



**70th Session of the
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Sustainable Development 2015**

Informal summary

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I. Overview

The United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development 2015 garnered visibility, political support and impetus for a truly transformative 2030 Agenda and its implementation. The very large number of Heads of State or Government as well as high-level leaders from business and civil society who participated is evidence of the enthusiasm generated by this new Agenda. The sense of achievement was reinforced by the address by His Holiness Pope Francis prior to the opening plenary.

Over 200 speakers addressed the high-level plenary session of the Summit, including the Co-Chairs of the Summit, Heads of State and Government, other high-level representatives of Member States, the United Nations Secretary General, and representatives from international organizations, business sector and civil society. Large numbers also contributed actively to the in-depth discussions on the issues addressed in the interactive dialogues.

Throughout the Summit, Heads of State and Government welcomed the 2030 Agenda and emphasized its transformative, universal and inclusive nature, its applicability to all countries and stakeholders and its motto of leaving no one behind. Its linkages with peace, security, human rights and good governance were also lauded.

Many said that the success of the 2030 Agenda would not be measured by what was promised, but what would be delivered. The debates focused on many themes of global concern addressed in the Agenda. Regional and national development challenges were stressed by many, with emphasis on the needs of countries in special situations. The central roles of global partnership, means of implementation and partnerships in the Agenda's implementation were prominent.

The engagement of stakeholders, including through partnership, was highly emphasised and over fifty partnership events were held during the Summit. The participation of development partners, including civil society organisations and the private sector, in the preparation of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda has been unprecedented. In order to fully achieve the Agenda, it will be necessary to continue to be inclusive, bringing together stakeholders everywhere to be engaged in the Agenda's implementation.

The Summit's six Interactive Dialogues covered a broad range of issues. Participants underscored that national ownership of the 2030 Agenda is key for implementation, together with citizen engagement and breaking down silos. Much emphasis was also placed on the need to forge innovative partnerships between governments, businesses and civil society.

II. Main messages

Speakers at the Summit welcomed the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). They reflected on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and outlined the impressive international and national achievements in implementing them, yet noted that progress has been uneven and there remains unfinished business. The SDGs were recognised as more comprehensive and complex and a springboard for continued progress.

Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

There was an important focus on implementing the Agenda. Many countries expressed a strong resolve to follow through on their commitments. Participants emphasized that national ownership of the 2030 Agenda is key for implementation, together with citizen engagement and breaking down silos between institutions as well as the various strands of policy making.

A fervent call was made for strengthening international institutions, with multilateral regional and international organisations contributing more towards sustainable development. Coherence between national, regional and international policies and priorities will also need to increase significantly over the next fifteen years. Several countries reported on initiatives they have already taken to implement the Agenda by reviewing their strategies, adopting new ones, or adjusting institutions.

A major challenge will now be to ensure that countries build on the momentum created by the Summit and truly undertake to adapt the 2030 Agenda to their national situations by reviewing policies, plans and institutions. Developed countries acknowledged that the Agenda extends beyond development cooperation, and are considering relevant reforms in their domestic policies to address its provisions.

Much emphasis was placed on the need to forge innovative partnerships between governments, businesses and civil society. Regional and national development challenges were stressed by many, with emphasis on countries in special situations.

Speakers underscored the integrated nature of the Agenda. Many stated that ending poverty and hunger and achieving sustainable development can only be attained by addressing many interconnected factors. To achieve the 2030 Agenda, reducing inequalities was considered essential, including the empowerment of women and the most marginalized. Balanced and sustainable economic growth with employment creation is fundamental for addressing the multidimensional nature of poverty and must be decoupled from environmental degradation.

There was consensus that special attention should be paid to the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small-Island Developing States. The needs of countries emerging from conflict and of Africa were highlighted, and the special challenges of middle-income countries were also emphasized.

It was underscored throughout the Summit that people must be at the centre of the Agenda and that no one must be left behind. A globalised world will not work if many are excluded. In recognition of a major humanitarian crisis not only in Europe but worldwide, many speakers noted the importance of addressing the essential needs of refugees while also tackling the root causes of migration and displacement.

Addressing climate change

Climate change was repeatedly stressed as an existential threat that jeopardizes hard-won development gains and undermines efforts for future sustainable development. Without addressing climate change, achieving the 2030 Agenda and the other SDGs will not be possible. Its negative impacts are putting at risk the potential for progress in the economic, social and environmental areas.

The transition to renewable energy sources was underscored as particularly important, while improving the efficiency of energy and natural resources. National policies can help attract investment in renewable energy. There were also calls for ending subsidies to fossil fuel sources.

The significance of the upcoming Conference of the Parties in Paris (COP21) was seen as crucial to the implementation and success of the 2030 Agenda. Many called for continued momentum and a revitalised political will to ensure a comprehensive and ambitious global agreement at COP21, one that is legally binding and reflects the ambition necessary for averting irreversible environmental damage.

There was a strong call for the agreement to include mechanisms for both adaptation and mitigation. In addition, many countries called for the inclusion in the agreement of a stand-alone mechanism for loss

and damage. Many stated that the new agreement needed to have a strong, transparent and flexible monitoring and evaluation mechanism.

Strengthening the means of implementation and a revitalized global partnership for sustainable development

There was wide-ranging consensus that a revitalized, strong and inclusive global partnership for sustainable development is crucial for the implementation of the SDGs. Some also mentioned that the spirit of the global partnership needs to shift from a North-South approach to reflect the universality of the new agenda, while taking into account differences in national circumstances and capacities and giving national policy space to countries.

The private sector and civil society were recognised as critical partners in building a strong global partnership. Public and private initiatives, involving both local and international actors, will be needed. Cooperation in all forms, with multiple stakeholders, will help to facilitate knowledge-sharing, harness technical expertise and mobilize financial resources.

Many called for renewed attention to strengthening the means of implementation. While significant progress has been made, inadequate financial resources were seen as the main impediment for achieving greater progress towards international development goals. In this context, the interlinkages between the SDGs means that investments seeking to benefit the achievement of one goal will also benefit the achievement of others.

Clear linkages were made between the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda and the outcome of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Many speakers emphasised that the Addis Agenda provides a strong framework for financing sustainable development and that its full implementation is essential to the achievement of the SDGs. The importance of adequate, consistent and predictable resources was underscored. The role of official development assistance (ODA) was emphasised. Many called for prompt action towards the ODA target of 0.7 percent of Gross National Income.

The means of implementation must draw on all sources of finance, including other transfers, such as remittances, curbing illicit financial flows, preventing tax evasion, addressing debt sustainability and systemic issues. Some also stressed the need to place an emphasis on delivering an efficient funding mechanism, especially in the context of the broader application of innovative finance mechanisms and forms of aid, in conjunction with private sector engagement.

Several speakers highlighted the importance of trade as an enabler for the realization of the new agenda. Putting in place the right policies at the national and international levels was also mentioned as paramount. Trade facilitation and enhanced market access were deemed important. Many underscored that national science, technology and innovation systems should be strengthened with support from the international community. Several speakers mentioned the importance of capacity building and technical assistance, through both bilateral and multilateral channels, in order to harness technology and innovation.

Common but differentiated responsibilities were emphasized by many, as well as that implementation should take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development.

Many developing countries referred to their own primary responsibility for mobilizing resources to implement the 2030 Agenda and to integrate it into their national development plans, strategies and priorities. The importance of international cooperation was highlighted, including South-South and triangular cooperation, complementing North-South cooperation. It was affirmed that the financing

mechanism for the SDGs must be coupled with a strong technology facilitation mechanism; speakers welcomed the Summit's launch of the global Technology Facilitation Mechanism.

Engaging all stakeholders

Speakers stressed the importance of engaging all stakeholders to actively take ownership of, and participate in, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The many development stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, were recognised as critical for implementation; the 2030 Agenda will not be achievable without their engagement and partnership.

Most of the SDGs will be implemented at the national and local levels. Empowering parliaments, national and local stakeholders and involving citizens will be crucial for achieving the SDGs. It will also be important to develop indicators that capture the goals' impact on ordinary citizens.

Putting in place a robust follow-up and review mechanism

Speakers highlighted that the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda will be reliant on putting in place a robust follow-up and review mechanism to ensure that commitments are translated into time-bound results. Many underscored the important role of the United Nations to assess progress and identify shortcomings in achieving the SDGs. In this regard, the central role of the high-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) at the global level was emphasized. The Economic and Social Council's annual forum on financing for development to review the development financing outcome and the means of implementation was also welcomed.

The need for increased capacity development and improved, credible and realistic statistical data for follow up and review was stressed by many speakers. Robust data and global evidence, supported by harnessing the data revolution, were seen as critical.

Making the United Nations 'fit for purpose'

The 2030 Agenda must be supported by targeted institutional reforms to make the UN system 'fit-for-purpose' and reflect today's realities. Further, the UN system needs to realign itself to effectively support the implementation of the SDGs. There was also a call for reforms to address regional dimensions.

III. Interactive Dialogues

Interactive Dialogue 1: Ending poverty and hunger

Interactive Dialogue 1 on ending poverty and hunger was Co-chaired by H.E. Dr. Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of Slovenia, and H.E. Mr. Ralph Gonzalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

- Participants noted that ending poverty is a matter of human dignity. The Millennium Development Goals were an important catalyst in the significant progress in reducing poverty and hunger globally. However, this progress has been deeply uneven. Too many are still poor and undernourished, and poverty continues to exist in all countries.

- Eradicating poverty and hunger, and leaving no one behind will require a multi-dimensional perspective that addresses their social, economic and environmental drivers. It must also tackle inequality and systemic and structural issues.
- Ending poverty and hunger can only be achieved by addressing interconnected factors, such as: inclusive growth; livelihoods and employment; access to basic infrastructure and services; food security; nutrition; health; education; greater equality; improved agricultural productivity and the sustainable use of natural resources. We also highlighted the important role of social protection schemes.
- Economic growth is necessary, but not sufficient, to accelerate the reduction of poverty and hunger. Future prosperity will also require that economic growth no longer degrades the environment. Climate change must be halted.
- Participants emphasized the importance of national ownership and political commitment, citizen engagement, effective fiscal policies, an integrated and coherent approach to policy making, adequate resources, monitoring of progress, and accountability and transparency. Increased participation of developing countries in global decision-making is also needed.
- There is a need for financing and investments from a range of actors, including national and regional development banks, the private sector and other institutional investors, such as pension funds and insurance companies. It is also important to raise additional resources, for example, through improved national tax systems and innovative sources of financing.
- Investing in the health and education of women and girls is crucial. Youth employment and inclusion should receive priority attention. Marginalized groups should be included in decision-making processes.
- Peaceful and just societies are a necessary precondition for sustainable development; many conflicts are driven by poverty, hunger and hopelessness.
- We noted that reversals in development gains could be avoided by building resilience to shocks and disasters, and will require appropriate risk management plans and strategies, together with strong social protection frameworks.
- Participants stressed the need to strengthen the global partnership for development at both the international and national levels.

Interactive Dialogue 2: Tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind

Interactive Dialogue 2 on Tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind was Co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic, President of the Republic of Croatia, and H.E. Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President of the Republic of Kenya.

- Participants noted that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls unprecedented attention to the need to reduce inequalities both within and among nations. Only by doing so can we build a world that is more just, stable and peaceful.
- It was agreed that translating the goals and targets in national policies and programmes is a commitment which will mobilize us all for the next fifteen years. The 2030 Agenda is ambitious: it encompasses all human rights and aims at eliminating all forms of discrimination.
- It was recognized that the goals cannot be achieved unless progress includes all, especially women as half of the world's population. Addressing gender equality is key and will have a multiplier effect on achieving all goals.
- While acknowledging the significant progress made in advancing gender equality, discussions highlighted some of the areas for further action:
 - First, universal access to quality education for girls must be reached by all means in the given timeframe.
 - Second, women must be given equal opportunities in the economic sphere, including at the workplace.
 - Third, more representation of women in political positions and leadership needs to be ensured.
 - And fourth, violence against women must be eliminated and investments made in sexual and reproductive health.
- Participants agreed that tackling inequalities requires not only change in policies or laws but also strengthened capacities and empowerment at the community level. The most marginalized, including rural, indigenous, disabled or older persons, must have equal opportunities and access to resources. They must also be given a voice.
- A sustainable world should give every person a fair chance. The humanitarian crises that the world faces now, particularly the situation of migrants and refugees, remind us to prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable.
- Participants highlighted that all are accountable for taking the 2030 Agenda forward. The right data, new technologies and broad partnerships are needed. Above all, there is a need for sustained political will to reach our common objective of ensuring dignity and equal opportunities for all.

Interactive Dialogue 3: Fostering sustainable economic growth, transformation and promoting sustainable consumption and production

Interactive Dialogue 3 on Tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind was Co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Charles Michel, Prime Minister of Belgium, and H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

- The discussions confirmed that prosperity has risen and many people have been lifted out of poverty. But, much more needs to be done, especially for the most vulnerable. Further reducing

poverty levels, addressing the structural causes of inequality, ensuring access to justice and respecting human rights remain critical priorities.

- Participants noted that balanced and sustainable economic growth is fundamental to poverty reduction and sustainable development. It is our obligation to pursue this in response to the many current and emerging global challenges.
- It was acknowledged that jobless growth, rising income inequalities, and youth unemployment are some of the key widespread global concerns. Promoting decent jobs, labour rights and the expansion of social protection, including social protection floors, are crucial for maintaining equitable and inclusive societies.
- To ensure inclusiveness of our economies, we need to pursue full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, reduce income disparities and promote gender equality. Investing in women's health and education, eliminating gender violence and promoting women's entrepreneurship are essential to achieving the sustainable development goals.
- Our economies will need to undertake structural and technological transformation in order to attain higher technological intensity, greater value added and productivity and full integration in international trade. Wider Connectivity, including access to the Internet, is a key enabler for accelerating such a transformation, as are building strong institutions and empowering communities.
- Enhancing regional and international trade is essential for sustainable development. Access to markets and technology are needed for integration into global value chains. More investment is needed, particularly in Africa, in sectors such as renewable energy, infrastructure, transport and agriculture.
- Public finance can be used as a catalyst to mobilize both foreign and domestic investments. In this regard, new partnerships are needed between the public and private sectors.
- Economic growth must be decoupled from environmental degradation and combat climate change to protect future generations. Accelerating a real shift towards more sustainable lifestyles will require changing how we consume and use valuable resources.

Interactive Dialogue 4: Protecting our planet and combatting climate change

Interactive Dialogue 4 on Protecting our planet and combatting climate change was Co-chaired by H.E. Mr. François Hollande, President of France, and H.E. Mr. Ollanta Humala, President of the Republic of Peru.

- Climate change is one of our biggest challenges. The negative impacts of climate change are putting into question the potential for progress in all economic and social areas. In order to achieve the objectives of sustainable development, it is essential to ensure a high level of consistency between the actions to address climate change and poverty eradication.

- Integrated actions are needed in order to achieve a sustainable biodiversity management and use of natural resources, forests, land, mountains, oceans, and seas. This is the only way to meet the growing demand for food, water and energy. It is essential to ensure that women, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups have equitable access to land, forests and fisheries.
- It is also essential to make sure that we limit the global temperature rise to 1.5 or 2 degrees. The only way to limit the rise of temperature is through the de-carbonization of the economy, especially priority in countries with higher emissions of greenhouse gases. The transition to renewable energy sources is particularly important, while improving the efficiency of the use of energy and natural resources.
- Developing countries, especially small-island developing States and the least developed countries, are highly vulnerable to climate change. Losses incurred by the increased frequency of natural disasters have high costs on people and the economies of these countries.
- Adaptation to climate change requires a greater international effort in the form of financial resources, technology transfer, and capacity building. Enhanced international cooperation is especially important in the context of small-island developing States and the least developed countries.
- It is imperative to strengthen the contributions of all stakeholders (particularly from the private sector) to all level – global, regional and national – and establish, where possible, a carbon price to guide investment decisions to a low carbon economy.
- Several countries reported the existence of ambitious national plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change. These plans constitute a good sign for the negotiations that will start at the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the UN Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris next December.
- All countries signalled high expectations for the outcome of the Conference of the Parties of the UN Convention on Climate Change in December. It appears that the general will is to achieve an ambitious and legally binding global agreement with the aim of keeping the temperature rise below 1.5 or 2 degrees. This agreement will be the test of our collective commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals.

Interactive Dialogue 5: Building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions

Interactive Dialogue 5 on Building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions was Co-chaired by H.E. Ms. Park Guen-hye, President of the Republic of Korea, and H.E. Ms. Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile.

- There was a strong sentiment during the dialogue that effective, accountable and inclusive institutions that are transparent and free of corruption are essential prerequisites for our common vision for sustainable development. While Goal 16 is an important goal in its own right, it facilitates and accelerates the success of all other goals.

- Participants agreed that increased involvement of citizens is needed in order to create full ownership of the 2030 Agenda. This can be achieved only through high quality education, non-discrimination, gender equality, access to justice and information, as well as reliable and timely data. This must include the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. It should uphold the highest standards of human rights and freedoms.
- The full engagement of citizens will also help to build a bridge between rich and poor, men and women, urban and rural constituencies, and provide an enabling environment for all people. This will be essential in promoting integrity and building trust between governments and citizens.
- It was acknowledged that strong institutions, based on the rule of law, and not on rule by law, are essential for building peaceful societies where people live free from fear and want. A culture of justice needs to be created, and upheld, to empower all people, including the most marginalised.
- Breaking down silos through building partnerships across sectors and among all stakeholders is a precondition for implementation of Goal 16 and all other Sustainable Development Goals.
- Participants concurred that the SDGs must be integrated into national plans and strategies, supported by sound monitoring and review frameworks. The important roles of parliaments and local authorities need to be recognized and enhanced.
- Partnerships and a stable environment provided through strong institutions are necessary for vibrant private sector engagement and domestic and international resource mobilization.
- Full gender equality needs to be achieved and women’s potential must be unlocked. Young people are the prime beneficiaries of peaceful states and societies. Children and youth living in conflict are often the most immediate victims of violence and displacement. We owe it to them to create a peaceful, just and prosperous world.

Interactive Dialogue 6: A strengthened global partnership for realizing the post-2015 development agenda

Interactive Dialogue 6 on A strengthened global partnership for realizing the post-2015 development agenda was Co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Macky Sall, President of Senegal, and Mr. Ahmet Davutoglu, Prime Minister of Turkey.

- Noting that reaching the SDGs will hinge on a revitalized global partnership, participants agreed that it should be universal and relevant to all, while addressing the needs of the most vulnerable and leaving no one behind. All stakeholders must be engaged and the needs of current and future generations taken into account.
- It was underscored the need to mobilize public and private, domestic and international finance, as well as technologies and capacity building for sustainable development. ODA will remain critical, in particular for the poorest and most vulnerable countries. Domestic resource mobilization, enhanced international tax cooperation and combatting illicit flows, plus sound policies, private investments and effective partnerships will also play important roles.

- Participants urged that commitments on ODA and in other areas must be met without delay. We also underscored the importance of effective, predictable, country-driven and results-focused development cooperation.
- Participants agreed on the need for coherent financial, trade, debt and technology policies in support of sustainable development. We also stressed good governance and the rule of law, an enabling environment and combatting corruption, and the empowerment of women and girls and inclusion of youth.
- Recognizing that global goals have to be localized, we highlighted the need to reflect them in effective national development plans, developed in open consultations with civil society, to guide national policy and international development cooperation. Capacities of local actors need to be strengthened and access to financial services expanded. We also emphasized the contributions of regional institutions, which provide platforms for sharing of experiences and know-how.
- Participants agreed on the need to forge innovative partnerships between governments, businesses and civil society, to ensure the tapping of all available resources and expertise. The potential of public policies and public funding to leverage private investments in support of the SDGs was recognized.
- Participants stressed the importance of open and transparent data to monitor progress, inform policy and ensure accountability of all stakeholders. The need for innovative, effective and inclusive approaches to monitoring and review was emphasized. Participants agreed on the need to engage all stakeholders and create space for civil society to participate, while supporting mutual learning as we work together towards the SDGs.