suggestions for the development cooperation aspects of the global partnership for development, including for practical arrangements to engage relevant actors, principles, and commitments, and the contours of a global monitoring and accountability framework. It will refine these issue areas based on guidance by the intergovernmental

process and new analysis on the future of development cooperation.

- This will go a long way in making the agenda not only ambitious, but practical.

Voices from the regions

- It was reaffirmed at the PGA's Stocktaking event that an accountability framework at the regional level would play an important role, as countries in the same region shared similar challenges and were likely to make greater progress by collectively addressing them. Indeed, the accountability framework for the post 2015 Development Agenda is expected to be transformative at all three levels
- I am pleased to report that UN regional commissions have made significant progress in regional consultations on an accountability. Outcomes available thus far have underscored the need for a comprehensive, multi-layered and multi-stakeholder accountability framework as crucial for the success of the agenda.
- Several of them underlined that accountability for progress towards sustainable development goes beyond the mere review of results, since it implies that all stakeholders, according to their respective responsibilities, have to account for the achievement of

the post-2015 agenda. Furthermore, the accountability mechanism should take into account the complexities and inter-linkages between the different goals and targets.

Role of Data

- In the coming months, and also in the context of defining the accountability framework, the SDGs will need to be further elaborated through appropriate, meaningful and reliable indicators. We will need new data and new uses of data. As per the recommendation of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and the report *A Life of Dignity for All*, the Post-2015 agenda will require a data revolution that is sustainable.
- This is why the SG recently announced his Independent Expert Advisory Group on the Data Revolution for Sustainable Development co-chaired Professor Enrico Giovannini of Italy and Mr. Robin Li of China, representing the institutional and the technology side respectively. The group will provide recommendations on a sustained, transformative effort to improving how data is produced and used. This will be critical to all stakeholders.

Synthesis Report

- Ladies and gentlemen, our discussions today will play an important role in the synthesis report of the Secretary-General.
- The objective of the Synthesis Report will be to maintain the level of ambition seen so far, fill gaps and provide the building blocks for the 2015 outcome document. It will build on the inspiration provided by Member States with a strong and compelling vision (one, universal, integrated, transformative agenda for poverty eradication and sustainable development), pulling together the wide range of inputs.
- Most importantly, the Synthesis Report will carry through the work of Member States by offering ways to communicate this level of ambition for country-level implementation, and their implications for monitoring and review. This is the litmus test of all our efforts. Only if we have a profound and transformative impact in the lives of people at the country level will we have accomplished our mission.
- The report will offer a compelling narrative that puts all the pieces together including; Principles, Vision, SDGs, MoI, Global Partnership/s, Accountability framework and the data revolution.

Closing

- We will continue to listen carefully to Member States and stand ready to continue to work with and support you on this important global responsibility that is before us. Thank you.