

Possible modalities for the programme of the 2016 high-level political forum on sustainable development

Introduction

From 11 to 20 July 2016, the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) will hold its first meeting after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, under the auspices of ECOSOC.

It is essential that the 2016 HLPF meeting demonstrates the critical role of the HLPF as the central platform for review and follow-up of the SDGs, thus fulfilling the mandates of the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, it is important to put in place the best possible arrangements for ensuring productive outcomes of the HLPF, including the results of the first voluntary national reviews on the implementation of Agenda 2030 as well as thematic reviews. To this end, adequate arrangements should be made to facilitate the national reviews by the 22 volunteering countries¹ as well as thematic reviews.

The 2016 session should also give an overall perspective of the implementation of the SDGs, the follow-up actions, and the main challenges, in particular in ensuring that no one is left behind. It should allow all relevant stakeholders to discuss how to realize the SDGs and come up with ideas and commitments. It should enable the HLPF to provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations to help translate the vision of the 2030 Agenda into reality.

Preparations for this year do not set any precedents for the way the review architecture – and the HLPF itself – will function in the future.

Mandates

The 2016 HLPF should start delivering on the mandates from the 2030 Agenda and General Assembly resolution 67/290, including those relating to the format and organizational aspects of the HLPF. This is a non-exhaustive list of these mandates:

- The HLPF will have the central role in overseeing follow-up and review at the global level².
- The HLPF is to provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations for sustainable development, and follow up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments, including their means of implementation; enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels; and ensure appropriate consideration of new and emerging sustainable development challenges³.
- It is to facilitate sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned⁴; and to “focus on the assessment of progress, achievements and challenges faced by developed and developing countries as well as new and emerging issues;
- The forum is also to promote system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies⁵ and improve cooperation and coordination within the UN system on sustainable development programmes and policies⁶.

¹ List of volunteering countries can be accessed at <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/2016>

² Agenda 2030 paragraph 47

³ Paragraph 2 of resolution 67/290 on format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development

⁴ Agenda 2030 para 82

⁵ Agenda 2030 para 82

⁶ General Assembly resolution 67/290 paragraph 7

Based on these mandates HLPF could include national and thematic reviews, challenges of countries in special situations, means of implementation, science-policy interface, consideration of sustainable consumption and production and contribution of major groups and other stakeholders. HLPF will also be informed by the SDG progress report and Global Sustainable Development Report and will benefit from regional preparatory processes.

Duration

The mandated duration of HLPF meetings when convened under the auspices of ECOSOC is eight days, including a three-day ministerial segment⁷. General Assembly resolution 68/1 decided that the high-level segment of ECOSOC would “include the three day ministerial meeting of the HLPF”.

Theme

Decision E/2016/L.11 stipulates that the theme of the 2016 HLPF will be “Ensuring that no one is left behind”.

Format

In accordance with GA resolution 67/290, the HLPF is chaired by the President of ECOSOC.

First five days:

The first five days of the HLPF need to carry out the mandates as outlined above and provide space for senior officials from Member States, UN system and major groups and other stakeholders to exchange experiences and lessons learned and hold interactive discussions leading to the HLPF political guidance and recommendations. Various formats will be used for these multi-stakeholder sessions -- including round tables, town hall meetings, moderated panels and video-link to other locations.

This segment could consist of:

- (i) Opening by the President of ECOSOC and DSG/USG of DESA
- (ii) Where we are in year one of implementation
- (iii) “Ensuring that No One is Left Behind” – the theme will be discussed through all 17 SDGs without constituting a precedent for future HLPFs⁸.
- (iv) Sharing of experiences from the national level (e.g. localization of SDGs; institutional change needed to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, engagement of the highest levels of government and mechanisms to be used to steer implementation, etc.)
- (v) Discussions based on the agreed conclusions from the ECOSOC FfD forum and STI forum⁹
- (vi) Countries in special situations – challenges facing these countries in implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

⁷ General Assembly resolution 67/290 paragraph 7

⁸ The possible focus areas could be the following, for example, Access to health, education opportunities, water and other basic services / Economic growth, industry and infrastructure, energy and sustainable consumption and production / Conducive environment for inclusion through empowering women, building peaceful and inclusive societies, fighting inequality and promoting sustainable cities / Food security and sustainable agriculture, climate action, sustainable oceans and terrestrial ecosystems.

⁹ Depending on the outcome of the discussions in the General Assembly, this segment may discuss relationship between HLPF, ECOSOC FfD forum and STI forum

- (vii) Science-policy interface - importance of science-based policy decisions – base on the pilot GSDR
- (viii) New and emerging issues – criteria for selecting new and emerging issues
- (ix) Regional perspective – inputs from regional sustainable development fora and other relevant regional processes
- (x) Contribution of major groups, other stakeholders and partnerships in support of implementation

Ministerial segment

This three-day segment needs to build on the results of the first five days and bring together the political guidance and recommendations for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

The segment could consist of:

- (i) Opening by the President of ECOSOC, PGA and SG
- (ii) Main messages from the five-day segment – key trends and findings
- (iii) National reviews – presentation of successes, challenges and lessons learned - Ministerial discussion
- (iv) “Ensuring that No One is Left Behind” – what policies are needed to be put in place to leave no one behind including restructuring of institutions, defining national strategies for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, financing, technology facilitation, capacity building
- (v) New and emerging issues – looking at long term scenarios to achieve sustainable development
- (vi) Adoption of the Ministerial declaration
- (vii) Closing by the President of ECOSOC

Activities around HLPF

Side events and other related events will be organized by Governments, UN system, IGOs, major groups and other stakeholders.

The **Partnership Exchange**¹⁰, will be organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) and the United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP) and is scheduled to be held on 18 July 2016. It will provide a space for dialogue among multi-stakeholder partnerships and government officials, policy makers, United Nations entities and major groups and other stakeholders, for showcasing the work of multi-stakeholder partnerships in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, ensuring that no one is left behind in implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

There will be also **different exhibitions** in the neck area in the basement of the UN Headquarters.

Learning, training and capacity building for sustainable development will also take place.

Outcome

General Assembly resolution 67/290 mandated that the HLPF will result in a negotiated ministerial declaration. A summary of the President of ECOSOC can also be envisaged to capture the discussions – including good practices, lessons learned and recommendations- in greater details.

¹⁰ More information can be found here <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/hlpf/PartnershipExchange>

Participation

States

The resolution 67/290 stipulates in paragraph 4 that all meetings of the HLPF will provide for the full and effective participation of all States Members of the United Nations and States members of specialized agencies.

In its paragraph 12, the resolution encourages States to ensure that their participation in the meetings of the HLPF reflect the balanced integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development from their national perspectives.

United Nations system

Resolutions 66/288, 67/290 and 70/1 recognise the role and contribution of the UN system in the implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and other sustainable development related agreements. These include United Nations specialised agencies and related organisations and funds, programmes

Intergovernmental organizations

The contribution of other relevant international organizations, including international financial institutions and multilateral development banks, regional and sub-regional institutions are also recognised by resolutions 66/288, 67/290 and 70/1. The HLPF will be open to participation by intergovernmental organizations with observer status with the General Assembly and with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Major groups and other stakeholders

Resolutions 67/290 and 70/1 both include a number of provisions that define the engagement of major groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) in the meetings of the HLPF. In accordance with paragraph 15 of resolution 67/290, representatives of the major groups and other relevant stakeholders will be allowed to attend all official meetings of the HLPF; to have access to all official information and documents; to intervene in official meetings; to submit documents and present written and oral contributions; to make recommendations; and to organize side events and round tables, in cooperation with Member States and the Secretariat.

Documentation

Pre-session documents

- Pilot Global Sustainable Development Report on the theme of the 2016 HLPF
- SDG progress report (to be translated in all official UN languages)

Other inputs

- Reports from regional fora on sustainable development (to be translated in all official UN languages)
- Inputs on the theme of 2016 HLPF by major groups and other stakeholders (to be translated in all official UN languages)
- Reports on national reviews (to be available at the review platform on DESA website) and synthesis of national reviews (to be translated in all official UN languages)
- Inputs from functional commissions of ECOSOC and other intergovernmental bodies and platforms for the thematic review (to be available at the review platform on DESA website)

In-session documents

Draft Ministerial declaration

Post-session documents

- Outcome of the HLPF – Ministerial declaration (to be translated in all official UN languages)
- Report of the HLPF (to be translated in all official UN languages)
- Informal summary of the meeting of the 2016 HLPF by the President of ECOSOC

Outreach

A comprehensive outreach strategy is being prepared in cooperation with DPI. Among the activities planned in this context are:

Social media

A social media advisory with key messages and visuals on the HLPF will be sent to social media focal points across the UN system. A campaign to promote the HLPF's theme 'Ensuring that no one is left behind' is ongoing. In this context, DSD/DESA is soliciting contributions to a blog on its website, with Major Groups and other Stakeholders and UN entities being requested to submit entries on what 'leaving no one behind' means from their perspective. A Twitter Chat on this theme and on SDGs implementation is planned for June. The production of a promotional video on the HLPF to be shown at the forum and through various outlets is also envisioned.

Press and Media

Media advisories and press releases will be issued before and after the Forum. The setting up of an interview zone to which several high-level HLPF participants can be escorted to give brief interviews is also in planning. Efforts will be made for SDGs Advocates and other high-profile participants to engage with mainstream media. A number of press briefings can be organized during the HLPF. Collaboration with UN Radio and UN News to increase media coverage is envisaged.

Websites and visuals

Updates on the HLPF are already provided regularly via the DSD/DESA website, newsletter and social media channels; submission of feature articles for DESA News is planned. An HLPF Banner to be mounted on the 1st Avenue Gate of the UN premises for the duration of the HLPF, as well as HLPF Roll-up banners to be used during the event, are available and will be displayed during the Forum. HLPF branded folders will be distributed to panellists.