

Meeting of the Members of the Council on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Paris, 6 March 2019

Draft Agenda



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Venue: OECD Conference Centre, 2 rue André Pascal, 75116 Paris, France

Chair: Mr. Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General

Wednesday, 6 March 2019

09:00-09:30 Opening Session

- Welcome remarks by Mr. Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General
- Keynote Address by Ms. Inga Rhonda King, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council
- Address by Ms. Amina Mohammed, United Nations Deputy Secretary-General (via video)

Speakers will set the scene by reflecting on how, three and a half years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the international community is putting in place plans and strategies to achieve the SDGs. They will discuss the impact we are seeing in our efforts to deliver for all, especially for those left furthest behind, and where progress is lacking and it is urgent to correct course to achieve the 2030 targets, but also the interim targets for 2020, just next year. There has been significant progress in some areas, including strong mobilisation from the private sector and civil society as shown by a large number of SDGs initiatives that have emerged. However, in some areas, there is actually backsliding. For example, 400 million more people went undernourished in 2017 than in 2014. Many governmental and non-governmental actors continue to struggle to fully implement the 2030 Agenda due its multidimensional and multi-level nature.

Questions on getting sustainable development policies right while managing the complexities inherent in the 2030 agenda are increasingly relevant. This includes how to account for the distributional effects of economic and environmental policies, how to manage a 'just' transition to a low-carbon economy and to the digital world; or how to implement policy packages that empower those furthest behind. This is also within a context of ensuring the conservation and sustainable use of our terrestrial and ocean ecosystems for the next generations and achieving clean air and water, all of which support the livelihoods of people globally. These agendas require efforts that transcend policy and electoral cycles; their complexities require effective communication to continuously engage the support of citizens, as well as a full involvement of the communities in the implementation of reforms.

Presentation of national experiences (followed by open discussion):

- Presentation by Mr. Richard Raši, Deputy Prime Minister for Investments and Informatization, Slovak Republic
- Presentation by Mr. Aziz Ajbilou, Secretary General, Ministry of General Affairs and Governance, Morocco
- Presentation by Ms. Ragnhildur Arnljótsdóttir, Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister, Iceland

The 2030 Agenda puts a strong focus on addressing inequalities and disparities within and among countries, and across population groups. It calls for improving opportunities to achieve higher well-being regardless of socio-economic origins, age, disability, gender, and place of birth.

Across the OECD, the top 20% of the income distribution earns 9 times more than the bottom 20%. The distribution of wealth is even more unequal, with the top 20% owning half of total wealth, while the bottom 40% holding only 3%. Inequalities of income and opportunity compound disadvantages. In OECD countries, children whose parents did not graduate from secondary school have only a 15% chance of doing so themselves, compared to 65% for more well-off children. High-income people live longer, and in some countries the longevity gap across income groups can be as large as 7 years. Globally, the UN reports that between 2010 and 2016, in 60 out of the 94 countries with data, the incomes of the poorest 40% of the population grew faster than those of the entire population.

Horizontal inequalities are also large. For instance, women and girls still do not enjoy the same rights or experience the same outcomes as men and boys. The World Economic Forum estimates that, at the current pace of progress, no country will reach gender parity by 2030, and global parity will only be achieved in 2234, in 215 years or nine generations.

During this session, participants will consider how countries mainstream gender considerations into SDG implementation; and how, by promoting gender empowerment and reducing gender gaps in critical areas such as access to justice, access to financing, or equal representation, progress can be accelerated across all SDGs.

Providing equal opportunities to all is key to achieving the SDGs. Educational opportunities are a strong enabling factor of socio-economic mobility and will be critical in closing gender gaps. Where appropriately designed and effectively implemented, education and skills policies can empower individuals throughout their lives.

Current UNESCO estimates suggest that we are off-track in achieving SDG 4, with 750 million youth and adults who are not literate, of whom two thirds are women. 617 million or a staggering 57% of children and adolescents are not able to read or do basic mathematics. OECD estimates suggest that globally discriminatory practices

and laws restricting the access to education for women and girls induce economic losses of up to USD 6 trillion or about 7.5% of global income in 2017.

Participants may wish to share experiences in implementing policy packages that tackle inequalities in a range of dimensions and through integrated approaches that factor in the multiple drivers and impacts of inequalities on sustainable development. Participants are also invited to discuss how addressing attitudes, stereotypes, and legal barriers is a precondition to facilitate girls' access to education and the full spectrum of skills.

The session could also examine how using education and skills policies can empower those furthest behind from the start (e.g. children born in poor households) and across the life cycle (e.g. workers who are displaced by automation or transitioning from "brown" to "green" jobs and need to be reskilled). Topics such as the challenges and opportunities related to education financing, early childhood care and education, and technology, innovation and the future of learning, as well as skilling and reskilling for life and work may be relevant.

11:00-12:30 **Session 2 – Achieving environmental objectives, including for interim 2020 targets**

Presentation of national experiences (followed by open discussion):

- Presentation by Mr. Isidoro Santana, Minister of Economy, Planning and Development, Dominican Republic
- Presentation by Ms. Cristina Gallach, High Commissioner for the 2030 Agenda, Spain

While urgent action is required to make progress on all SDGs, a group of targets are already set to be achieved in 2020. Most of these are environment-related, including the protection and sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, the sustainable management of forests and the halting of biodiversity loss; the sustainable management and protection of marine and coastal ecosystems for healthy and productive oceans; and the environmentally sound management of chemicals and waste. Integrating ecosystem and biodiversity values into national and local planning is also one of the targets in the 2030 Agenda for achievement by 2020.

Despite the 2020 deadlines for a number of targets, there is a lack of progress on many fronts. Global trends in biodiversity continue to decline; oceans are being used at unsustainable rates (with increasing pressures of overfishing, pollution, habitat degradation, and climate change); global greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise; and environmental degradation continues.

In devising policies to tackle these challenges, the linkages and interactions between different sectors and environmental pressures should be taken into account – this includes but is not limited to pressures such as land use change, unsustainable agriculture and land management, over-exploitation of natural resources, and climate change. The impact of how innovation and the digital transformation may contribute to achieving some of these targets should also be considered.

This session will provide an opportunity to discuss how countries are ensuring that national strategies are fit to deliver on environmental objectives for 2020 and beyond; to take stock of where countries stand; and discuss opportunities to progress further.

12:30-
14:00 **Break**

14:00-
15:30 **Session 3 – Mobilising more impactful and effective financing for the SDGs**

Presentation of national experiences (followed by open discussion):

- Presentation by Ms. Nialé Kaba, Minister of Planning and Development, Côte d'Ivoire
- Presentation by Mr. Achim Steiner, Administrator, United Nations Development Programme (joining by videoconference)
- Presentation by Mr. Laszlo Borbely, State councillor, Coordinator of the Sustainable Development Department, General Secretariat of the Government, Romania
- Presentation by Mr. Hugo von Meijenfeldt, Coordinator National Implementation SDGs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Netherlands

The success of implementing the 2030 Agenda relies on the financial resources allocated to achieving the goals, as well as the efficiency in using those resources. While the international community needs to step up and deliver on Official Development Assistance (ODA) commitments to support those most in need, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires the mobilisation and more effective use of domestic resources, (including more effective collection of tax revenues), as well as foreign direct investment (FDI), philanthropy, and remittances.

There is a mixed picture of trends in sustainable development finance. Some essential sources of financing for sustainable development are declining: the drop in domestic private investment and foreign direct investment are major causes for concern (FDI dropping by 30% over 2016-17 to USD 750 billion). Revenue of governments, the central pillar of financing for sustainable development at USD 4.3 trillion, still remains below the recommended GDP threshold in many developing countries. Other major financial flows are stable, but remain small in comparison: remittance flows are steadily growing (record high of 466 billion in 2017), ODA is steady but remains below international commitments (147.2 billion in 2017); and private giving remains smaller but is steadily rising (USD 41.8 billion in 2017). In addition, illicit financial flows are revenue foregone that could be used for the SDGs. Current analysis suggests that illicit flows from Africa, estimated at USD 50 billion per year, almost equate to the amount of ODA to that continent (USD 52.8 billion in 2017).

Declining financing for sustainable development is a risk for developing countries in particular, but also a threat to sustainable and peaceful prosperity globally. While an increase of finance flows from a range of actors is imperative, there is a need to go beyond discussions on turning billions into trillions. Better orchestration of all resources is necessary, and more attention should be given to how we turn existing financing into more impactful investments, targeted to sustainable and inclusive growth, especially for the 8% of the world population still living in extreme poverty today.

This session will address the challenges of evaluating impact of key sources of financing, such as aid, FDI, impact finance and investment, and the targeting and

prioritising of resources for sustainable development. How are countries aligning their budgeting practices and re-profiling spending to achieve their 2030 Agenda-aligned development strategies and plans? What mechanisms do countries have in place to make sure that financial resources are effectively allocated across various development objectives? How are developing countries enhancing domestic resource mobilisation and ensuring more effective public expenditure?

Participants may wish to share experiences around governance frameworks that embed multi-year and multi-sectoral budgetary considerations, and how these can be helpful in budgeting for the SDGs (e.g. budgeting for MDGs; green budgeting; gender budgeting; well-being budgeting) while ensuring value for money. What lessons are emerging for building capacities to effectively harness various revenue streams (domestic and international, public and private) and leverage official assistance to mobilise private investment for more impact?

**15:30-
15:45** **Closing Session**

Documentation and additional information

All documentation for this meeting can be found at www.oecd.org/SDGs

A Key Issues Paper containing an overview of each of the chosen topics, along with suggested questions for discussion, is available. Room documents containing relevant OECD work will also be made available.

To confirm participation in the meeting, or for any other questions, please contact:

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