

Regionalism and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Regional Commissions' Side Event

General Assembly seventy-first session, New York
(23 September 2016, 8:30 – 10:00 AM, CR-7, GA Building)

Concept Note

Objective

To highlight the significance of regional cooperation and initiatives in supporting country efforts for a successful and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Expected Outcomes

Member States and other stakeholders will have a better appreciation of the contributions and value added of regional cooperation and initiatives towards an effective implementation and follow up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The event will promote inter-regional peer learning by sharing experiences from the regions, including on regional partnerships among States, regional and subregional organizations and other stakeholders to deliver on a transformative and ambitious agenda.

Focus Areas

Some of the key areas to be addressed by participants from the perspective of each region include:

- (i) Engaging in multiple initiatives to integrate the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs into national policies, development planning and fiscal frameworks and ensuring people's ownership;
- (ii) Strengthening Countries' data and statistical capacities for evidence-based policy making;
- (iii) Facilitating the exchange of experiences and peer learning through regional multistakeholder follow-up and review mechanisms;
- (iv) Promoting policy coherence and alignment through South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as regional partnerships;
- (v) Identifying and promoting innovative means of implementation, including resources for financing for development and leveraging science, technology and innovation.

Modality and participants

The Secretary-General will deliver opening remarks. The roundtable will include Heads of State and Governments, Heads of regional organizations, ministers from different regions and the five Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions.



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Background

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, inclusive of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the supportive means of implementation reflected, among others, in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), categorically and repeatedly recognizes the significance of the regional dimension of development.

This global recognition by Heads of State and Governments in such a UN landmark development agenda is a culmination of the new regionalism that has been growing and deepening in most regions over the last two decades, expanding sub-regional and regional cooperation and integration processes and agreements beyond traditional areas such as trade to cover other aspects such as investment, currency, competition policy, connectivity, migration, labour regimes, the environment, food security and health, among others.

It is also a recognition of the critical contributions and value added of the regional dimension in terms of: providing a vital bridge between global frameworks and national development agendas in relation to the integration, implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda; informing global and national policymaking and normative agenda-setting through regional experiences and perspectives; supporting South-South cooperation and the rise of middle income countries (MICs), including through enhanced regional cooperation, efforts to deepen regional integration, and exchange of experiences, good practices and effective public policies among countries of similar circumstances and beyond; promoting partnerships and policy coherence, including at the subregional level and in support of countries in special situations, such as least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs), small island developing States (SIDS) and countries in conflict; fostering a progressive agenda and guiding transformational change, adding new substance and innovative ideas to the new development paradigm; reconciling a diversity of interests and articulating a development vision that reflects multiple realities and; building and increasing resilience to crises through greater capacity to innovate, share common interests, pool resources

The United Nations Regional Commissions (RCs) have been assigned explicit and implicit mandates to assist Member States in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development, provide technical support for SDG implementation including through effective leveraging of the means of implementation, and facilitate effective follow-up and review. The RCs were entrusted with these mandates given their universal coverage, convening power, intergovernmental nature and strength, broad-based cross-sectoral expertise, and experience in mobilizing regional consensus on key intergovernmental agreements. They are implementing these mandates in cooperation and partnership with the regional UN system and other regional organizations and stakeholders.

Bearing in mind this background, the high-level side event will provide Member States and other stakeholders with perspectives and assessment of the efforts and dynamics of implementation of the ambitious 2030 Agenda in the regions, anchored in national experiences and impacted by sub-regional and regional contexts and specificity.

