The post-2015 process

Member States are in the process of defining a post-2015 development agenda. With the deadline for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set for the end of 2015, a follow-up framework is expected to be launched at the United Nations Summit in September which is currently being elaborated through the intergovernmental negotiations at the UN General Assembly.

The process of arriving at the set of Sustainable Development Goals is Member State-led with broad participation from Major Groups and other civil society stakeholders. There have been numerous inputs into the post-2015 process, notably a set of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) proposed by an Open Working Group (OWG) of the General Assembly, the report of an intergovernmental committee of experts on sustainable development financing and the General Assembly dialogues on technology facilitation.

The OWG was established after Member States had agreed to launch a process to create a new set of development goals at the Rio+20 Conference in 2012. The group met for 13 sessions through 2013 and 2014 which were open to inputs from multi-stakeholders and presented their proposal for 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 associated targets in August 2014.

This proposal serves as basis for the ongoing post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations in New York. At these monthly sessions, Member State representatives are negotiating the outcome document for the United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 development agenda in September.

Information on India’s engagement at the intergovernmental meetings in February, March and April is given below.
There are two other processes underway that will have an important bearing on the Sustainable Development Goals. They include the debate on how to finance the post-2015 agenda that will be negotiated at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa, to be held in July.

The Climate Change Conference scheduled for the end of the year in Paris is the other important process that is expected to not only reach an agreement on climate change but also integrate it into the SDGs.

Since all three processes – the negotiations on a new set of development goals, the debate on financing for development and the talks on a renewed climate change agreement – cumulate within 2015, the year is considered to be of paramount importance for global sustainable development and the United Nations system.

India’s engagement at the ongoing post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations

Declaration Session

After a first introductory stocktaking session in January, the second edition of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda focused on the “declaration”, which would set the frame for the new development goals.

The Indian government position is in alignment with the position of the G77 and China. The government highlighted the importance of respecting diverse national circumstances and starting points and called for an agenda universal in relevance but differentiated in action. It was emphasized that the concept of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities would have to be enshrined in the declaration as well as in the SDGs themselves.

The G77 and China also raised the important question of accountability, stating that countries are accountable to their populations rather than to each other. Member states felt it would be critical for governments to nationalize the SDGs and targets and develop national monitoring frameworks in order to be able to report to their own electorate. The lack of a clear accountability mechanism between sovereign countries is often cited as a major reason for the limited success of internationally agreed resolutions and will be a key issue in ensuring the successful implementation of the SDGs. In fact, it is expected that this issue will continue to be discussed through the next rounds of intergovernmental discussions in New York.
Sustainable Development Goals and Targets Session

The third session of the intergovernmental negotiations on the post-2015 agenda in New York focused on the discussion on the proposed SDGs, targets and the associated indicators.

India’s position is reflective of that of Group of 77 and China. After recalling that the SDGs and targets of the OWG outcome document should be fully integrated into the final post-2015 framework, the Group opposed reopening the goals and targets and clustering the SDGs as proposed by the Secretary-General’s Synthesis Report. It was stated that there would be targets that could benefit from scientific analysis and revision, yet the risk of using technical proofing as a vehicle to renegotiate all of the proposed goals and targets and thereby losing the wide consensus reached within the OWG, would heavily outweigh the benefits.

The Indian delegation welcomed the efforts by the UN Statistical Commission to create a framework on how to measure the progress of the SDGs, noting that the process would need time and the monitoring framework currently being developed would be a global design and national statistical departments would have a role in nationalizing the indicators. It was reemphasized that the targets are ambitious and countries should be allowed to adapt them to the national circumstances.

Lastly, it was stressed that it will be of central importance that the development of indicators for the SDGs leads to strengthened statistical systems. This would require significant investments in statistical capacity at the national, regional and international levels. Thus, this should be made a priority within the intergovernmental negotiations as well as within the consultations on Financing for Development.

Means of Implementation and Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Session

The April edition of the post-2015 Intergovernmental Negotiations became a joint session between the Financing for Development (FfD) and Post-2015 processes. With regard to technology transfer, the Indian delegation mentioned that India has always been a strong supporter of the

Box: Common but Differentiated Responsibilities

The concept of Common but Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR) was introduced during the Rio Earth Summit in 1992 and afterwards enshrined within the Rio Declaration:

“...In view of the different contributions to global environmental degradation, States have common but differentiated responsibilities. The developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit to sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command.”

Rio Declaration on Environment and Development – Principle 7

It was reaffirmed within the Rio+20 Declaration in 2012 and found its way into the preparatory documents for all major processes of the post-2015 agenda including the intergovernmental negotiations on a post-2015 development agenda, financing for development and climate change.
transformative potential and role of technology as the key to unlock shared prosperity and planetary sustainability. The creation of a facilitation mechanism under the auspices of the United Nations for the promotion of development, transfer and dissemination of technology was therefore encouraged and the overall wish for the delegations to dedicate more time to the matter of technology transfer was expressed. The global nature of many pressing development challenges would make this imperative.

The crucial role of the private sector in financing the new development agenda was stressed. Corporates would play a crucial role in fostering economic growth and development, not only by providing funds but also by driving innovation. However, several examples had shown that, without government control, the interests of this sector and the public would not always align. Consequently, the need for inter-governmental oversight was emphasized.

Citing that the poorest 1.2 billion people are only using 1% of the world’s resources while the richest 1 billion consumes 72%, one delegate from the Indian Permanent Mission to the UN stated that the North-South divide would be a fact. He therefore renewed the call for the new framework to incorporate the concept of CBDR.

The next session of the post-2015 intergovernmental negotiations in New York will be held between the 18 and 22 of May.
Post-2015 Events

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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>20-22 Apr</td>
<td>Cartagena Data Festival</td>
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<tr>
<td>20-24 Apr</td>
<td>Intergovernmental negotiations on post-2015, Means of implementation and partnership for sustainable development</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-22 April</td>
<td>High-level Thematic Debate by the PGA on Promoting Tolerance and Reconciliation</td>
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<td>4 May</td>
<td>High-level Thematic Debate by the PGA on Strengthening Cooperation between the UN and regional and sub-regional organizations</td>
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<tr>
<td>18-22 May</td>
<td>Intergovernmental negotiations on post-2015, Follow-up and Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>21-22 May</td>
<td>Asia Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development 2015</td>
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Post-2015 Resources

- Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing
  Report of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing
- Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals
  Open Working Group proposal for Sustainable Development Goals
- Synthesis report of the UN Secretary-General
  The road to dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet
- United Nations Resident Coordinator’s Office
  National Consultation Report Post-2015 Development Framework: India
- United Nations Statistical Commission
  Technical report by the Bureau of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) on the process of the development of an indicator framework for the goals and targets of the post-2015 development agenda
- Sustainable Development Policy & Practice
  TFM, Technology Assessment in Focus at Post-2015 Event
- Leong, Alvin K.
  CBDR in the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Post-2015 Links

- https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org
  The official UN website dedicated to the post 2015 process
- https://www.pminewyork.org/index.php
  Website of the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations

For additional post-2015 inputs from civil society and major groups visit:

  Civil society movement to ensure concrete actions are taken and ambitious agreements are made in 2015.
  Civil society campaign, pushing for a strong and legitimate successor framework to the Millennium Development Goals.
  Collaboration of research institutes from across the globe that provides an independent source of critical thinking, integrated analysis and awareness-raising on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a post-2015 development agenda.
- http://post2015.org
  Post 2015 Website of the Overseas Development Institute (ODI). UK’s leading independent think tank on international development and humanitarian issues.
  Daily independent reporting service on post-2015 provided by International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)