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and the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly

Emerging issues: Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: moving from commitments to results for achieving social development

Note by the Secretariat

I. Introduction

1.   Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/18, the programme of work of the Commission for Social Development has included the agenda item "Emerging issues" since its 2007-2008 review and policy cycle. Under this item, the Commission addresses current issues affecting social development that require urgent consideration or new cross-cutting issues in the context of evolving global development challenges. At the fifty-fourth session, under "Emerging issues", the Commission will consider the question "Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: moving from commitments to results for achieving social development". The present note has been prepared to provide background information for the discussion of this topic.

2.   The present note focuses on certain specific areas that are important for the integrated implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and in which the Commission could play a leading role. It also explores how the Commission can provide guidance on the effective implementation of the Agenda through translating commitments into results in the area of social development. The note should be read in conjunction with the report of the Secretary-General on rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world (E/CN.5/2015/3) as well as similar notes prepared for the fifty-first, fifty-second and fifty-third sessions (E/CN.5/2013/11, E/CN.5/2014/8 and E/CN.5/2015/6).

II. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: an integrated agenda that promises to leave no one behind

3.   At the United Nations summit held in September 2015, Member States adopted the post-2015 global development agenda, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (General Assembly resolution 70/1). Agenda 2030 is a universal, transformative and people-centred plan of action to collectively work towards achieving sustainable development for the current and future generations through integrating its social, economic and environmental dimensions in a balanced manner.

4.   Through its promise to reach the furthest behind first and its recognition that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge, the new Agenda highlights the foundational role of social progress in achieving sustainable development. In its resolve to end poverty and hunger in all their forms and dimensions and to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality and in a healthy environment, the new Agenda presents social development as both a driver and a result of other dimensions of the development process. The new Agenda also emphasizes that the achievement of sustained and inclusive growth and a socially and environmentally sustainable future for all requires an approach to policy that is people-centred and integrated. This means that the implementation of the Agenda will require social, economic and environmental policies to work in concert, not in separate silos, to improve the well-being of all by paying particular attention to the most disadvantaged groups and individuals. Agenda 2030 and the approach to its implementation echo the visions and principles emanating from the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995.

5.   The World Summit for Social Development explicitly placed people at the centre of development for the first time. The commitments made at the Summit are based firmly on the conviction that social development is central to the needs and aspirations of people and that individuals can reach their full potential in life only in a social order based on justice. It also recognized that sustaining social development and social justice requires sound economic policy and broad-based sustained growth that promote the equitable distribution of economic gains, equal opportunities and greater access to resources for all, articulating the need for the integration of social, economic and environmental policies to realize the three core objectives of social development: poverty eradication, full and productive employment and social integration. Therefore, not only do the vision and principles of the World Summit for Social Development remain relevant in the context of the 2030 Agenda, the experience of the implementation of its outcome, namely, the Programme of Action and the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development, can also provide constructive lessons for today.

6.   One of the lessons learned is that the most productive approach to social development is to maximize the capacities, resources and opportunities of all people to fully participate in and contribute to societal activities, so that they can lead a decent, healthy and productive life with dignity and in harmony with the environment. As long as a certain portion of a population is left behind, the overarching goal of sustainable development cannot be achieved. Empowering people, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, is key to reducing poverty and inequalities, promoting inclusive and sustained growth and tackling

environmental challenges. All policies in all sectors should ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups and individuals are fully included and are active participants in the sustainable development processes.

7.   The core value of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals that form its nucleus is the commitment to tackling a number of complex and interrelated global challenges (namely, widening inequalities, growing job insecurity, the systemic fragilities of the global economy, the negative impacts of climate change, etc.) in a more integrated manner. The current siloed approach to the design and implementation of social, economic and environmental policies would be particularly ineffective in the implementation of the Agenda. Rather than pursuing social, economic and environmental policies as piecemeal initiatives, a holistic and integrated approach, where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts is needed. Integration must exist at all levels of the process, including ensuring evidence-based policy analysis, formulation, monitoring and evaluation, and impact assessment, based on high-quality, accessible, timely disaggregated data (by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability and geographic location).

III. Key areas and interlinkages to achieve social development within the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

8.   Social development will play a critical role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, both as a mark of progress in itself and as a driver of progress in other dimensions.

9.   This section highlights key thematic areas of social development that are critical drivers for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. While not exhaustive, the areas presented can be seen as crucial interlinkages or cross-cutting issues that not only catalyse — or even define — social progress and development in the current global context, but underpin progress in several economic and environmentally oriented goals.

A. Reducing inequalities

10.   Redressing inequality is fundamental to achieving the overall objective of the 2030 Agenda of promoting sustainable development without leaving anyone behind. Inequalities are also at the root of many of the challenges that the 2030 Agenda sets out to overcome, including poverty, economic instabilities, environmental degradation, social exclusion and threats to peace. A comprehensive and integrated policy platform centred on clearly defined social objectives could and should address many, if not all, of those factors.[1]

11.   Inequality has many dimensions, including economic, social, political and legal. Inequality in terms of economic outcomes (for example, income and assets) co-exists with and mutually reinforces inequality of opportunity (access to

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[1] See *Inequality Matters: Report on the World Social Situation 2013* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.IV.2) for detailed analysis.

education, health care, financial services and so forth). Inequalities can also exist within given income groups owing to other social and political factors.

12. Unequal access to water and sanitation, nutrition, energy, land and other productive assets, credit, inheritance, information, knowledge and technologies is also a major barrier faced by people living in poverty and other vulnerable groups and individuals. Such inequalities perpetuate poverty, while also exerting negative impacts on the environment.

13. Widening inequality is one of the major challenges to social cohesion. While a certain degree of inequality naturally exists, high levels of inequality heighten social tensions and undermine economic and social progress. If horizontal inequalities or disparities (typically associated with social identities, especially those related to ethnicity, religion and geographic location) remain unaddressed, they could lead to social disintegration or even violent conflict.

14. When analysing the economic and social processes that create inequalities, both exogenous factors (international trade and investment agreements, global governance, climate change) and endogenous drivers (macroeconomic, fiscal, industrial/environmental and social policies and trade) need to be addressed and main channels through which opportunities are translated into outcomes need to be identified.

15. Policies and strategies to tackle inequality need to simultaneously address its causes in multiple dimensions (historical, cultural, social, economic, legal and political), given that each dimension aggravates the others. Such policies and strategies include measures to strengthen human capabilities, especially through investment in social services. Addressing inequalities requires long-term structural changes at the international, national and local levels, within the legal, policy and institutional frameworks of a given context. Promoting broad-based participation and the empowerment of people is also an effective way to redress inequalities, including gender-based inequality and discrimination.[2]

16. Universal social protection, including social protection floors, is an important tool for enhancing the capacities and resilience of any population and has proved effective in reducing inequalities in both the economic and social spheres. Social protection guarantees minimum income, which enables poor families to send their children to school, improve nutrition and health and mitigate risks from economic, social and environmental shocks. Improving basic health-care services will reduce maternity and child mortality rates and reduce the risk of falling into poverty as a result of loss of income from sickness. Universal access to health-care coverage should be further promoted, as it is the most effective way to address vulnerability associated with health-related risks.

B. Addressing multiple dimensions of poverty and hunger

17. As Goal 1 of the 2030 Agenda clearly emphasizes, efforts to end poverty should address not only income, but also the structural causes of poverty, lack of or limited access to education, health care and other basic services, food, nutrition,

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[2] See the last chapter of *Inequality Matters: Report on the World Social Situation 2013* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.13.IV.2) for policy suggestions in greater detail.

energy, adequate housing and safe environments; unequal access to land and other productive assets, credit and inheritance, as well as information, knowledge and technologies; lack of opportunities for decent work and participation; and social discrimination and exclusion.

18. Poverty afflicts different people at different times in the life cycle. People move out or fall into poverty, while many are trapped in chronic/intergenerational poverty. Certain groups and communities are particularly vulnerable to poverty and deprivation, including women, persons with disabilities, older persons, indigenous peoples, migrants, ethnic minorities and people living in rural and remote areas. National strategies to reduce overall poverty should include measures to carefully analyse and remove structural barriers, particularly those faced by the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, so that they can escape and/or stay out of poverty.[3]

19. Reducing food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition is an integral part of policies and strategies to end extreme poverty, reduce vulnerabilities and enhance resilience. Food insecurity, hunger and malnutrition are also closely associated with inequality, well-being, learning outcomes of school-age children, sustainable agriculture and food distribution. School-age children deprived of sufficient nutrition in early childhood are more likely to underperform and drop out of school and are therefore unable to acquire the skills necessary for earning decent income later in life. This perpetuates a vicious cycle that results in the intergenerational transmission of poverty.

20. Food security is also closely linked to agriculture and rural development. Each year, 30 to 40 per cent of the total food produced is lost before it reaches the market.[4] Household consumers also waste at the retail level and waste significant amounts of food.[5] Enhancing agricultural productivity and food production processes, together with strategies for redirecting wasted food, can end hunger and improve living conditions for some 795 million hungry people living in extreme poverty.[6] Conversely, addressing the root causes of poverty is necessary for enhancing the productivity in rural and agricultural areas.

21. Given that many poor people living in rural areas are smallholder family farmers whose livelihood often depends on subsistence agriculture, enhancing their income and productivity, including by expanding their access to land, credit and other productive assets, is key to improving their capacity to escape poverty and hunger. In addition, people living in poverty and in rural areas are more prone to the negative effects of climate change and natural disasters. Building their capacities to utilize natural resources more sustainably is fundamental to poverty eradication and sustainable development. Creating income-generating opportunities in sectors such as natural resource management and preservation could address poverty, hunger and environmental concerns simultaneously.

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[3] See *Rethinking Poverty: Report on the World Social Situation 2010* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.09.IV.10) for a more detailed analysis of the causes and impacts of multidimensional poverty as well as policy recommendations to address the challenges.

[4] See http://www.fao.org/in-action/seeking-end-to-loss-and-waste-of-food-along-production-chain/en/?fb_locale=es_ES.

[5] See Global Initiative on Food Loss and Waste Reduction, available from http://www.fao.org/save-food/en/.

[6] See World Food Programme, Hunger Statistics, available from https://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats.

22. Climate change disproportionately affects people living in poor communities and in rural, agricultural, remote or other vulnerable areas. According to the World Bank, without any interventions, the adverse effects of climate change would most likely increase agricultural prices and threaten food security in some regions and magnify many threats to health.[7] The differentiated impacts of climate change or environmental degradation on different groups of population or communities should also be analysed and taken into consideration in policymaking.

23. Some of the policies to address inequalities, such as investment to strengthen human capability and the social protection programmes mentioned in the previous section, have also proved effective in combating poverty. In addition, productivity-enhancing services and technology, the expansion of decent work opportunities and rural development, among other things, are part and parcel of an integrated policy framework to support people to move out of poverty and to mitigate economic, social and environmental shocks and prevent people from falling into poverty. Policy coherence among various sectors should be enhanced to address particular vulnerabilities facing people and to enhance their resilience.

C. Promoting productive employment and decent work for all

24. It is widely recognized that productive employment and decent work are the main pathways to escaping poverty and exclusion and achieving sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth. Decent work opportunities provide income to sustain livelihoods and increase participation in labour market activities. Decent work also promotes social inclusion, dignity, participation, motivation and the engagement of people. For people living in poverty, particularly those in rural and agricultural areas, decent jobs also enhance their health, nutrition and quality of life. Decent jobs in green sectors that protect, preserve and restore the ecosystem will also prevent environmental degradation.

25. Small and medium-sized enterprises are the major engine for job creation in many countries; however, many such enterprises are in the informal sector. The informal sector represents a large share of employment, particularly in developing countries. Workers in informal employment, including the self-employed, workers in household enterprises, agricultural workers and wage earners in informal enterprises, tend to have low productivity, low pay and no social protection. Informal employment disproportionately affects disadvantaged and excluded groups. Long-term poverty eradication strategies therefore need to focus on the upgrading or formalization of employment.

26. However, the transformation of informal employment is a complex issue. Strategies should be carefully crafted, maintaining a delicate balance between reducing disincentives and increasing incentives to upgrade or formalize. Such strategies should also be aimed at promoting financial inclusion and skills/vocational and entrepreneurship training; improving income, working conditions and productivity; and promoting the participation of people working in the informal sector in social dialogue. In addition, the issues of undeclared work, precarious jobs and the minimum wage need to be further addressed.

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[7] See World Bank Group, *Shock Waves: Managing the Impacts of Climate Change on Poverty* (Washington, D.C., 2016).

27. The decent work agenda also promotes the protection of the right of workers to work under fair conditions and in a healthy and safe environment, contributing to improved well-being. Another component of the decent work agenda, namely, social protection, coupled with universal access to health-care coverage, can enhance the participation in labour of disadvantaged groups, including women, young people or persons with disabilities. Social protection also mitigates the adverse impact of job loss in the transition to a green/low-carbon economy, reducing resistance to the necessary transformation. Interlinkages among decent work, climate change and a low-carbon economy should be further explored, as the loss of some traditional jobs will need to be compensated by the creation of jobs in the green sector and accompanied by adequate skills training.

D. Social inclusion and inclusive development to leave no one behind

28. Certain segments of the population face particular barriers to fulfilling their potential owing to discrimination, social exclusion and lack of opportunity to participate in economic, social and political activities. To leave no one behind in the sustainable development process, countries must implement social inclusion policies and measures, in addition to broad-based socioeconomic policies. These measures, aimed at reaching the farthest behind first, include respecting diversity, enhancing participation, eliminating discriminatory and/or exclusionary laws, policies and practices and promoting a human rights-based approach. For example, universal social protection needs to be complemented by effective and transparent measures to target the most vulnerable and disadvantaged social groups and communities.

29. Among these disadvantaged groups, indigenous peoples continue to suffer disproportionately from high poverty rates and poor access to education and health care and are often politically marginalized. They often live in isolated territories that are exploited for natural resource extraction, from which they receive limited benefits. Older persons, the majority of whom now live in less developed regions, face specific challenges. Older women in particular are more vulnerable to discrimination, neglect, abuse, gender-based violence and denial of asset ownership. Women suffer from gender gaps in labour participation and wages and predominantly carry the burden of unpaid care work.

30. Young people are disproportionately affected by unemployment and underemployment, which poses a major challenge with respect to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (youth unemployment rates are two to three times higher than the average rates). In addition, in some countries, a large number of young people are neither employed nor in education or training. With the current rate of employment growth, it is expected that 470 million jobs will need to be created globally to absorb the growing number of new entrants to the labour market between 2016 and 2030.[8] This is of particular concern for countries affected by the so-called youth bulge. Evidence shows that a large number of unemployed youth increases social tensions and threatens social cohesion. However, a large number of young, healthy, educated and skilled young people can be the driving force for sustained and inclusive economic growth. Engaging young people in productive activities and incorporating their needs and concerns are therefore critical for

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[8] See International Labour Organization, "The Global Jobs Crisis: Facts and Figures", available from https://www.worldwewant2015.org/pt-br/node/392784.

achieving sustained and inclusive growth and enhancing social stability. Interlinkages among youth employment, skills development, green jobs and social protection during the transition to a greener economy should be further examined.

31. Increased urbanization also has a significant impact on inclusive development. It is projected that 60 per cent of the world's population will live in urban areas in 2030,[9] including in megacities of 10 million or more residents.[10] This will have significant social, economic and environmental implications. Owing to rapid urbanization in many developing countries, more people are moving into urban areas for better job prospects and higher standards of living. Often, these hopes are not realized and migrants settle in urban slums. People living in urban informal settlements are marginalized, with a low level of access to education, health-care services, water, sanitation and waste management, and adequate housing. As a result, they live in poverty and in an unhealthy environment. This issue cannot be addressed only at the local level, but requires a comprehensive and integrated approach with specific measures to address the challenges facing internal migrants and the urban poor. For instance, children living in slums often engage in child labour owing to poverty and lack of access to education. In addition to the protection of their rights, their inclusion in the education system, supported by social protection measures, universal access to health-care coverage and nutrition programmes, could be considered.

32. Lastly, universal access to social protection should be prioritized as a policy platform to promote inclusive development and human rights.

E. Investing in universal access to basic social services

33. Basic social services, especially education, health care, safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation, are not only social development goals, but also instruments of human development that are critical for long-term inclusive growth and environmental sustainability. Achieving universal and equitable access to basic social services and ensuring access to adequate sanitation and hygiene, affordable energy and housing are essential for all people to lead a decent and healthy life with dignity. Investing to improve access to such services is fundamental to strengthening the capacity of people to contribute to inclusive economic growth. Improved services in water, sanitation and energy will directly protect the natural environment, while education facilitates changes in consumption and production patterns by changing behaviour and mindset.

34. Despite progress in improving access to primary and secondary education, 59 million children are out of school at the primary level, of whom 34 million are girls and 30 million are living in situations of conflict. On average, 87 out of every

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[9] See International Federation of Surveyors (FIG) Commission 3, *Rapid Urbanization and Mega Cities: The Need for Spatial Information Management* (Copenhagen, International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), 2010). Available from http://www.fig.net/resources/publications/figpub/pub48/figpub48.pdf.

[10] In 2014, 28 megacities were home to 453 million people or about 12 per cent of the world's urban dwellers. See United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision, Highlights* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.14.XIII.8) (New York, 2014). Available from http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/highlights/wup2014-highlights.pdf.

100 children complete primary school in the developing countries. A total of 250 million who complete primary education are unable to read or write.[11] One in three adolescents will not have completed lower secondary school in low- and middle-income countries in 2015, although a majority of those countries have legislated free lower secondary education since 1999.[11]

35.   It is estimated that the lives of 1.8 million children under the age of 5 and 100,000 mothers would have been saved if inequalities in coverage of essential maternal and child health interventions had been eliminated. That would reduce child mortality by one fifth and maternal mortality by almost one third.[12] Further, people without access to universal health-care coverage are more exposed to the risk of falling into poverty owing to health-care costs. Universal health-care coverage can reduce health-related vulnerabilities and, at the same time, enhance the productivity and resilience of people.

36.   Nearly 800 million people still do not have access to an improved source of drinking water that is protected from outside contamination. Two and a half billion people, or over a third of the world's population, live without adequate sanitation facilities and 1,400 children die every day from unsafe water, lack of basic sanitation and poor hygiene.[13] About 80 per cent of those without access to drinking water live in rural areas.[14] Effective universal policies to improve access to water and sanitation should be designed in a way to ensure that they reach the most vulnerable and marginalized population groups. Innovative approaches, such as the Sanitation and Water for All partnership, have emerged to increase sector coordination and build stronger systems and institutions to better target resources.

37.   Innovative partnerships could further mobilize the financial resources necessary to invest in basic social services. Human and financial resources need to be effectively allocated to critical universal policies to reach the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. In recent years, a human rights approach has also proved to be effective in achieving universal access to education, health care, water and sanitation. In these areas, it is particularly important to emphasize that no target should be considered to be met until no one is left behind.

IV.   Role of the Commission for Social Development

38.   The 2030 Agenda builds upon the outcomes of prior major United Nations conferences and summits, including the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in 1995. The vision, principles and goals of that summit are reflected in the new Agenda. The three major objectives of the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, namely, the eradication of poverty, the

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[11] See United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Education for All Global Monitoring Report, Education for All 2000-2015: Achievements and Challenges* (Paris, 2015).

[12] See Lara Brearley and Thomas O'Connell, *Universal Health Coverage: A Commitment to Close the Gap* (London, Rockefeller Foundation, Save the Children, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and World Health Organization (WHO) 2013).

[13] See Sanitation and Water for All, available from: http://sanitationandwaterforall.org/about/.

[14] See the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) presentation "Towards Universal Access to Water and Sanitation", available from: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egms/docs/2015/sd-agenda2030/Gestippt.pdf.

promotion of social integration and productive employment and decent work for all, are recognized as fundamental elements in achieving sustainable development.

39. The 2030 Agenda sets the goals and targets to be achieved while leaving the "how" to national authorities in order to fit their specific context and national priorities. To implement the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, Governments will need to: (a) translate them into an integrated national policy framework; (b) based on the national policy framework, formulate national plans, strategies and programmes; (c) identify and secure financial and technical resources; (d) establish mechanisms for monitoring, review and reporting progress; and (e) identify and build effective partnerships.

40. The Commission for Social Development, a body responsible for advising the Economic and Social Council on all issues relating to social policies and social development, including the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, has an important role to play in assisting Member States in their implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

41. The Commission should continue to serve as a forum for sharing experience in promoting people-centred and inclusive development, policy coherence and an integrated approach to social development within the context of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, the Commission could serve as a guardian of the overall objective of leaving no one behind by ensuring that the specific needs of the vulnerable social groups and communities covered by the Agenda are addressed in its implementation across the social, economic and environmental fields and that they are meaningfully involved at all stages of policy processes.

42. In this regard, the Commission may wish to consider the options below, which are not mutually exclusive.

A. Promoting social development as a catalyst for achieving sustainable development

43. Building on its experience in implementing the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, the Commission may wish to claim its role as a forum for promoting social development as a catalyst for achieving sustainable development. The Commission may consider selecting, as its future priority themes, areas of interlinkage or synergy where social development drives socially, economically and environmentally sustainable development, as appropriate, under the guidance of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council. Some of these areas were addressed in section III above. Additional issues and/or their implications for vulnerable social groups may be further examined by the Commission at its fifty-fourth session in the context of preparing its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

B. Contributing to the follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda

44.   In the light of its attention, at the current session, to its methods of work, the Commission may wish to concretize its means of contributing to the follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda. The mechanism for coherent, efficient and inclusive follow-up and review processes of the 2030 Agenda at the global level is being elaborated. While the Agenda provides guidance on how this architecture should function, further details of the role of relevant intergovernmental bodies, including the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions and other inter-agency bodies, and their relationships among themselves and with the high-level political forum on sustainable development are yet to be elaborated. It can be expected that the mechanism will make use of existing architecture at the global level, with the high-level political forum as a central platform.

45.   The Agenda also provides guidance on thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues. Thematic reviews at the high-level political forum will be supported by reviews by the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and other intergovernmental bodies and forums, which should reflect the integrated nature of the Goals as well as the interlinkages between them, and will engage all relevant stakeholders and where possible, feed into, and be aligned with, the cycle of the high-level political forum (see General Assembly resolution 70/1, para. 85).

46.   Pending further clarification on the format of the thematic reviews (namely, clusters, cross-cutting themes, groups of Sustainable Development Goals), the Commission should consider how best it can contribute to those reviews, as well as the review of the Goals and targets related to its specific areas of work, and how the inputs of the Commission could best feed into the work of the high-level political forum under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council. The Commission could also mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into its work, in close collaboration with the United Nations entities on whose expertise it can draw.

47.   In this regard, the Commission may wish to take stock of existing mechanisms within its mandates and highlight how they can be utilized to implement the 2030 Agenda and monitor progress. These include the follow-up and review of the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, the World Programme of Action for Youth), the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, the platform of the International Year of the Family, the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

48.   In addition, in recent years, the Commission has been using the agenda item on emerging issues to align its work with the annual theme of the Economic and Social Council.[15] Similarly, the Commission may wish to explore options for aligning its work with the theme of the high-level political forum. For example, the

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[15] Under the item "Emerging issues", the Commission has considered the themes "The social dimension in the global development agenda beyond 2015" (2013), "The social drivers of sustainable development" (2014) and "Contributions of social development to the transition from the Millennium Development Goals to the sustainable development goals" (2015).

Commission might consider adding a new agenda item, selecting as its priority themes key areas and interlinkages that accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda or considering a strategic plan for the next 15 years based on the overlaps of the 2030 Agenda with its current programme of work.

C. Strengthening the collaboration of the Commission with other intergovernmental bodies

49. In order to promote an integrated approach to achieving the social objectives of sustainable development, the Commission could explore means of strengthening its collaboration with other intergovernmental bodies. The full implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,[16] adopted at the third International Conference on Financing for Development as a new global action agenda for financing sustainable development, is critical for realizing the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets. The Agenda has committed to a social compact[17] and, in that regard, to explore coherent funding modalities to mobilize additional resources, building on country-led experiences (see General Assembly resolution 69/313, annex, para. 12). Domestic resource mobilization is important for securing or enhancing effective socially oriented development policies such as improvements in education, health, and social protection systems. In that regard, engaging finance and economic ministries and other relevant ministries to address key interlinkages between social and economic and social and environmental dimensions are considered to be essential. The Commission could strengthen its interaction with the annual Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development, which will be launched in 2016. Similarly, the Commission could exchange information and share knowledge with the Economic and Social Council multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals.

50. The Commission could also strengthen its interaction with other functional commissions, in particular the Statistical Commission, and provide policy advice, key elements to be considered and data that are directly linked to furthering social progress in the context of the 2030 Agenda (namely, leave no one behind, the impact of economic and environmental policies on the well-being of people).

51. The Commission could also strengthen its collaboration with the regional commissions to ensure policy coherence and an integrated approach.

D. Building effective multi-stakeholder partnerships

52. In order to promote an integrated approach to achieving the social objectives of sustainable development, the Commission could explore means of building effective multi-stakeholder partnerships. The 2030 Agenda highlights the need for a

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[16] Adopted at the third International Conference on Financing for Development and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015.

[17] Namely, to provide fiscally sustainable and nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, with a focus on those furthest below the poverty line and the vulnerable, persons with disabilities, indigenous persons, children, youth and older persons, and to consider setting nationally appropriate spending targets for quality investments in essential public services for all, including health, education, energy, water and sanitation (see General Assembly resolution 69/313, para. 12).

revitalized Global Partnership for Sustainable Development to ensure its implementation (see General Assembly resolution 70/1, para. 39). Such a global partnership should be accompanied by concrete policies and strategies and bring together Governments, parliaments, the United Nations system and other international institutions, regional and subregional organizations, local authorities, scientific and academic communities, indigenous peoples, social groups, civil society organizations, business and the private sector (see ibid., paras. 39-46).

53.   While Governments have the primary responsibility for follow-up and review at the national, regional and global levels, all sectors of a society should be included as partners in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in order to create a sense of ownership and ensure their active participation in the implementation of the Goals. In particular, young people are critical agents of change and will carry the Agenda forward for the next generation.

54.   Further, to ensure that no one is left behind, the development infrastructure cannot continue to operate as it has. A transformation that breaks down silos and strengthens participatory mechanisms through which socially inclusive and coherent strategies for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals can be established will be required.

55.   The Commission may wish to explore opportunities for making discussions in the Commission more participatory, to ensure that all actors have a greater influence on the decision-making processes. Since the role of non-State actors will become increasingly important for mobilizing and sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, the Commission should build effective multi-stakeholder partnerships with civil society, including academic and scientific communities, civil society organizations, the private sector, social groups (young people, women, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples), workers' organizations, farmers' organizations and faith-based organizations, and with local governments, United Nations entities and other international organizations. Their involvement will not only make the sustainable development process more accountable, but also help the Commission to better communicate its work, including key messages and outcomes of the Commission, to wider audiences both inside and outside the United Nations system. A multi-stakeholder dialogue under the auspices of the Commission may be considered.

V. Conclusion

56.   Social policies are not only fundamental to the achievement of social goals, but they also play a catalytic role in realizing other Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

57.   The present note has attempted to provide a comprehensive, but not exhaustive, compilation of key issues or critical areas of interlinkage that leverage the impact of social policy for achieving social, economic and environmental objectives within the framework of the 2030 Agenda. These interlinkages enable a coherent and integrated implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals that leaves no one behind. The Commission could further elaborate on these areas during its discussion in the current session.

58. In addition, the note has mapped out some options for the Commission to consider in order to effectively contribute to the follow-up and review of the social dimension of the 2030 Agenda.

59. To discuss and elaborate on the suggestions contained in this note, the Commission may wish to focus on the following questions in its deliberation on the emerging issue at its fifty-fourth session:

(a) How can the Commission effectively contribute to the follow-up and review of the implementation of the social dimensions of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals in a coherent and integrated manner?

(b) Is there a need to reorient the substance and the format of the Commission's deliberations and/or outputs?

(c) How can the Commission strengthen and/or build effective partnerships with various stakeholders in addressing the social dimension of sustainable development in a coherent and integrated manner?

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