Statement by

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United Nations
Since the Development Committee last met in April, UN Member States have adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Earlier this year, they agreed on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, and on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. In December, they will seek a new agreement on climate change at COP21 in Paris.

Taken together, these agreements offer major opportunities for people and planet. Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aspire to eradicate poverty and hunger, fight inequality and discrimination, and tackle climate change. The SDGs also recognize the importance of peaceful and inclusive societies for achievement of sustainable development.

Over the past fifteen years, the momentum generated by the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) has contributed to progress on eradicating extreme poverty; improving access to primary education; reducing infant, child, and maternal deaths; combatting HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis; and on other key MDG targets.

These advances were supported by global partnerships for development which galvanized significant increases in Official Development Assistance, improved developing countries’ access to developed country markets, and advanced major initiatives to reschedule or write down the external debt of developing countries. As the new focus now shifts towards supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the MDG experience is instructive.

Supporting the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development defines “means of implementation” ranging across finance, technology, capacity-building, trade, and systemic issues under each of the goals. These means of implementation are complemented by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing framework for development. The Action Agenda seeks to mobilize all possible sources of finance, and align all financing flows and policies with economic, social and environmental priorities.

Official development assistance (ODA) remains important, particularly for low-income countries. But ODA is a small part of the development finance equation. The Agenda reiterates that countries have
primary responsibility for their economic and social development, while also committing the international community to create an enabling environment for sustainable development. It spells out the potential contributions of public and private finance. It emphasizes that development and dissemination of technology, as well as capacity building, are key drivers of development.

By endorsing the Addis Agenda, governments committed to a new social compact, and agreed to provide fiscally sustainable and nationally appropriate social protection systems, including social protection floors. The Action Agenda also encourages governments to set nationally appropriate spending targets for investments in essential public services for all, including in health, education, energy, and water and sanitation, and commits to support developing countries in these efforts.

The Addis Agenda stresses the importance of mutually beneficial trade policies, monetary and financial systems, and more effective global economic governance. It underscores the need to increase the voice and representation of developing countries in global governance institutions. The full implementation of the 2010 IMF quota and governance reform remains a key priority. The need for prudential regulation for ensuring financial sector stability is emphasized, as are the importance of debt sustainability, and of debt restructuring which is orderly, effective, fair, and negotiated in good faith.

Development banks will play a vital role in the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the SDGs. As a major institutional stakeholder of the Financing for Development process, the World Bank was closely involved in preparations for Addis Ababa, and will play a leading role in implementing the Action Agenda. The UN System looks forward to continuing its close co-operation with the World Bank in the follow-up to Addis, starting with the inaugural Forum on Financing for Development in New York in spring 2016.

UNDG Support for SDG Implementation

Member States have called for co-ordinated and coherent support from the UN development system for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and SDGs. Responding to this request, the UN Development Group (UNDG) has adopted a common approach entitled ‘MAPS’, which stands for mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support.

- Mainstreaming is about supporting governments to include the SDGs in plans, strategies and budgets.
- Acceleration of progress on key goals and targets is a priority, and we will build on our experience with MDG acceleration in more than fifty countries. The World Bank has been an important partner in this acceleration, and we hope this collaboration will continue in the SDG era.
- We will make co-ordinated policy and technical support available to countries at their request, drawing on the expertise and programmatic experience of the UN development system.

MAPS will be applied according to the development context and challenges faced, including in countries in transition or recovering from crises. Partnerships, data, and accountability are themes which cut across all three components. The successor to the UN’s MDG advocacy campaign, the UN Millennium Campaign, will aim to popularise the goals in every country, bringing stakeholders together to support implementation, including by sponsoring citizen-driven processes to track progress. UN Development Assistance Frameworks are already being aligned to support SDG achievement, and this effort will be stepped up during the roll-out of MAPS. Tools to guide the roll-out are being made available to UN Country Teams and national stakeholders, including guidelines for national SDG reporting.
Tackling Climate Change

Tackling climate change and ensuring that it does not hinder or undo development progress will require accelerating tried and tested climate change actions, and supporting new and innovative ways to advance climate and broader sustainable development objectives in tandem. The UN and the World Bank can play a key role in making this happen, at country and global levels. We can strengthen our collaboration in the post-2015 period to support countries to take an integrated approach to climate change and development by:

- working together on implementation of the anticipated Paris climate change agreement to help build resilience and minimize the risks which climate change poses to sustainable development and economic growth;

- providing support on climate finance so that developing countries have the necessary policies, institutions, and budgetary frameworks in place to access and channel climate finance to meet their needs for low emission development and the strengthening of climate resilience. This could include working together with countries to identify and address the barriers and associated risks they face in attracting public and private investment.

Helping United Nations and Bretton Woods Institutions Collaboration to Support Countries in SDG Implementation

The UN is committed to working closely with the Bretton Woods Institutions to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Through our collaboration, we can better understand the linkages across the SDGs, and how policy actions in one area can have payoffs across a range of goals. We can foster the whole-of-government approaches which will be so critical to move us towards the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. We can jointly engage with processes, such as those associated with the G20, to mobilise additional support for cross-sectoral analysis and policy options.

The call in Agenda 2030 to “leave no one behind” demands that we work together to address the challenge of reaching the last mile, identifying and addressing the deep-rooted determinants of exclusion. In all our work, we need to consider and address the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in special situations, particularly Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries, Small Island Developing States, and fragile and conflict-affected states. We need to invest in better understanding the root causes of vulnerability, and their complex economic, social, environmental and political dimensions. We need to work together to help countries to reduce vulnerabilities and manage risk at both the national and the international level.

In countries affected by conflict, we can build on successful programmes such as the joint UN-World Bank initiative to develop a rigorous and collective assessment on Restoration of Core Government Functions, including at local levels, in the aftermath of conflict. It will also be important to strengthen our existing partnerships in crisis countries to advance recovery, given the changing crisis contexts. Our joint support to the Ebola-affected countries in assessing the economic and social impact of the Ebola crisis and in designing post-Ebola recovery strategies are good examples of such collaboration.

Achieving the SDGs will require major new investments especially in infrastructure. When these investments take place in sustainable and resilient infrastructure, they not only create jobs and meet real needs for new infrastructure in the short run, but also lay the foundations for long-term growth. The UN and the Bretton Woods Institutions can work together to support developing countries to align new infrastructure investments with the SDGs, and to ensure that sufficient financing and capacity support is
available. In this regard, the new infrastructure forum put forward in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda can play an important role in bringing all actors together.

Another specific area of collaboration which can be stepped up between the UN and the Bretton Woods Institutions is supporting countries to mobilise domestic resources for sustainable development, also in line with the outcomes of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

The new agenda’s emphasis on accountability requires that governments and development actors alike apply the highest standards of data and knowledge management; and use technology to engage people and groups from all walks of life in monitoring and implementing the SDGs. We look forward to working with the World Bank and other partners in the new Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data which will play a critical role in ensuring that having reliable and accessible data for implementing and monitoring the SDGs remains high on the agenda of governments, development partners, civil society, and other stakeholders. Our collaboration in particular on governance statistics will be critical to provide an evidence base for SDG 16 on ensuring peace in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

With regard to population data, the UN is actively collaborating with the World Bank on various initiatives and projects, including on the Global Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (CRVS) group and through the Measurement and Accountability for Results in Health partnership. We also look forward to stepping up our collaboration on preparation of the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses: the 2020 Round.

The SDGs will be implemented at the national level, taking into account specific national situations and priorities. Achieving the SDGs, however, also calls for collective action to deal with global challenges ranging from climate change to financial and economic stability and communicable disease control. A strong collaboration between the United Nations and the Bretton Woods Institutions can help advance the collective actions needed to address those challenges which cannot be addressed by any one country alone.