

Post-2015 development agenda

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The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) devised by the United Nations form a development blueprint agreed to by all the world's countries and leading development institutions. They range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS and providing universal primary education, all by the target date of 2015. Although they have galvanised unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world's poorest, it is becoming clear that the Goals will not be met in time. Mindful of this, in July 2012, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced the 27 members of a High-level Panel to advise on the global development framework beyond 2015.

The Panel is co-chaired by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom, and will include 26 "Eminent Persons", including representatives of governments, the private sector, academia, civil society and youth, with the "appropriate geographical and gender balance." While panelists are members in their personal capacity, their work will reflect new development challenges while also drawing on experience gained in implementing the MDGs, both in terms of results achieved and areas for improvement. The Panel is part of the Secretary-General's post-2015 initiative mandated by the 2010 MDG Summit. The High-Level Panel is "one of the pieces in a multi-layered puzzle" that is the post-2015 process. The Panel's work will be closely coordinated with that of the intergovernmental working group tasked to design Sustainable Development Goals, as agreed at the Rio +20 conference. The reports of both groups will be submitted to Member States for their further deliberations.

The Post-2015 Development Agenda already differs from the MDGs in that its formation is an all-inclusive process with the engagement of a broad range of stakeholders. UN agencies are convening 11 thematic e-discussions which allow all interested parties – civil society, donors, private sector, youth, academia and others – to voice their opinions on what the next development agenda should look like in light of each thematic area. Simultaneously, national consultations will take place in over 50 countries to not only further foster an inclusive, multi-stakeholder process, but

to also shape a post-2015 development agenda informed by national and local priorities. *Beyond 2015*, for example, is a global civil society campaign that is intricately involved in the consultation process. Bringing together some 620 organisations from developed and developing nations, it comprises small community based organisations as well as international NGOs, academics and trade unions. As a campaign it is pushing for "an equitable and sustainable world where every person is safe, resilient, lives well, and enjoys their human rights."

After Rio, two HPL meetings have already taken place in London and Monrovia. Liberia is not used to hosting such a large and diverse group of eminent delegates. But Liberian President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was proud to host the third HPL in Monrovia: "it was a momentous occasion for Liberia. We welcomed over 300 international delegates to our country, and were proud to show them a rising Liberia." Importantly, having an HLP meeting in Liberia was a valuable exercise in that it brought panelists and others involved in the process to a country that itself is facing many of the challenges that the Agenda looks to address. Having witnessed the reality of poverty on the ground, the Panel in Monrovia concluded that that economic growth, although crucial for social and economic development, is not sufficient to ensure social justice, equity and sustained prosperity for all. In short, the Panel so far recommends that the Agenda be "a global, people-centred and planet-sensitive agenda to address the universal challenges of the 21st century: promoting sustainable development, supporting job-creating growth, protecting the environment and providing peace, security, justice, freedom and equity at all levels."

President Sirleaf looks forward to the forthcoming meeting in Bali, which will be the final phase of the High Level Panel meetings. The theme of the Bali meeting, she highlights, is "global partnerships and means of implementation." She anticipates "robust discussions on the roles of various stakeholders, on global governance of ownership and mutual responsibility, financing and accountability, to ensure that we have put in place the right building blocks to realise our vision for development."

The High Level Panel will submit a report containing their recommendations to the Secretary-General in May 2013. F