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States

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

REPORT

Arab Consultative Meeting on an Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda Tunis, 15 -16 September 2014

Summary

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and its partners, namely the League of Arab States, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Group, organized the *Arab Consultative Meeting on an Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda* in Tunis during the period 15-16 September 2014. The meeting brought together Arab government representatives, experts from across the economic, social and environmental spheres, professionals from regional and international organizations, and representatives of major groups.

The meeting aimed at seeking regional views and proposals regarding the elements of an accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda. It resulted in a chair's summary which synthesizes key results, and which was submitted to the United Nations Secretary-General as the regional input to his synthesis report on the post-2015 development agenda. The synthesis report is expected to be issued before the end of November 2014 and will constitute the basis for negotiations of the agenda.

After introducing accountability concepts, approaches and objectives within the context of the post-2015 development agenda, the meeting discussed the following issues:

a) Lessons learned from selected existing accountability mechanisms at the global and regional levels, including: binding human rights commitments under the Universal Periodic Review; voluntary commitments to the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally-agreed goals under the Economic and Social Council's Annual Ministerial Review; and the African Peer Review Mechanism as a comprehensive, multi-stakeholder and periodic self-monitoring accountability mechanism at the regional level.

b) Accountability mechanisms related to the means of implementation of sustainable development, with a special focus on mutual accountability for aid effectiveness, citizen-driven accountability of international financial institutions, and trade reviews and sustainability impact assessments.

c) The architecture of a multilayered accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda that is simple, efficient, flexible and transparent. In particular, the meeting discussed: the scope of commitments to be included under an Arab accountability framework; the complementarities and coherence to be achieved between the global, regional and national levels; and adequate tools to be adopted regionally but anchored at the national level. Furthermore, the role of various stakeholders, including governments, United Nations agencies, regional organizations, civil society and private

sector actors to both hold, and be held, accountable was explored by participants.

d) The feasibility of establishing a regional sustainability performance review mechanism as an accountability tool to enhance strategic frameworks for sustainable development and national planning systems. To inform this discussion, participants benefited from an account of Arab country experiences in undertaking reviews of environmental performance and investment policy.

e) Current sustainable development reporting tools at the global, regional and national levels and their role in strengthening the science-policy interface for better evidence-based policies. Private sector reporting, including by national and international enterprises, received special interest, in addition to the potential role of the Arab Sustainable Development Report, the first edition of which will be issued by ESCWA in 2015.

The final session of the meeting sought the views of high-level panelists regarding the challenges of accountability at the national, regional and international levels, particularly within the context of the adverse conditions of conflict and occupation prevailing in the region.

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Introduction

1. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) and its partners, namely the League of Arab States, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Group, organized the *Arab Consultative Meeting on an Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda*, which was held in Tunis during the period 15-16 September 2014, in parallel with the 28th ESCWA Ministerial Session.
2. The meeting provided a platform for seeking regional views and proposals from representatives of Arab countries, experts and major groups, regarding the elements of a multilayered accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda. Discussions were informed by an account of Arab country experiences and lessons learned from existing review mechanisms. In particular, options for an Arab regional accountability mechanism anchored at the national level and feeding into the global level were at the core of the debate.
3. The objectives of the meeting were as follows:
 - (a) To inform participants about accountability as a key pillar of the post-2015 development agenda, discuss the challenges and opportunities it provides, and develop a regional perspective in this regard;
 - (b) To discuss possible platforms and tools for a regional accountability mechanism for the post-2015 development agenda, with a special focus on reviewing performance for enhanced policy design, mobilizing means of implementation for sustainable development and institutionalizing adequate mechanisms for measuring and assessing progress;
 - (c) To explore potential reporting systems on sustainable development that can be used by different development actors, including the private sector.
4. Section I of this report provides a list of key messages emanating from the meeting, and for which there was broad consensus. Section II summarizes the discussions that took place during the different sessions, while section III provides organizational information about the meeting.

I. KEY MESSAGES

5. Occupation and terrorism are serious impediments to development in the Arab region. Ending occupation and resolving armed conflicts will create enabling conditions for an enhanced commitment to SDGs and will facilitate the establishment of an independent, effective and responsible accountability framework at the regional level.
6. An effective multilayered mechanism for monitoring, accountability and follow-up is needed as part of the post-2015 development agenda, and such a mechanism could ultimately take many forms. There is a need, however, to bring more clarity to the issue through further global and regional consultations. In particular, there is a need for a clear definition of accountability and the identification of principles to serve as a minimum for consensus.
7. Accountability should involve all stakeholders, with national governments having the primary responsibility. Other stakeholders - parliaments, enterprises, civil society organizations (CSOs), local governments - will have different roles. The empowerment of all stakeholders and especially CSOs is considered crucial for the success of this process.

8. The necessary capacities and associated costs are important elements to consider in the design of an accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda. Furthermore, establishing such an accountability framework would be an expensive process and resources must be made available to support developing countries and stakeholders. There is a need for an accountable UN system, effective regional institutions and strong programmes for national institution-building for sustainable development and accountability.

9. Arab countries are not starting from scratch. They need to build on successful experiences in reviewing progress with the MDGs and in areas such as trade, human rights, investment and environmental management. Constructive dialogue and experience sharing can help to build a common understanding of accountability and its mechanisms. As a first step, it is important to engage all key stakeholders in such a dialogue in order to strengthen the sense of ownership and ensure sustainability of the process.

10. Discussions on accountability have only begun and it will take some time to reach agreement and consensus. These discussions will need to continue within the context of the emerging sustainable development agenda, as well as other key international negotiations and frameworks including climate change.

11. An effective mechanism would be multilayered, comprising global, regional and national components. National leadership is critical; however countries face many challenges, including limited national institutional capacities and resources for designing policies, gathering and analyzing information and data and for follow-up.

12. Member countries are skeptical about the effectiveness of national accountability mechanisms and the possibility of going beyond reporting to also include corrective measures. Doubt was also expressed regarding the ability of the global community to discuss issues of occupation, double standards and terrorism.

13. An accountability framework at the regional level should build on the existing institutional architecture, with an important role for the League of Arab States (LAS) through its Economic and Social Development Summits. ESCWA, UN agencies and programs, civil society, the private sector, and LAS need to join their efforts to ensure a solid accountability framework for the post-2015 agenda. The regional level provides a useful scale for experience and knowledge sharing. The region needs to learn from other experiences, and design its own accountability tools carefully and effectively rather than merely replicating existing tools.

14. Accountability at the global level relies on developing countries committing to achieving the SDGs and to reporting on the progress made and challenges faced; and on developed countries and the global community at large committing to ensuring support to developing countries both in implementation and monitoring.

15. ESCWA was identified as a platform that can facilitate regional reporting on SDGs progress, information sharing, dissemination of best practices, and capacity building.

16. The region welcomed the annual organization of the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development to mirror the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) and the publication of the Arab Sustainable Development Report in its prototype edition. These ESCWA initiatives are supported by LAS and other partners including the RCM members, and can support the accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda.

II. SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS

A. OPENING SESSION

17. The opening session included statements by the meeting's organizers. *H.E. Ms. Faeqa Saeed Al-Saleh*, Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the Social Affairs Sector, League of Arab States (LAS), provided the vision of LAS on accountability for the post-2015 development agenda. In her statement, she highlighted three key components of a potential regional accountability framework, namely: The role of governments, national accountability mechanisms, and civil society organizations. Ms. Al-Saleh pointed to the role of LAS and its subsidiary bodies, notably the specialized ministerial councils, the economic and social council and the Arab summits, in such a framework. She also referred to the efforts exerted by LAS in cooperation with UN system organizations, notably ESCWA and UNDP, to define regional priorities for post-2015.

18. *Mr. Nadim Khouri*, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCWA, emphasized that the post-2015 development agenda will include four building blocks, namely: a) a far-reaching vision of the future firmly anchored in human rights and universally accepted values and principles; b) a set of concise goals and targets aimed at realizing the priorities of the agenda; c) a global partnership for development to mobilize means of implementation; and d) a participatory monitoring framework for tracking progress and mutual accountability mechanisms for all stakeholders. He stressed the importance of this regional meeting being requested by the UN Secretary-General, and reiterated its consultative nature, noting that the outcome will be a chair's summary.

19. Mr. Khouri pointed out that the meeting should outline the scope of commitments to be reviewed under the anticipated accountability framework and explore adequate fora that could serve as a regional platform(s) for accountability. He noted that the lack of an accountability framework is considered to be an important shortcoming of the MDGs, emphasizing the relevance of the regional level in this regard, given that neighboring countries typically face similar challenges that are better addressed jointly. He highlighted the special context of uncertainty and instability in the Arab region and the well-founded preoccupations of some Arab countries with conflict resolution, peace and security issues.

20. Mr. Khouri highlighted that the Arab Region will not have to start from scratch in the area of accountability and concluded with the need to learn lessons from a variety of review and assessment mechanisms, which have been conducted by Arab countries on environment, trade, investment and human rights, as presented and analyzed by the background paper prepared for this meeting. He made reference to the approach proposed in the paper to follow a staged process in establishing a regional accountability mechanism that builds on existing tools and platforms.

21. *Mr. Adel Abdellatif*, Chief, Regional Programme Division, UNDP Regional Bureau for Arab States, informed participants about key messages that came out of the national consultations on the post-2015 development agenda with government representatives and major groups. One of these messages is the need for greater economic and social participation by different groups in society, especially women and youth. He noted that figures given by Arab countries hide much of the sub-regional inequalities and inequalities between different social groups. A good accountability framework can only be built on reliable data that discern these inequalities.

22. Mr. Abdellatif stressed that given the rising instability in many Arab countries, a key priority should be on maintaining gains achieved so far and building resilience to shocks. He stressed on the need to consider issues of social justice, good governance and rule of law when conceiving national accountability frameworks. He called for the development of a regional monitoring and accountability framework with the participation of LAS and the UN system. With no doubt, such a mechanism would require capacity building on statistics, monitoring and evaluation to enable countries to develop national progress reports that are credible and accurate.

23. Ms. *Melanie Hutchinson*, Programme Officer, UNEP, highlighted the consensus of the open working group regarding the 17 proposed goals, considering it as an achievement that lays the ground for an accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda. The approach adopted by UNEP to support the full integration of the three pillars of sustainable development was agreed to in previous Arab regional consultations and was reiterated during the UNEP governing council meeting organized recently. Ms. Hutchinson considered that an accountability framework should be based on reliable data and that capacity building is needed in the region for better monitoring and reporting on sustainable development.

B. SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM SELECTED ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISMS

1. *Introducing accountability within the post-2015 development agenda*

24. Ms. *Reem Nejdawi*, Chief of the Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division in ESCWA, introduced accountability in the context of negotiations of the post-2015 development agenda, the SDGs formulation processes at global and regional levels, and previous experiences with accountability mechanisms. The report of the High-level Panel of Eminent Persons on the post-2015 development agenda considered mutual accountability as a keystone of the new global partnership and a transformative shift for shaping effective institutions at all levels. Furthermore, goal 16 as approved recently by the open working group on SDGs called for effective and accountable institutions. Ms. Nejdawi underlined that the High Level Political Forum was established in 2013 to undertake a number of tasks, including regular reviews, starting in 2016, on the follow-up and implementation of sustainable development commitments and objectives. This role was reaffirmed recently in the Ministerial Declaration of the 2nd HLPF meeting in July 2014.

25. She noted that an accountability mechanism for the Arab region should build on existing platforms within ESCWA, LAS and the UN system, and with the participation of governments, the private sector and civil society. Potential platforms include the specialized councils of LAS, the Arab Sustainable Development Forum, the Ministerial Session of ESCWA, the Economic and Social Council and the Economic and Social Summit of LAS.

26. The accountability framework for the post-2015 development agenda should be multilayered and inclusive in order to have an effective new partnership for development. Ms. Nejdawi pointed that some questions about the scope of accountability, its characteristics, and the implementation of the principle of common but differentiated responsibility remained actually without answers at this stage.

27. At the national level, accountability requires good governance, dedicated regional and global frameworks for progress assessments and evaluation and a participatory process including government, civil society, local authorities, parliament and the private sector. Accountability is also challenging since it needs effective institutions, strong political and societal will, rule of law, capacity building and means of implementation. However, good data and information systems are determinants for accountability and need to follow the principles of transparency and accessibility.

28. Ms. Nejdawi gave a brief typology of existing review mechanisms. One category aims to improve policy design in the areas of environment, trade, investment and sustainable development. A second category of tools is closely linked to means of implementation of sustainable development including reviews of aid effectiveness, complaint mechanisms of international financial institutions for citizen driven accountability, and trade-related reviews. A third category aims to assess achievements and monitor progress, such as the Annual Ministerial Review of MDGs and other internationally-agreed goals, and the Universal Periodic Review of human rights. Finally, the African Peer Review Mechanism, as a comprehensive and periodic mechanism at the regional level, is inspiring for other regions and provides many lessons to learn from.

2. *The Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC*

29. *Mr. Navid Hanif*, Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, explained the purpose behind the regional consultations on accountability, stressing on their importance in informing the Secretary-General's synthesis report as to why accountability is needed now, who is being held accountable and what does it mean for the different regions. He pointed out that accountability certainly goes beyond monitoring and review, as it involves behavioral changes and achieving results. A culture of accountability needs to be created to ensure that post-2015 voluntary commitments are fulfilled. In addition, a web of accountability linking all regional mechanisms, and a circle of accountability constituting a feedback loop at all levels, but particularly at the global level, are also needed.

30. He referred to the Annual Ministerial Review of MDGs and other internationally-agreed development goals, conducted under the ECOSOC since 2007, and which were meant to review implementation at all levels and then make recommendations for further action. The AMR draws on a combination of thematic assessments, global and regional reviews, and national voluntary presentations (NVPs). The AMR experience provides a wealth of experience from which valuable lessons for the way forward can be drawn. Indeed, since 2005, seventy eight NVPs have been made, including seven from five Arab countries. Some of the lessons learned from these experiences relate to the challenge of data comparability; the need for enhanced follow-up on policy recommendations; the potential for stronger engagement of peer reviewers; and a wider participation of stakeholders in this process.

31. Mr. Hanif concluded that to have an adequate accountability framework of the post-2015, reviews should remain voluntary, guided by national leadership to build data and monitoring capacity, and ensure comparability of indicators across countries. A consistent and multilayered framework from the national, to the regional and feeding into the global level is needed, with each level being assigned different and complementary tasks. We also need to learn by doing, hence the need to strengthen feedback mechanisms through the circle of accountability referred to above.

3. *The Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights*

32. *Mr. Dimiter Chalev*, Representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Chief of the OHCHR Office in Tunisia, affirmed that economic growth alone is not sufficient to increase welfare, and that inequality, discrimination and the lack of social justice need to be addressed. He highlighted the importance of fulfilling human rights obligations under international conventions and agreements, pointing to the interdependence between civil, political, economic and social rights. The Universal Periodic Review was initiated by the United Nations Human Rights Council in 2008 and covers a wide range of conventions and agreements, among them, the 1966 covenant on civil and political rights, the covenant on economic, social and cultural rights, the UN convention on disability, the UN convention on children, CEDAW and others.

33. As part of the two mandatory review cycles for 2008-2012 and 2012-2016, Arab countries underwent at least one review of their binding commitments under international law, as well as their non binding commitments under soft law such as UN guidelines on business conduct. Moreover, improvements in the fulfillment of human rights were imposed as conditionalities by donors and development partners. The key weaknesses in some Arab countries include the absence of a systematic measurement of progress of economic and social rights, lack of coordination between parliamentarians and human rights institutions, and lack of transparency. Focusing on the Tunisian experience, Mr. Chalev referred to the 113 recommendations received over two reviews, of which Tunisia accepted 110. Tunisia is currently preparing a mid-term review of progress on the implementation of these recommendations. While not compulsory, mid-term progress reviews are encouraged as a good practice.

34. In order to improve the practices of Arab countries under the Universal Periodic Review, Mr. Chalev stressed on the need to build strong linkages between development planning systems and human rights frameworks, create necessary conditions for an active engagement of civil society, disclose and make information available on national budgets, strengthen national statistics institutions, and establish disaggregated data on human rights indicators, especially on economic and social rights.

4. *The African Peer Review Mechanism*

35. *Mr. Talaat Abdel-Malek*, ESCWA consultant, presented the experience of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). The mechanism aims to promote policies that lead to political stability, sustainable development, and regional and sub-regional economic integration among members. APRM membership is voluntary and open to all African Union (AU) members, and takes the form of a memorandum of understanding. Reviews cover four themes: political governance, economic governance, corporate governance, and socio-economic development. A base review is conducted within 18 months following membership, and periodic reviews follow after 2-4 years.

36. The APRM has three main bodies to manage the process: An APR Forum, consisting of participating AU Heads of States and Governments that have acceded to the APRM; a Panel of Eminent Persons exercising oversight to ensure independence, professionalism and credibility of the process and oversee the selection and appointment of review teams; and the APRM secretariat to provide technical, coordinating and administrative support. The review process involves participation of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government as well as the private sector, civil society and the media.

37. Mr. Abdel-Malek pointed out that the APRM is the most comprehensive peer review mechanism to-date. It has served as an early warning system to avert crises and their ripple effects on neighboring countries, and has also helped in institutionalizing a culture of accountability. However, a number of challenges and shortcomings emerged during implementation, including: Means of mobilizing citizen participation; Ensuring that countries reviewed appropriately acknowledge APRM reports and recommendations and make these readily available to the public; Sustaining the process, preventing fatigue and bureaucratization, and maintaining momentum; Need to revisit existing structures to deal with these challenges and revise the self-assessment and questionnaire tools, which were becoming cumbersome and repetitive.

Summary of discussions

38. The ensuing discussions raised the following points:

(a) Need for a clear and accurate definition of accountability in order to share the same understanding of the concept and its implications;

(b) The separation of powers principle is a prerequisite of accountability as it guarantees that the executive power is accountable to taxpayers through parliamentarians who represent them;

(c) Key accountability pillars include: the liability of development actors to their actions; disclosure and access to information; and answerability and dialogue between different stakeholders;

(d) Need to improve national development programmes through strong planning systems that integrate the SDGs. In addition, incentives need to be provided to improve accountability at the national level and accelerate the implementation of SDGs and other internationally agreed goals. In this respect, lessons learned from the experience of the MDGs must be taken into consideration;

(e) An independent monitoring system and a reliable reporting system are both needed for accountability, notably for issues such as children rights;

(f) Accountability essentially starts at the national level, and should be based on the rule of law and effective institutions;

(g) Need to reform the regional institutional framework for sustainable development, including an expansion of the mandate of the Joint Committee on Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR) to address sustainable development issues in an integrated way.

C. SESSION 2: REVIEW MECHANISMS RELATED TO THE MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

1. *Mutual accountability for aid effectiveness*

39. Mr. Talaat Abdel-Malek highlighted the OECD experience in addressing mutual accountability as one of five principles for aid effectiveness, along with ownership, alignment, harmonization and management for results. Initially, mutual accountability was understood to be between governments of recipient countries and donor countries, while the concept has now changed to inclusive accountability. This acknowledges that governments are not the only development actor at the national level, and that other actors including civil society, parliamentarians, research institutions, and citizen-driven organizations are all partners in the development process. Strengthening governance at the national level is critical for accountability, since data comes from national institutions, and as such, OECD focused on strengthening data on mutual accountability.

40. Mr. Abdel-Malek noted that the definition of accountability is not problematic, as it is generally an agreed concept. However, implementation is the key problem because strong political will is needed as well as sufficient incentives for monitoring the change under non binding commitments. Designing an accountability mechanism is the government's responsibility. The first step should be getting all relevant stakeholders around the table to discuss the accountability framework in order to ensure ownership by all stakeholders. The objective of this exercise is to convince all stakeholders that official development assistance cannot have the desired impact unless incentives for change and positive behavior are provided.

41. With respect to the question of who are the stakeholders for mutual accountability, Mr. Abdel-Malek pointed out that civil society needs to be granted equal rights as a development partner; however the relationship of civil society with government is often controversial, and the question remains as to whom civil society should be accountable.

2. *Citizen-driven accountability mechanisms*

42. Ms. Anoush Begoyan Schliesing, Complaint Mechanism Officer, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) informed participants about the origin, nature and principles of citizen-driven independent accountability mechanisms by international financial institutions. She focused on the Project Complaint Mechanism (PCM), considered as one pillar of EBRD's governance policy, along with Environmental and Social Policy (ESP) and Public Information Policy (PIP). She stressed on the need to raise awareness about the rules and procedures of the new EBRD complaint mechanism to ensure that it is effectively used by relevant stakeholders in the Arab region.

43. Ms. Schliesing indicated that the complaint mechanism is designed to be a citizen-driven independent accountability mechanism, and aims to impose policy safeguards to ensure that economic, cultural and social rights are protected. The complaint mechanism established within EBRD in 2003, and reformed twice in 2010 and 2014, provides voice to individuals who might be negatively affected by EBRD investments to allow them to signal any lack of effectiveness or compliance with the rules and safeguards of the bank. The mechanism involves independent experts responsible for compliance reviews.

44. Ms. Schliesing concluded that accountability mechanisms are likely to play an increasing role in the future as citizens become more informed about their economic and social rights, and better

organized in responding to any wrongdoing. International financial institutions cannot ignore this trend and need to adopt complaint mechanisms for citizen-driven accountability to regain the trust of their clients and avoid transgression of social and environmental rights.

3. Oman's experience with trade policy review

45. Ms. Hilda Al-Hinai, Director of the Oman World Trade Organization Office, presented the experience of Oman in undertaking trade policy reviews under the WTO in 2008 and more recently in 2014. She highlighted the importance of these exercises in shedding light on positive aspects while giving the opportunity to address shortcomings and identifying technical assistance needs. In the case of Oman, the review allowed the government to focus on certain deficiencies in existing policies related to customs, reporting, coordination on pricing in the region, diversification beyond the oil sector, and foreign labor-force issues.

46. Ms. Al-Hinai noted that some countries are apprehensive to do trade policy reviews because they do not want to be compared to other countries in the region, whether they think they are more developed, or lacking in some areas. Some countries also consider trade policy reviews as a public relations exercise that help to demonstrate that the country has a good investment environment. She concluded with the need for coherence between trade reviews and other types of reviews such as environment and investment.

4. Trade sustainability impact assessments

47. Mr. Mohamed Chemingui, Chief, Regional Integration Section, Economic Development and Globalization Division at ESCWA, clarified that trade sustainability impact assessments (TSIA) aim to identify the economic, social and environmental impacts of trade liberalization. Previously, TSIA were limited to economic aspects, while now social and environmental aspects have become at the core of comprehensive sustainability assessments of free trade agreements. As an example, he informed the participants that the European Union assessed, through the services of the consulting company Ecorys, the trade sustainability impact of four deep and comprehensive free trade agreements (DCFTAs) with selected Arab countries namely: Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Egypt.

48. Mr. Chemingui emphasized the need to have parallel and independent evaluations, confirming that ESCWA has the technical capacity to evaluate the expected impacts of trade agreements on economic development (GDP), social development (employment, poverty), and environmental protection (CO₂ is currently the focus). ESCWA is proposing to look at the expected impacts of these DCFTAs on the productivity of the agricultural sector and on public health. Indicators for measuring impact, whether of economic, social or environmental nature, need to be common for the whole region to make the results of those assessments helpful to different Arab countries. Reports need to support informed trade policy design and decision making.

49. In conclusion, Mr. Chemingui stressed that as Arab countries embark on trade agreements such as those being negotiated between the Gulf Cooperation Council and the EU, countries participating in related negotiations need to have a similar level of knowledge and detailed understanding of the issues based on proper evaluation to be able to negotiate on solid footing.

Summary of discussions

50. The ensuing discussions raised the following points:

(a) The need for a minimum level of consensus on the basic elements of an accountability framework, the scope and related institutions, and the need to build a culture of evaluation to improve planning systems;

(b) The importance of building the capacity of CSOs to enable them to play an active role in supporting accountability at the national level, contribute to a new culture of evaluation and new behaviors, and to have the legitimacy and ability to deal with accountability issues;

(c) The key role of parliamentarians in ensuring national level accountability;

(d) The importance of improving performance and the rate of achievement of sustainable development by developing incentives for accountability;

(e) Mutual accountability and aid effectiveness as basic principles and the importance of holding donor countries accountable in this regard;

(f) Regarding trade agreements, since commitments become binding after signature, impact assessments must be conducted prior to signature, preferably with the involvement of civil society, and if the assessment shows negative impacts then the agreement should be blocked.

D. SESSION 3: AN ARAB ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM ANCHORED AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL
AND FEEDING INTO THE GLOBAL LEVEL

1. Proposal for a regional accountability mechanism for the Arab region

51. Mr. Taalat Abdel-Malek pointed that the concept of accountability has evolved into one where all key stakeholders and partners in development are held accountable to each other for their actions. He noted that each stakeholder, including governments, parliaments, civil society, private sector, and academic/research organizations, can contribute according to its mandate and comparative advantage. The absence or weakness of accountability leads to: waste of resources; spread of corruption; consistent failure to deliver on development goals; more inequality and social injustice; greater citizen dissatisfaction; breeding grounds for popular uprisings.

52. Mr. Abdel-Malek stressed that national accountability is at the core of regional and international accountability frameworks. He highlighted the importance of the regional level in facilitating accountability through exchange of experiences and peer reviews, ensuring linkages with the global level, and providing support to national mechanisms.

53. The proposal put forward is based on five guiding principles: Simplicity; focus on priority issues, in light of country review findings; selectivity versus comprehensiveness; adjustability of time frame and sequence, based on progress made; and finally, ongoing consultations with member states and stakeholders. It is proposed to establish the mechanism in two phases. Phase one includes 4-5 year pilot period to carry out selected tasks while phase two is over the longer term and aims to consolidate and expand tasks in light of lessons learned and member states' feedback. Collaboration with member states and exchange of experiences and information are crucial. Seven key activities for phase one could include the following: sustainability performance reviews and agreement on action plans; support to national accountability mechanisms; launching of pilot peer reviews; mid-term review of progress, which will also help to determine if the last two tasks are feasible and would be supported by strong political commitment; workshop to upgrade monitoring and evaluation skills and knowledge; initiate work on a regional sustainability index; and development of a regional accounting system on national sustainable development strategies.

54. Phase two involves a consolidation of experiences and an expansion of scope. It is based on a high-level review of progress of phase one and an approval of the strategic sustainable development issues to be pursued in phase two. A technical platform to work out an action plan based on such approval is needed. The plan includes actions to: regularize peer reviews and follow-up (e.g. every 2 or 4 years); develop the regional sustainability index and publish its results; finalize the regional sustainability accounting system; support more active engagement of member states in regional and international development cooperation; prepare, on behalf of member states, progress reports for HLPF under ECOSOC and other bodies; strengthen and expand ongoing links with regional and

international development cooperation fora and engage them in relevant tasks; conduct periodic and independent progress reviews and adjust plans accordingly.

55. Key stakeholders will play different roles. Member states remain the primary actors, while ESCWA is best placed to play a facilitating role (plan, coordinate, support, monitor, develop bridges with other institutions). Political platforms including LAS and others should develop consensus and feedback, while UN agencies and other international bodies are important sources of know-how and experience sharing.

2. *Interventions by lead discussants*

56. Ms. Melanie Hutchinson emphasized that accountability frameworks related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs) exist, and UNEP's review of these experiences may provide a useful benchmark. Indeed, there are many lessons to be learned from the successes and failures of MEAs. While there are over 500 agreements, only 4 of them have showed real success due to factors such as: support of the scientific community; having a clear idea about targets and solutions; having specific measures of progress and achievement; and having embedded processes for monitoring, follow-up and accountability.

57. National reporting and communications on MEAs are typically prepared to evaluate compliance and progress on commitments. However, reporting fatigue is a problem and UNEP is currently considering how to cluster reporting by identifying gaps, areas of under-achievement, and capacity-building needs in terms of data collection, monitoring and reporting.

58. Ms. Hutchinson referred to the existing framework of sustainable development indicators for the Arab region prepared under LAS, and which include social, environmental and economic indicators developed especially for the region. This provides an important experience to study, notably in terms of data requirements and the need to avoid placing a heavy burden on countries to monitoring all these indicators.

59. *Mr. Youssef Chaitani*, Chief, Conflict, Occupation and Development Section, Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Division at ESCWA, started his intervention by referring to the SDG proposal, which acknowledges that governance, peace and security are crucial for sustainable development (Goal 16). He highlighted the high incidence of conflicts which prevails in the Arab region, with 41% of Arab countries having been through conflict over the past 5 years. The impact of these conflicts on development outcomes is severe: Reduction of GDP per capita by an average of 2% per year, losses that need to be recouped over a period of 5-15 years, with some of these losses being impossible to recover from. The post-2015 agenda addresses a set of development issues that are jeopardized by conflict, such as access to water and the redirection of resources to security and military sector (military expenditure in the region is higher than any other region, equaling 1.5% of GDP).

60. The issue of displaced people and refugees is very severe in the region and may lead to further conflicts in the future. For example, 500,000 Palestinians were displaced in a period of two months during the recent crisis in Gaza. With the lack of accountability for Israel's actions, it will take many years to replace destroyed housing units. Mr. Chaitani informed participants that ESCWA is establishing a database and a methodology for periodic review of the impact of conflict on development through evidence-based analysis.

61. *Mr. Ziad Abdul Samad*, Executive Director, Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), stressed about the need first to understand why the region was unable to achieve the MDGs. He referred to the global debate regarding Goal 16 of the SDGs, which lowered its ceiling from "achieving peaceful societies" to "promoting peaceful societies". In addition, the target related to the rule of law was also lowered to "access to justice", which he believes is regrettable. On the other

hand, he felt that the apparent agreement to have means of implementation specified under each goal was a positive step.

62. Regarding accountability, Mr. Abdul Samad highlighted the need to disclose information and ensure adequate access of citizen to this information. Liability is also a key issue. Furthermore, human rights under international conventions and agreements should form the basis of accountability including the international declaration on the right to development. International cooperation is needed to achieve goal 16, and mutual accountability is needed if governments are to be held accountable for not achieving the goals. The developed world is impeding the development of solutions regarding climate change, fair trade and other issues. This leads us to question the role of the developing world in key global decision making bodies.

63. Mr. Abdul Samad referred to three levels of accountability that are equally important. At the national level, the separation of powers between legislative, executive and judicial is key for ensuring accountability. In addition, there is a need to monitor policies and the budget process. At the regional level, there is a need to enhance the role of LAS, notably the Economic and Social Summits. At the international level, various tools and means are needed to hold the private sector accountable. Different ideas can also be tabled that can lead to more balanced positions and decisions about the accountability of civil society. He noted that it was unfortunate that negotiations of the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda took place without the participation of civil society.

64. *Mr. Sering Falu Njie*, Deputy Director, Policy, UN Millennium Campaign, emphasized that parliamentarians were a key constituent that is being neglected in the on-going consultations on accountability for the post-2015 development agenda. As representatives of the people and legislators, they play a key role in resource allocation and oversight, and are well-placed to take accountability forward. In democratic systems, citizens have the right to hold their governments accountable. In the context of the post-2015, it is challenging to have accountability for a non-binding agenda, and it becomes an issue of moral obligation.

65. Mr. Njie stressed on the different forms of accountability, vertical and horizontal, and its core constituents – responsibility, answerability, enforceability and negative and positive incentives. Three building blocks for accountability should be addressed. The first relates to measuring progress and sharing and disseminating information, while the second relates to means of ensuring data reliability and capacity-building to handle big data. The third building block relates to taking action and engaging in a process of change and reform by creating spaces for public debate and platforms for citizen-state dialogue and advocacy.

66. Accountability may be looked at from both the supply and demand sides. From the supply side, issues of attitudes, capacities, willingness and ability of the state to open up are important, in addition to the creation of an enabling environment of democracy and rule of law. From the demand side, the attitudes and capacities of citizens and civil society actors, and their willingness and ability to actively seek government accountability can be a major obstacle in contexts where civil society is weak. Accountability needs to be seen as a moral obligation to citizens, and the proposed framework must place equal emphasis on data, communication, and reform.

Summary of discussions

67. The following issues were raised during the discussions:

- (a) The importance of mainstreaming sustainable development goals within national planning systems and learning from the experience of the MDGs;
- (b) The potential role of LAS as the home for a regional accountability mechanism;
- (c) The key role of ESCWA within an accountability framework for the SDGs and other agreed development goals. In this regard, ESCWA's positive experience working with member countries on

the measurement and assessment of the MDGs, as in the case of Sudan for example, provides a good basis;

(d) Accountability is a costly process, as there are costs for data collection, monitoring and follow-up. Where should the budget for accountability come from? Participants cautioned that accountability could be a double-edged weapon that may be misused;

(e) Local authorities, municipalities and the participation of the public as important elements of accountability;

(f) Some participants questioned the seriousness of countries in the region towards sustainable development, or whether it is being used only as a title to access funding opportunities, as current economic models pursued in the region are not really sustainable;

(g) Annual budget review as an entry point for parliaments to hold governments accountable and monitor programme implementation;

(h) The difficulty of having accountability frameworks in countries undergoing conflict, given the absence of development plans in these countries;

(i) The need to ensure impartiality of reports and avoid conflicts of interest by having different entities undertaking the monitoring, evaluation and follow-up.

E. SESSION 4: TOWARDS A SUSTAINABILITY PERFORMANCE REVIEW FOR THE ARAB COUNTRIES

1. *Experience of the Joint Committee of Environment and Development of LAS*

68. Mr. Djamel Eddine Djaballah, Director of Environment, Housing, Water Resources and Sustainable Development at LAS, gave a brief history of the Joint Committee of Environment and Development in the Arab Region (JCEDAR), which was established after the 1st Rio conference in 1992. JCEDAR provided an overarching framework for sustainable development in the region, including the issuance of a number of thematic declarations such as the Abu Dhabi declaration on energy, and played a key role in regional preparations for the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002 and the subsequent launching of the Sustainable Development Initiative in the Arab Region adopted at the Tunis Summit in 2004. JCEDAR also facilitated the progressive engagement of civil society in different regional processes, including in the executive plan for the implementation of the initiative, which also included programmes by relevant regional and UN organizations.

69. Mr. Djaballah informed the participants that JCEDAR's name will possibly change to "environment and sustainable development" to emphasize the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and strengthen the environmental one. Some crucial issues should be discussed under this committee and be at the core of its future mandate, including the SDG goal on climate change and the issue of green economy financing.

2. *Environmental Policy Review of European Countries in Transition*

70. According to Ms. Ivonne Higuero, Chief of Operational Activities and Review Section, Environment Division at the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), an Environmental Performance Review (EPR) takes account of broader sustainable development issues but is centered mainly on environmental issues. The objectives of EPRs are the following: 1) Assist countries to improve environmental management; 2) Promote exchange of information on environmental policies; 3) Help integrate environmental policies into sector-specific economic policies e.g. agriculture, transport, energy; 5) Promote greater accountability to other countries and to the public at the national level; 6) Strengthen cooperation with the international community. On this last point, EPR may influence ODA as donors use EPR information to assess recipient performance.

71. OECD has carried out EPRs since 1991, while UNECE started in 1993 and carries out reviews in non-OECD countries only (20 countries in total, mainly in Eastern Europe). UNECE cooperated with ECA in undertaking the EPR of Morocco. To avoid duplication, sister UN agencies can participate in review missions.

72. Ms. Higuero noted that EPRs are conducted on voluntary basis following receipt of a country request. The main focus areas for the third cycle are: Environmental, legal and policy making frameworks, and institutions and legislations in place; Conformance to multilateral environmental agreements and other European agreements; Economic instruments and environmental expenditure such as taxation, incentives to promote environmental management, and green economy investments. Countries agree to the EPR's terms of reference and decide what sectors they want to cover.

73. EPRs involve in-depth desk study and discussions with stakeholders. To maintain the independence of the exercise, UNECE identifies the parties that need to be involved (including line ministries and civil society) and meets with them without the presence of government representative. EPRs assess the level of public participation and the level of stakeholder engagement in policy development. A report is prepared that highlights areas of success, but also looks at gaps and challenges and identifies a set of focused recommendations. The report is then subjected to an expert review including comments by the concerned Government itself, but also by peer reviewers from states members of the Committee on Environmental Policy, before the report is finally adopted. Ms. Higuero concluded by highlighting the importance of undertaking an EPR as it demonstrates accountability, supports implementation, and helps donors to assess aid effectiveness.

3. Experience of Morocco with Environmental Policy Review

74. *Mr. Mohammed Maktit*, Head of the Division of Planification and Prospective at the Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment of Morocco presented his national EPR experience, which was undertaken in the context of the adoption of a new constitution in Morocco. The EPR focused on a number of issues, including environmental protection mechanisms and observatories, the provision of water and energy services in rural areas, reforms in the transportation sector, and financing mechanisms such as the National Fund for Environment and the National Fund for Industrial Pollution. Moreover, the Ministry of Environment requested UNECE to look at the extent to which national policies respond to and meet international standards.

75. The EPR report included sixty recommendations on how to improve performance and develop legal mechanisms related to environment, education, health, agriculture and industry. Good governance and the need for information system on the environment were also recommended by the EPR. This is currently being addressed by the Ministry of Environment through the national strategy on sustainable development which will be presented at a conference in the coming months.

Summary of discussions

76. The following issues were raised during the discussions:

(a) Accountability must be placed in a wider framework for enhancing performance through participatory processes;

(b) Participants called on ESCWA to launch an EPR initiative in cooperation with UNECE, to allow the Arab region to benefit from the European experience in this regard;

(c) Participants stressed on the need to come up with practical recommendations that support implementation by countries, staying away from theory or unrealistic considerations of an academic nature;

(d) Participants re-iterated regional priorities for post-2015, emphasizing the need to diversify economic activities and reduce reliance on a limited set of goods; enhance productivity and change

the productive basis of national economies; enhance employment creation for men and women; provide water on a sustainable basis; improve health care services; and move to a knowledge based economy;

(e) Accountability within countries is established by clearly defined institutions and mechanisms; This national framework needs to be enhanced through capacity building, and there are successful experiences that can be built upon;

(f) At the national level, the understanding of sustainable development has not reached an advanced stage, and priorities may differ between countries;

(g) The Arab Strategic Framework on Sustainable Development is a good step but it requires an executive plan.

F. SESSION 5: REPORTING ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT BY DEVELOPMENT ACTORS,
INCLUDING ENTERPRISES

1. *The Global Sustainable Development Report*

77. Mr. Nikhil Seth, Director, Division for Sustainable Development at UNDESA, informed the participants that the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) was mandated by Rio+20 as an instrument for the new High Level Political Forum. GSDR improves the science-policy interface for evidence-based policies, and brings results from the national and regional levels for discussion at the global level within HLPF. The report is not envisaged to be a tool for monitoring and accountability per se, although it can help in this regard, and other instruments will probably be used for monitoring and reporting on sustainable development.

78. Mr. Seth noted that several options for scope and methodology of the report were reviewed by stakeholders at multiple levels. The Prototype edition was scientifically-focused, and highlights emerging issues, progress, future pathways and investment needs to ensure continued progress. The GSDR process will have an important role in the future as many countries (developed and developing) lack the capacity to undertake a real integrated assessment of the science-policy interface.

79. On the added value of the Report, Mr. Seth indicated that it will provide easy access for decision makers to findings of many scientific assessments. Indeed, it is an “assessment of assessments” that highlights synergies and trade-offs between policy action and impacts on implementation and progress. The target audience includes policy makers, senior officials and a wide range of stakeholders. GSDR will focus on issues identified in the Rio+20 outcome document and the post-2015 development agenda. Regarding geographic scope, it will cover the five UN regions, with a focus on countries with special situations (least developed countries, small island developing countries, and landlocked countries). It is expected to issue the report once every four years as a means of scientifically monitoring and evaluating in an integrated approach whether the world is really on a path to sustainable development.

2. *The Arab Sustainable Development Report*

80. Ms. Monia Braham, Economic Affairs Officer, Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division at ESCWA, and Mr. Cameron Allen, ESCWA Consultant, gave an overview of the planned Arab Sustainable Development Report (ASDR). ASDR is part of ESCWA’s Rio+20 follow-up programme and is currently under preparation for discussion during the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development in April 2015. Benefitting from the approach used for the global report, the ASDR will incorporate elements from national and regional levels. Importance will be given to national contributions to the report that are being prepared through a group of national focal points.

81. The ASDR objectives are the following: 1) Enhance the science-policy interface and improve access to information; 2) Review progress in Arab region towards sustainable development across priority thematic issues; 3) Assess gaps and opportunities for enabling means of implementation in the region; 4) Provide regional perspectives on the SDGs and post-2015 development agenda. The ASDR has the potential to provide a tool for monitoring and accountability in the Arab Region.

82. ESCWA will also engage and collaborate with regional stakeholders and UN system organizations in the preparation of issues briefs around the 17 proposed SDGs, and undertake an analysis of sustainable development indicators and data availability. Stocktaking reports at the national level will review success stories, gaps and capacity building opportunities within the region. The report will have four chapters: Sustainable development landscape in the region; Status and progress on sustainable development in the Arab region; Enabling conditions and means of implementation; Integrated approaches for achieving the SDGs such as nexus and green economy approaches.

3. The need for an accounting system for SDGs

83. *Mr. Tommaso Diegoli*, Project Manager, Sustainable Development Solutions Network-Mediterranean (MED Solutions), informed participants that the SDSN operates under the auspices of the UN Secretary-General and engages scientists, engineers, business and civil society leaders, and development practitioners for evidence-based problem solving. It promotes solution initiatives that demonstrate the potential of technical and business innovation to support sustainable development in its three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental. Interactions between the public sector, business and other stakeholders are among the concerns of SDSN.

84. *Mr. Diegoli* stressed that all stakeholders must commit to good governance, including transparency, accountability, access to information, participation, ending tax and secrecy havens, and stamping out corruption. The SDSN Report to the Secretary-General outlines the challenges of sustainable development and stresses the importance of measuring policy results against specific targets. The SDSN Indicators Report defines indicators as report cards to measure progress towards achieving a target and ensuring good management and accountability of governments and other stakeholders to achieve SDGs.

85. *Mr. Diegoli* concluded by highlighting the proposed goal 17, which aims to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development. He made reference in particular to the importance provided to the targets on data, monitoring and accountability, which relate to the availability of high-quality, timely and reliable disaggregated data, and the development of measurements of progress on sustainable development that complement GDP.

4. Role of civil society for the promotion of the reporting on sustainable development by enterprises

86. *Mr. Sami Marrouki*, President of the Corporate Social Responsibility Institute of Tunisia (IRSET), introduced CSR as a concept whereby companies contribute voluntarily to a better society and a cleaner environment through their business activities and social investments. Over the past years, an increasing number of companies worldwide developed CSR strategies in response to pressures from customers and investors. CSR is not limited to compliance to human right standards, labor and social security arrangements, as it also includes efforts to mitigate climate change, promote the sustainable management of natural resources and protect consumers.

87. The Rio+20 outcome document “the future we want” emphasized the importance of CSR under internationally recognized standards including the United Nations Global Compact, and called for the promotion of enterprise reporting on sustainable development. The Group of Friends of Paragraph 47 was created under the initiative of France, Denmark, Brazil and South Africa.

88. Mr. Marrouki presented IRSET as a think-act tank institute that promotes reporting by national and multinational enterprises under the UN Global Compact, as a means of encouraging businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies, and to report on their implementation. The UN Global Compact is based on ten principles in the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. Under the Compact, companies are brought together with UN agencies, labour groups and civil society, whereas cities can also join through the Cities Programme.

89. Within the context of the negotiation of the post-2015 development agenda, Mr. Marrouki stressed the need to evaluate the achievements of enterprises towards the MDGs and ensure a high level of commitment by enterprises for the SDGs. He concluded his intervention by indicating that other international standards are also available and could be considered as a reference for CSR policies and reporting on sustainable development. Moreover, a national standard on governance and CSR is under development at the initiative of Tunisian public authorities and representatives from civil society, private sector and academic institutions. The promotion of CSR at the national level needs suitable strategic frameworks and national information platforms.

5. National CSR information platforms and accountability of the private sector

90. Mr. Francoix Fatoux, General Delegate, Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility, introduced ORSE as a French network aimed at researching and promoting CSR and socially responsible investment (SRI). Founded in June 2000, it is a non-profit organization working with a diverse group of stakeholders composed of businesses, trade unions, professional organizations, academics and nongovernmental organizations, all committed to SRI and CSR. ORSE develops tools and instruments to help members create and implement CSR policy, fosters the exchange of experiences and best practices between members and facilitates the establishment of partnerships between concerned actors and networks in France and Europe.

91. Mr. Fatoux emphasized the need for a strategic framework for CSR at the national level, noting that the experience of France and the European strategy on CSR offer lessons to be learned. He informed participants about ORSE's initiative to establish web-based information platforms for CSR in some Arab countries, including Algeria and Tunisia, and which constitute tools to measure and evaluate the commitment of enterprises to sustainable development and spread the culture of accountability within the private sector.

Summary of discussions

92. The following issues were raised during the discussions:

(a) The current role of stakeholders, including the private sector, in existing accountability mechanisms, and the nature of capacity building needs;

(b) The role of reporting on sustainable development within a multilayered accountability framework, and whether the Global Sustainable Development Report should be linked to regional reporting on sustainable development;

(c) The role of the Arab Sustainable Development Report in highlighting regional priorities, progress and challenges and supporting national accountability frameworks, and the role of regional institutions in this regional reporting process;

(d) The potential role of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network as a platform for interregional collaboration on developing disaggregated data, engaging with academia, civil society and governments and developing indicators to measure progress;

(e) The role of civil society organizations, such as NGOs, trade unions, local authorities, parliament, academia, in contributing to the national strategy for sustainable development and reporting on sustainable development at the national level;

(f) Accountability frameworks and implications in terms of progress measurement and monitoring needs, whether national or regional, will gain more clarity as the post-2015 development agenda (goals, targets and indicators) takes a final shape.

G. HIGH-LEVEL SESSION ON AN ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA

93. Ms. Reem Nejdawi introduced the session by summarizing key messages emanating from the discussions. Ms. Roula Majdalani moderated the high-level panel and addressed respectively the following questions to *Mr. Shaddad Attili*, Minister and Former Head of the Palestinian Water Authority, *Ms. Ghada Waly*, Minister of Social Justice, Egypt, *Mr. Omar Razzaz*, Chair of the Board of Trustees, King Abdullah II Fund for Development, Jordan and *Ms. Amina J. Mohamed*, UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning:

(a) Question 1: How can we conceive a rights-based approach to sustainable development under occupation? What about the accountability of occupation authorities towards the rights of the Palestinian people, including the right to development and the economic, social, cultural and environmental rights?

(b) Question 2: How can we integrate the SDGs into planning systems and what should be the role of statistics for accountability at the national level?

(c) Question 3: What are the adequate frameworks for governance and institutional accountability?

(d) Question 4: Why accountability for the post-2015 development agenda? Why now and what are the common views expressed during other regional consultations? What are the next steps after the publication of the Secretary-General report?

94. Mr. Shaddad Attili indicated that planning and development are impossible under occupation. Palestine cannot participate in the negotiations about accountability and the post-2015 development agenda, when no one is holding Israel accountable about preventing the development of Palestinian territories. He stressed that every time Palestine sets up a plan for development, implementation is impossible since Israel has other plans. As people under occupation, Palestinians need to have a state before being able to talk about SDGs and all requirements for social justice, economic, social and environmental rights and accountability.

95. Ms. Ghada Waly highlighted the importance of accountability in finding solutions as well as building trust between different development actors at the national level. At the regional level, the role of institutions needs to be reinforced, notably that of LAS and the economic and social summits which should constitute the framework for regional accountability, and promote the integration of the SDGs into national planning systems. At the international level, we need a framework to make all countries and regions accountable and we have to avoid duplication.

96. Mr. Omar Razzaz pointed out that where accountability at the national level is inadequate and trust between the different stakeholders is weak, accountability under regional and global frameworks could be perceived as an alternative solution to accountability at national level. However, the risk with regional peer review mechanisms is that it might end up being an exercise of mutual praise where everyone is happy, which will weaken the mechanism's credibility. As such, it is important to ensure that the peer review process is worthy the efforts.

97. Mr. Razzaz gave the example of Jordan, where the King set up a committee to evaluate the implementation of the privatization process. The objective was not to bring the process of privatization to an end but to establish a dialogue based on information and facts. Without disclosure and transparency, the process could not be successful and as such, the committee's report was

published. A lesson learned from this experience is that successful countries are not those do not make mistakes but those that actually learn from their mistakes. A peer review process allows countries to learn from positive and negative experiences, and can enhance accountability if a minimum number of conditions and requirements are available: the provision of good data, a sound assessment and an independent evaluation, the involvement of technocrats and experts, and the publication of results. An accountability model for the Arab region should be a positive one, focusing on learning rather than retaliation and sanctions.

98. Ms. Amina J. Mohamed drew the attention of participants to the fact that until very recently, a debate on accountability was unthinkable, and that the current consultations were the result of an amazing progress over the last two years. Development needs to be looked at in a different way, as being transformative of institutions and mandates, ambitious in mobilizing the means of implementation needed to achieve sustainable development (e.g. finance, technology and trade), and sometimes difficult to achieve such as under situations of conflict.

99. Indeed, the UN work focuses on three mutually reinforcing pillars: 1) human rights, 2) peace and security and 3) development. When both the human rights and peace and security pillars are struggling, the development pillar needs to adjust as it is not possible to achieve development and ensure that no one is left behind without human rights and security. On how accountability fits in the post-2015 development agenda, Ms. Mohamed stressed that without accountability at all levels, the ambition of the new agenda will be undermined. She highlighted the importance of maintaining the process on accountability open, inclusive and transparent, and to act on it as soon as possible if the agenda is to gain legitimacy.

100. The consultative meetings being organized by the Regional Commissions will help develop a common understanding on accountability and clarify expectations from the different regions. There is an obvious need to build upon existing mechanisms and to understand why some other tools did not deliver and what changes need to be made to improve the situation. The post-2015 agenda being universal, it is important to look at incentives and have positive accountability to improve opportunities for its implementation. Accountability will also fail to leave no one behind if the challenge of data and statistics is not addressed through a real data revolution.

101. Regarding next steps, Ms. Mohamed indicated that the Secretary-General's synthesis report will bring all the work to date into a single report to start the negotiations and that it will be ready for member states by November. Over the next nine months, there will also be important work on the financing, technology and trade tracks. Governments need to think about a financing strategy or otherwise the agenda will fail to do its job, like the MDGs, which will bring a blow to multilateralism.

Summary of discussions

102. The following issues were raised during the discussions:

(a) Participants re-emphasized that in addition to the difficulties raised by accountability as a concept, the Arab Region is currently suffering from challenging conditions and pressures such as refugees, forced displacement and the question remains on how to deliver on development domestically under such constraining conditions on planning systems;

(b) The dearth of resources is an obstacle to effective accountability, and the previous failure of some accountability mechanisms does not encourage the adoption of regional or national mechanisms;

(c) Mechanisms are needed at the global and regional levels to help put together indicators, measuring tools, means of data collection and capacity development. Otherwise, accountability seems to be too costly on national, regional and global levels;

(d) Member country representatives stressed the need for more clarity about accountability at the national level, especially regarding the establishment of an enabling environment through effective participation of different stakeholders, social justice, transparency, and integrity. Accountability requires learning and capacity building, and above all a strong political will.

III. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. DATE AND VENUE

103. The meeting was held at the Regency Hotel in Tunis on 15 and 16 September 2014.

B. AGENDA

104. The meeting was organized in five main sessions in addition to a final high-level panel. The detailed agenda is included in annex 1.

C. PARTICIPANTS

105. The consultation meeting was chaired by ESCWA and attended by around 85 participants representing Arab governments, regional organizations and partners, civil society, regional and international experts and academics, and other stakeholders (See list of participants in annex 2). Participants from 13 Arab states attended the meeting, namely (Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia and Yemen). This included high-level officials from a range of ministries, including ministries of foreign affairs, international cooperation, environment, planning, economy, energy, water, agriculture, mining, finance, solidarity, women, family, social development and the Saudi Human Rights Commission.

106. United Nations participation included most members of the Regional Coordination Mechanism in the Arab Region in addition to UN offices and agencies involved in post-2015: The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO); the World Food Programme (WFP), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP); the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP); the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS); the UN Women; the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF); the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR); the United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat); the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN); the UNDP/United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC); the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning; the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA); UNECE; UNECA; and the Regional Commissions New York Office (RCNYO).

107. Experts from international and regional organizations participated in the meeting and enriched its deliberations, including representatives of: the Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (ALECSO), the International Centre for Agricultural Research in the Dry Area (ICARDA), the Arab Towns Organization (ATO), the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), the Arab Thought Forum, the Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC), the Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting (GOIC), the International Trade Centre (Office for the Arab States), the Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility (ORSE) in France, and the Mediterranean Development Initiative (MDI). Major groups participation was also prominent and included representatives from: Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED), Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN), Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND), Environment Society of Oman (ESO), Water Research and Technologies Center (CERTE), Associative Network for Nature and Development in Tunisia (RANDET), Center of Arab Woman for Training and Research (CAWTAR) and African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS).

D. EVALUATION

108. An evaluation questionnaire was distributed to participants who provided their feedback as summarized in this section. Overall, the meeting was found to have gathered a good mix of participants and initiated a constructive, evidence-based debate with the contribution of multiple stakeholders, including various governments, UN, regional and international organizations and major group representatives. Some participants recommended the participation of major global NGOs who could have shared their expertise on the matter (e.g. transparency international). Participants considered the meeting as an excellent opportunity to network and exchange experiences.

109. Participants commended the meeting agenda and found the moderators well informed and engaging. They appreciated the focused discussion session around a concrete proposal on a regional accountability framework. However, some critical questions remained unanswered, such as the politicization of the accountability framework and the working definition of accountability. While the meeting objectives were clear, not all the sessions were aligned to these objectives and some participants discussed their views on the SDGs rather than focusing on accountability for the SDGs. Some suggested collaborating closely with ECA and the Africa union, as there are many countries and issues in common.

110. There was a call to allocate more time to discussions around the countries' experiences with existing mechanisms. Regarding the discussion paper, participants found that it was clear and comprehensive and constituted a good base for introducing the theme of the meeting but it remained general and needed to include further analysis on existing accountability mechanisms.

E. DOCUMENTS AND PRESENTATIONS

111. The meeting's documentation and presentations are available on the meeting webpage at: <http://www.escwa.un.org/information/meetingdetails.asp?referenceNUM=3510e>.

Annex I. Agenda

DAY 1: 15 September 2014	
8:30 – 9:00	Registration
9:00 – 9:30	<p>Opening remarks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • H.E. Ambassador Faeqa Saeed Al-Saleh, Assistant Secretary-General, Head of the Social Affairs Sector, League of Arab States • Mr. Nadim Khouri, Deputy Director of the Executive Secretary, ESCWA • Mr. Adel Abdellatif, Chief, Regional Programme Division, Regional Bureau for Arab States, UNDP • Ms. Melanie Hutchinson, Programme Officer, UNEP
9:30 – 11:15	<p>Session 1: Introduction and Lessons Learned from Selected Accountability Mechanisms</p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> Ms. Roula Majdalani, Director, Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA</p> <p><u>Presentation:</u> Introducing accountability within the post-2015 development agenda Ms. Reem Nejdawi, Chief, Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA</p> <p><u>Panelists:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Annual Ministerial Review of ECOSOC</i> Mr. Navid Hanif, Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs • <i>Economic and social human rights commitments under the Universal Periodic Review</i> Mr. Dimiter Chalev, Representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and Chief of the OHCHR Office in Tunisia • <i>The African Peer Review Mechanism</i> Mr. Talaat Abdel-Malek, ESCWA Consultant <p>Discussion</p>
11:15 – 11:30	Coffee break

<p>11:30 – 13:30</p>	<p>Session 2: Review mechanisms related to the means of implementation of sustainable development</p> <p>Moderator: Mr. Abdallah Al Dardari, Chief Economist and Director, Economic Development and Globalization Division, ESCWA</p> <p>Panelists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mutual accountability for aid effectiveness</i> Mr. Talaat Abdel-Malek, Former Co-chair of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Working Party on Aid Effectiveness and ESCWA Consultant • <i>Complaint Mechanism of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development</i> Ms. Anoush Begoyan Schliesing, Complaint Mechanism Officer, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, London • <i>Experience of Oman with trade policy review</i> Ms. Hilda Al-Hinai, Director, Oman WTO Office • <i>Trade sustainability impact assessments</i> Mr. Mohamed Chemingui, Chief, Regional Integration Section, Economic Development and Globalization Division, ESCWA <p>Discussion</p> <p>Summary of Sessions 1 and 2 by the Rapporteur</p>
<p>13:30 – 15:00</p>	<p>Lunch</p>
<p>15:00 – 17:30 <i>(including afternoon coffee break)</i></p>	<p>Session 3: An Arab Accountability Mechanism Anchored at the National Level and Feeding into the Global Level</p> <p>Moderator: Ms. Reem Nejdawi, Chief, Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA</p> <p>Presentation: Proposal for an Arab accountability mechanism for the post-2015 development agenda Mr. Talaat Abdel-Malek, ESCWA Consultant</p> <p>Discussants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Melanie Hutchinson, Programme Officer, UNEP • Mr. Youssef Chaitani, Conflict, Occupation and Development Section, Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Division, ESCWA • Mr. Ziad Abdul Samad, Executive Director, Arab NGO Network for Development • Mr. Sering Falu Njie, Deputy Director, Policy, UN Millennium Campaign <p>General discussion</p> <p>Summary of Session 3 by the Rapporteur</p>
	<p>Close of day 1</p>

Day 2: 16 September 2014	
9:00 – 11:00	<p>Session 4: Towards a Sustainability Performance Review for the Arab countries</p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> Ms. Mamia El-Benna Zayani, Former Minister of Environment, Tunisia</p> <p><u>Panelists:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Experience of the Joint Committee of Environment and Development</i> Mr. Djamel Eddine Djaballah, Director of Environment, Housing, Water Resources and Sustainable Development, LAS • <i>Environmental Policy Review of European Countries in Transition</i> Ms. Ivonne Higuero, Chief of Operational Activities and Review Section, Environment Division, UN Economic Commission for Europe • <i>Experience of Morocco with Environmental Policy Review</i> Mr. Mohammed Maktit, Head of the Division of Planification and Prospective, Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment, Morocco <p>Discussion</p>
11:00 – 11:15	Coffee break
11:15 – 13:30	<p>Session 5: Reporting on Sustainable Development by Development Actors, Including Enterprises</p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> Mr. Fred Neto, Director, Social Development Division, ESCWA</p> <p><u>Panelists:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Global Sustainable Development Report</i> Mr. Nikhil Seth, Director, Division for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) • <i>The Arab Sustainable Development Report</i> Ms. Monia Braham, Economic Affairs Officer, Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA Mr. Cameron Allen, ESCWA Consultant • <i>The need for an accounting system for SDGs</i> Mr. Tommaso Diegoli, Project Manager, SDSN Mediterranean (MED Solutions) • <i>Role of civil society for the promotion of the reporting on sustainable development</i> Mr. Sami Marrouki, President, Corporate Social Responsibility Institute of Tunisia (IRSET) • <i>National Information Platforms for CSR and Accountability of private sector</i> Mr. Francois Fatoux, General Delegate, Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility (ORSE) <p>Discussion</p> <p>Summary of Sessions 4 and 5 by the Rapporteur</p>
13:30 – 15:00	Lunch

15:00-17:00	High level session on the Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda
<p><i>(including afternoon coffee break)</i></p>	<p>This final session of the meeting will gather the views of high-level persons regarding the Accountability Framework for the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and the role of a regional mechanism of accountability within this framework.</p> <p><u>Moderator:</u> Ms. Roula Majdalani, Director, Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA</p> <p><u>Presentation of key messages from the meeting</u> Ms. Reem Nejdawi, Chief, Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division, ESCWA</p> <p><u>High level panelists:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - H.E. Mr. Shaddad Attili, Minister, Former Head of the Palestinian Water Authority - H.E. Ms. Ghada Waly, Minister of Social Justice, Egypt - Mr. Omar Razzaz, Chair of the Board of Trustees, King Abdullah II Fund for Development, Jordan - H.E. Ms. Amina J. Mohamed, UN Secretary-General’s Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning

Annex 2. List of Participants

Name	Job Title	Organization	Country
<u>Member Countries</u>			
Menouer Boughedaoui	Professor of Environment	University of Blida	Algeria
Ghada Waly	Minister of Social Justice	Ministry of Social Justice	Egypt
Omar Aboueich	Deputy Assistant Minister for International Cooperation for Development	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Egypt
Mohamad Mosa Mohamad Afana	Director of Policy and Development Directorate	Ministry of Environment	Jordan
Mutasim Al Kilani	Head of Sustainable Development Division	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Jordan
Muneerah Yahya Alkhulaifi	Foreign Relation Specialist	Ministry of Finance	Kuwait
Lina Yamout	Chief, Service of Environmental Guidance	Ministry of Environment	Lebanon
Gsim Abdessatar		Ministry of Agriculture	Morocco
Mohammed Maktit	Head of the Division of Planification and Prospective	Ministry of Energy, Mining, Water and Environment	Morocco
Omar Ahl Rchid	Head of Studies and Research	Ministry of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development	Morocco
Hilda A. R. Al-Hinai	Director	Oman WTO Office	Oman
Said R. S. Al Qatbi	Director of Regional Development	The Supreme Council for Planning	Oman
Shaddad Al-Attili	Minister and Former Head of PWA	Palestinian Water Authority (PWA)	Palestine
Hesham Bakur Bakhider	Environmental Specialist	Presidency of Meteorology and Environment (PME)	Saudi Arabia
Naser Howaimel	Deputy Minister for Social Development	Ministry of Social Affairs	Saudi Arabia
Saleh AlShehri	Planning Specialist	Ministry of Economy and Planning	Saudi Arabia
Babiker Abdalla Ibrahim Hamad	Under secretary	Ministry of Environment and Forestry	Sudan
Omima Saide Saeed	Inspector	Ministry of Commerce	Sudan
Chokri Mezghani	Executive Director	Ministry in charge of Sustainable Development	Tunisia
Jalel Al-Snoussi	Director	Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Tunisia
Memia Benna Zayani	University professor Former Minister of Environment		Tunisia
Oussama Nagati	Head of Service Department of the rational	National Agency for Energy Management	Tunisia

	use of energy		
Sadok El Amri	Former Secretary of State for Environment	Sahel and Sahara Observatory (OSS)	Tunisia
Sami Marrouki	President	Corporate Social Responsibility Institute of Tunisia (IRSET)	Tunisia
Yassine Marzougui	Engineer Chef de service	CUASDD-Tunisia	Tunisia
Abdo Ghanem AlMohaya	Manager of Infrastructure Planning and Programming, Development Planning Sector	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Yemen
Ibrahim Abdulrahman Abdullah Sharafuddin	Director, International Organizations	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Yemen
Ahmed Salem Malqat	Director General of Planning and Information	Environment Protection Authority	Yemen
Major Groups			
Hala Ahmed Mohamed Yousry	Head of Rural Sociology Department	Desert Research Center African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS) Women Major Group (WMG)	Egypt
Mohamed Mahmoud Elsayed	Deputy General Coordinator	Arab Network for Environment and Development (RAED)	Egypt
Farah Basheer Mohammad Qaddoura	Public Relations Manager	Arab Group for the Protection of Nature (APN)	Jordan
Ziad Abdul Samad	Executive Director	Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)	Lebanon
Mehdi Ahmed Jaaffar Matwani	Sustainable Development Consultant	Environment Society of Oman	Oman
Amani Hegab Alnhat	Researcher	Human Rights Commission	Saudi Arabia
Mohammed Abdulkareem H. Al-Saif	Member of the Council of the HRC	Human Rights Commission	Saudi Arabia
Badia Chulli	Researcher on Water and Environment	Research and Water Technologies Center (CERTE)	Tunisia
Boubaker Houman	University professor	Associative Network for Nature and Development in Tunisia (RANDET)	Tunisia
Regional and International Organizations			
Ahmed Alawi Al Haddad	Director, Department of Economic Affairs	Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC)	Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Mahmoud Sued Musa Al-Sarhan	Freelance Consultant	Arab Thought Forum	Jordan
Abbas Ali Naqi Al Naqi	Secretary General	Organization of Arab	Kuwait

		Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC)	
Abdul Kareem Ayed	Director of Library and Information Department	Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (OAPEC)	Kuwait
Muna M. Bourisli	Secretary – General, Advisor	Arab Towns Organization	Kuwait
Laila Diab Shrair	Strategic Planning Consultant	Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting (GOIC)	Qatar
Abdeslam Azuz	Senior Trade Promotion Officer	Office for the Arab States - International Trade Centre	Switzerland
Abulgasem Hasan El-badri	Director, Department of Science and Scientific Research	Arab League Educational Cultural & Scientific Organization (ALECSO)	Tunisia
Ghazi Ben Ahmed	Executive Director	Mediterranean Development Initiative (MDI)	Tunisia
Mohammed ElMourid	Regional Coordinator for North Africa Regional Program	ICARDA-Tunis	Tunisia
Soukeina Bouraoui	Executive Director	The Center of Arab Woman for Training and Research (CAWTAR), representing AGFUND	Tunisia
Experts and Resource Persons			
Talaat Abdel-Malek	ESCWA Consultant Former Co-chair of the OECD/Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) Working Party on Aid Effectiveness		Egypt
Ellala Mohez	Project Manager	Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility (ORSE)	France
Francois Fatoux	General Delegate	Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility (ORSE)	France
Yasmine Seghirate	Chargée de missions, Entreprise et pauvreté	Observatory of Corporate Social Responsibility (ORSE)	France
Tommaso Diegoli	Project Manager, SDSN Mediterranean (MED Solutions)	UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)	Italy
Omar Razzaz	Chair of the Board of Trustees	King Abdullah II Fund for Development	Jordan
Cameron Ian Allen	ESCWA Consultant		Lebanon
Anoush Begoyan Schliesing	Complaint Mechanism Officer	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Tunis Office	London

Mohammed Adel Hentati	Consultant on Environment and Sustainable Development		Tunisia
United Nations Organizations			
Azza Morssy	Chief, Middle East and Arab Programme, Programme Development and Technical Cooperation Division	UNIDO	Austria
Melanie Hutchinson	Programme Officer	UNEP Regional Office for Western Asia	Bahrain
Mohamed Diab	Regional Director, Middle East, North Africa, Central Asia and East Europe Bureau	United Nations World Food Programme	Egypt
Eltayeb Elamin	Regional Community Mobilization and Networking Adviser	UNAIDS	Egypt
Mohamed Yusuf Aw-Dahir	Regional Food Systems Economist	FAO Regional Office for the Near East and North Africa	Egypt
Yamina Chakkar	Regional Director for the Middle East and North Africa	UNAIDS	Egypt
Marieme Bekaye	Sustainable Development Officer	ECA/North Africa Office	Morocco
Amina J. Mohamed	UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning	United Nations Secretariat	New York
Adel Abdellatif	Chief, Regional Programme Division	United Nations Development Program's Regional Bureau for Arab States (UNDP/RBAS)	New York
Amr Nour	Director	Regional Commissions New York Office RCNYO/UNHQ	New York
Masumi Ono	Team Leader, Post-2015 One Secretariat	Executive Office of the Secretary-General	New York
Navid Hanif	Director, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)	New York
Nikhil Seth	Director, Division for Sustainable Development	UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)	New York
Sering Falu Njie	Deputy Director, Policy	UNDP/United Nations Millennium Campaign (UNMC)	New York
Maria-Luisa Fornara	Representative	UNICEF	Tunisia
Ghassan Khalil	Special Representative	UNICEF	Tunisia
Delia Barcelona	Deputy Regional Director (a.i.)	UNFPA Arab States Regional Office	

Dimiter Chalev	OHCHR Representative and Chief of Office for the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Tunisia	Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR)	
Ivonne Higuero	Chief of Operational Activities and Review Section, Environment Division	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN-ECE)	
Joudane Letla	Assistant Representative	UNFPA-Tunisia	
Katja Schäfer	Human Settlements Officer, Arab States	United Nations Human Settlement Programme (UN-Habitat) Regional Office for Arab States (ROAS)	
Maria Lukyanova	Head of WFP Office in Tunisia	World Food Programme	
Mohammad Naciri	Deputy Regional Director	UN Women	
League of Arab States (LAS)			
Faeqa Saeed Al-Saleh	Assistant Secretary-General, Head of the Social Affairs Sector	League of Arab States	Egypt
Djamel Eddine Djaballah	Director of Environment, Housing, Water Resources and Sustainable Development	League of Arab States	Egypt
Tarek Nabil El-Nabulsi	Head of follow-up and coordination unit, Cabinet of Assistant Secretary General for Social Affairs	League of Arab States	Egypt
Yasmin Hassan Teima	In charge of follow-up on Rio+20 portfolio	League of Arab States	Egypt
ESCWA			
Nadim Khouri	Deputy Executive Secretary	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Roula Majdalani	Director Sustainable Development Policies Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Abdallah Al Dardari	Chief Economist and Director, Economic Development and Globalization Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Fred Neto	Director, Social Development Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Reem Nejdawi	Chief, Food and Environmental Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Ramla Khalidi	Chief of Strategic Directions and Partnerships Section, Technical Cooperation	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon

Youssef Chaitani	Chief, Conflict, Occupation and Development Section, Emerging and Conflict-Related Issues Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Mohamed Chemingui	Chief, Regional Integration Section, Economic Development and Globalization Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Karima El Korri	Chief, Population and Social Development Section, Social Development Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Oussama Safa	Officer in charge, Participation and Social Justice Section, Social Development Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Mohammad Al-Hamdi	Economic Affairs Officer, Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Lana Baydas	First Social Affairs Officer, Center for Women	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Monia Braham	Economic Affairs Officer, Food and Environment Policies Section, Sustainable Development Policies Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
Eugenie Hashem	Administrative Assistant Office of the Director Sustainable Development Policies Division	UN-ESCWA	Lebanon
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