

Meeting of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders  
With H.E Mr. Frederick Musiiwa Makamure Shava, President of ECOSOC  
10-11 am, 14 February 2017  
United Nations Headquarters

**I. Proposed Draft Agenda**

1. Welcome remarks from the President of ECOSOC and from the Co-Chairs of the Steering Group of the Major Groups and Other Stakeholders Mechanism (5 min)
  
2. HLPF 2017 programme of work (25 min)
  - a. *Thematic reviews*

Possible guiding questions:

- i. How should the HLPF 2017 programme be structured in order to allow for deeper analysis of specific SDGs and targets, as well as review of the interlinkages?
- ii. How will the HLPF take into account the thematic reviews from organizations of the United Nations system and other intergovernmental decisions and resolutions in order to arrive at recommendations for moving forward? Will there be an agenda item to address issues raised in those reports and decisions?
- iii. What opportunities could be created for interactive exchanges among governments, stakeholders, UN Entities on reports, good practices, opportunities and challenges regarding the specific goals under review?
- iv. How could recommendations from the HLPF be brought back to the regional, national, and local level?

*B. Voluntary National Reviews by Member States*

- v. How can the programme of work be organized in a way that maximizes the opportunity for dialogue between countries presenting their national reviews and other Member States and Major Groups and other Stakeholders? What additional opportunities or formats need to be

created to facilitate this dialogue? How can the participation of MGoS on VNR presentations be enhanced?

- vi. What are the expected outcomes of the voluntary national reviews? What do reporting Member States expect in terms of way forward, recommendations and guidance from the HLPF?

### 3. Enhancing the participation of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders in the High-level Political Forum

Possible guiding questions:

- What actions are needed to enhance the engagement of MGoS and reverse the challenges faced by MGoS in their participation and contribution towards implementation, reporting, review and follow up of member states and its involvement in the HLPF?
- What strategies could be put in place to address funding and structural barriers constraining MGoS participation at the HLPF and to create measures to strengthen the participation, voices and experiences of the most vulnerable and marginalized, those that the Forum is committed not to leave behind?
- How can HLPF participation modalities be enriched to improve the quality of discussions and create spaces for constructive engagement, problem-solving and the exchange of good practices?
- How can the voluntary reports of MGoS be meaningfully considered at the HLPF in accordance with para 89 of the agenda? What spaces can be created for those reports to be collected and considered?

### 4. Any Other Business

## **II. Background note**

Enhancing broad, open, transparent and inclusive participation of major groups and other stakeholders in the High Level Political Forum is imperative for the successful and

effective implementation, follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. The Rio+20 outcome recognizes that ‘opportunities for people to influence their lives and future, participate in decision-making and voice their concerns’ are fundamental for sustainable development.

It is therefore important to ensure that the right of access and inclusive participation of Major Groups and other stakeholders as mandated by Rio+20 outcome document<sup>1</sup> and Resolution 67/290 are implemented and enhanced annually at all levels, building on the cumulative experience of each successive HLPF.

Resolution 67/290 provides some of the strongest provisions for the participation rights of NGOs to be found in the UN system, recognizing that any shrinkage of civic space for the participation of ‘major groups and other relevant stakeholders’ at the HLPF and its mandated review processes would jeopardize the implementation of the 2030 Agenda<sup>2</sup>. It is therefore imperative that Member States shall provide opportunities for the enhanced participation of major groups and other stakeholders in the HLPF, including in the implementation and review of the SDGs at the national, regional and global levels.

Important elements towards enhancing participation of major groups and other stakeholders in the HLPF includes promoting and ensuring access and attendance at all meetings; access to all documents, including background documents and outcome documents; opportunities to make timely interventions during the HLPF deliberations at all sessions, as well as during the deliberations resulting in the ministerial declaration. The agenda of the 2017 HLPF should include an item for major groups and other stakeholders to report on their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda as mandated in the 2030 Agenda.<sup>3</sup>

Other recommendations include:

- The modalities for the HLPF in general - and especially the reviews of national voluntary reports at the global level - should encourage interactive dialogue and debate. More time should be given for member states to engage with each country report, with inputs from major groups and other stakeholders.
- Recommend that the HLPF be made more inclusive and accessible by providing closed captioning, international sign interpretation, and accessible format website and documentation for visually impaired participants.

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<sup>1</sup> See The Future We Want, Section C, paragraphs 42-55.

<sup>2</sup> See Resolution 67/290, paragraphs 14-16.

<sup>3</sup> Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, paragraph 89.

- National reviews should make the best use of already available information, including data from other UN reporting mechanisms as well as inputs from thematic experts. Additional sources of information like parallel reports should also be considered as inputs and made available on the HLPF website as part of review materials for the respective country.
- Moreover, the UN secretariat could request member states to volunteer to conduct national voluntary reviews over the next 4-year cycle, creating a schedule that facilitates better preparation. Parliaments should play a key role in national reviews.

### **III. MGoS Resources**

- Answers to MGoS questionnaire for ECOSOC Retreat, January 2017, found [here](#). (Jeffery Huffines is preparing a compilation in a Word document as well.)
- Letter to the President of ECOSOC from Major Groups and other stakeholders on feedback on the HLPF, 20 July 2016, found [here](#).
- Proposal for voluntary common guidelines for major groups and other stakeholders to report to the high-level political forum on their implementation of the 2030 Agenda, 2016, found [here](#).
- HLPF Coordination Mechanism Terms of Reference, February 2016, found [here](#).
- Civil Society & Other Stakeholders: Leaving no one behind when implementing the Agenda 2030, Sustainable Development 2015, November 2015, found [here](#).
- Report on Stakeholder Workshop on Governance, Transparency and Accountability, 18-19 June, 2015, found [here](#).
- IUCN Position Paper on Towards strong accountability for sustainable development, 15 May 2015, found [here](#).
- The Future HLPF Review - Criteria and ideas for its institutional design (by Marianne Beisheim, German Institute for International and Security Affairs of the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) ), March 2014, found [here](#).
- Participatory democracy - HLPF laying the basis for sustainable development governance in the 21st Century, Jan-Gustav Strandenaes for UNDESA/DSD, March 2014, found [here](#).
- E/CN.17/2013/2, Discussion papers submitted by major groups on strengthening public participation at the United Nations for sustainable development , 5 August 2013, found [here](#).

- Strengthening Public Participation at the United Nations for Sustainable Development: Dialogue, Debate, Dissent, Deliberation, Barbara Adams & Lou Pingeot, June 2013, found [here](#).
- Major Groups Position Paper on the HLPF, 23 February 2013, found [here](#).

#### **IV. HLPF Background Material**

- HLPF 2017 website [here](#)
- EGM on VNRs 14-15 Dec 2016 [here](#)
- HLPF Retreat 23-24 Feb 2016 retreat [here](#)
- HLPF Retreat 21-22 Nov 2015 [here](#)
- Voluntary reporting guidelines for VNRs [here](#)
- Q&A VNRs 2017 [here](#)
- MGoS voluntary guidelines for implementation reports [here](#)
- Synthesis of the 2016 VNRs [here](#) (12600216\_VNR\_Synthesis\_Report)
- MGoS submissions for [HLPF 2015](#) & HLPF 2016
- HLPF 2016 Ministerial Declaration [here](#)
- HLPF 2016 Report (N1626024.pdf) [here](#)