

ASSESSMENTS BY THE BUREAU OF ECOSOC FUNCTIONAL COMMISSIONS AND EXPERT BODIES

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¹ The names used to refer to the functional commissions and expert bodies shown in the Table of contents and the Summary table are used for ease of reference and for the purpose of this paper only. They are used in tandem with the official names of each of the subsidiary bodies, in accordance with [E/2019/INF/3](#).

Summary table

Questions	1. Does your functional commission/ expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?	2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?	3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/ expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?	4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?	5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/ expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?
Subsidiary body	SC1	SC2	SC3	SC4	SC5
Statistical Commission Population (CPD)	CPD1	CPD2	CPD3	CPD4	CPD5
Social (CSocD)	CSocD1	CSocD2	CSocD3	CSocD4	CSocD5
Status of Women (CSW)	CSW1	CSW2	CSW3	CSW4	CSW5
Narcotic Drugs (CND)	CND Intro CND1	CND Intro CND2	CND Intro CND3	CND Intro CND4	CND Intro CND5
Crime Prevention and Control (CCPCJ)	CCPCJ intro CCPCJ1	CCPCJ intro CCPCJ2	CCPCJ intro CCPCJ3	CCPCJ intro CCPCJ4	CCPCJ intro CCPCJ5
Science and Technology (CSTD)	CSTD intro CSTD1	CSTD intro CSTD2	CSTD intro CSTD3	CSTD intro CSTD4	CSTD intro CSTD5
Forests (UNFF)					
Dangerous Goods (TDG-GHS)	TDG-GHS1	TDG-GHS2	TDG-GHS3	TDG-GHS4	TDG-GHS5
Standards of Accounting (ISAR)	ISAR1	ISAR2	ISAR3	ISAR4	ISAR5
Geographical Names (UNEGN)	Prep process UNEGN1	Prep process UNEGN2	Prep process UNEGN3	Prep process UNEGN4	Prep process UNEGN5

Questions

1. Does your functional commission/ expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council’s role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body’s mandate?

3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/ expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

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Subsidiary body

	UN-GGIM Exec Summary UN-GGIM1	UN-GGIM Exec Summary UN-GGIM2	UN-GGIM Exec Summary UN-GGIM3	UN-GGIM Exec Summary UN-GGIM4	UN-GGIM Exec Summary UN-GGIM5
Geospatial Information (UN-GGIM)					
Development Policy (CDP)	CDP paras 1-4	CDP paras 5, 3	CDP paras 7-9	CDP para 6	CDP paras 10-11
Public Administration (CEPA)	CEPA1	CEPA2	CEPA3	CEPA4	CEPA5
Tax Matters (UNTC)					
Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)					
Indigenous Issues (PFI)	PFI1	PFI2	PFI3	PFI4	PFI5

Original assessments received

Statistical Commission

Responses to questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies by the Chairs and Bureaux:

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

The Statistical Commission is the primary body for the coordination of the global statistical programmes and supports national and international statistical systems and the other UN policy organs through the adoption of international statistical standards and the frameworks for monitoring societal, economic and environmental progress.

As a technical body, the Statistical Commission effectively contributes to advancing the measurement of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Statistical Commission continues to lead the global statistical system in providing the best available data and statistics to build an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The global indicator framework developed by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators was adopted by the General Assembly on 6 July 2017. This framework contains an initial set of indicators which has been refined annually and reviewed comprehensively by the Commission. Furthermore, the Commission coordinates the substantive and technical work to advance international standards, methodologies, and guidelines for full implementation of the framework.

The Commission produces the international standards for the production of data and statistics across all domains. Within the vast range of statistical domains, the Commission prepares reviews of the programmes of work by expert groups and other groups convened under the Commission. These updates on the technical progress in each domain are contained in the official documentation of the Commission's annual sessions. Some examples of contributes to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda include the Commission's work on climate change statistics, environmental-economic accounting, geospatial information, economic statistics, and much more.

The importance of data and statistics to adequately assess a situation and make policy recommendations cannot be overemphasized. The technical work of the Statistical Commission helps Member States to strengthen their national statistical systems to be able to meet the data demands of policy- and decision-makers. For example, over the past two years, the Commission has embraced the needs for timely, accurate, disaggregated data on COVID-19 and its impact through the use of alternative data sources, including administrative data, scanner data, earth observation data, and have thus taken on the role of data stewards.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits

within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?

The main report prepared using the global indicator framework is the annual Sustainable Development Goals Report, which highlights progress made toward the SDGs as measured by the indicators. The report is based on statistical evidence and provides a comprehensive overview of the status and data gaps. As a technical body, the Commission addresses data gaps which are highlighted in the SDG report.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

The Statistical Commission brings together the chief statisticians from around the world to agree on statistical standards and methodologies. As a technical body, numerous groups (over 40) have been established under the auspices of the Commission in order to examine topics of methodological interest, develop normative documents, and coordinate the work of multiple actors. Typically, the outputs produced by the groups have been submitted to the Commission for discussion and eventually for endorsement.

Within the various groups, there are workstreams and working groups that address the emerging challenges and data gaps. Some of the best practices include open, transparent working methods that allow for official statisticians to work with data and statistical experts to fully take advantage of advances in technology. By working together, the work undertaken by the Commission's and its working groups, benefits from data innovation and the latest technological advances.

One way to ensure that the working methods and scope of the Statistical Commission are attuned to the current needs of Member States was an examination of the terms of reference of the Commission. Following a decision at its 52nd session in 2021, the Bureau of the Commission carried out an open and transparent review process and update the terms of reference. Through this open process, all Member States had opportunities to bring their voice to the updated TOR. At its 53rd session, the Commission recommended the adoption of a draft resolution by ECOSOC containing the updated terms of reference.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

Statistics and data are the basis for informed, evidence-based decision making, and the guidance and standards on statistics and data that the Statistical Commission provides across domains are essential to support countries to provide comparable timely data. Data and Statistics are per definition cross cutting; therefore the integrative power of data and statistics needs to be stressed. Also, Statisticians have developed integrated information frameworks (e.g. the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting SEEA), which support integrated policy approaches.

An opportunity for joint work includes inviting Chairs to participate in other subsidiary bodies' sessions and panels. The importance of data and statistics is cross-cutting and relevant to all bodies. The Vice-Chair of the Statistical Commission has joined the meetings of other ECOSOC subsidiary bodies to share the work on the Commission on the relevant topics, ie., Crime and Justice Commission in November 2021. The promotion and production of better data are needed for integrated policy approaches. In April this year, a vice-chair of the Commission will join a multi-stakeholder panel on the “contribution of key population and development issues to building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” being convened by the Commission on Population and Development.

As the Committee on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) is also technical in nature, it is only logical that the cooperation with the Statistical Commission is particularly close. The two subsidiary bodies have for instance jointly developed the integrated geospatial-statistical information framework to guide countries in integrating statistical (numerical) and geospatial data. The UN Statistics Division/DESA serves as Secretariat to both Commissions, which enhances the efficient cooperation between the two bodies.

Across the UN system, the Statistical Commission works with various specialized agencies and other bodies to enhance the work in specific domains. In fact, most of the technical documents referring to specialized statistical fields (e.g. agricultural statistics, financial statistics, education statistics etc.) are prepared by the respective specialized United Nations entity. The UN regional commissions are key partners in the work of the Commission, especially supporting the development of statistical norms, taking into account regional specificities and the implementation of such norms, after their global adoption.

Furthermore, the long-term working relationship with the World Bank allows for broader application of the work with statistical offices. For example, a joint survey on the implementation of the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data and a set of global COVID-19 surveys of national statistical offices.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

The report of the Statistical Commission reflects the in-depth substantive discussions of the Member States on the cross-cutting domains addressed in its annual session. The focus of the Statistical Commission is technical, and its expertise provides the basis for building stronger data and statistical systems within Member states. Because of the cross-cutting nature of statistics, the Statistical Commission contributes to all areas within the scope of ECOSOC. We would also welcome dialogue between ECOSOC and the Statistical Commission to identify information and data needs of ECOSOC in general and in their various specific policy areas to ensure that the development of statistical methods and outputs responds to those needs in the most effective manner.

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Commission on Population and Development (CPD)

Questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies

Interim responses by the Bureau of fifty-fifth session of the Commission on Population and Development

4 April 2022

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

The Commission on Population and Development contributes explicitly to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda:

- *In the latest resolution on the methods of work of the Commission, ECOSOC decided that the Commission shall continue its current practice of selecting one special theme for each annual session on the basis of progress, gaps, recurrent challenges and evolving issues relevant to population and development based on the Programme of Action and the key actions to accelerate its further implementation, while also taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with a view to fully implementing all of its mandated tasks and contributing to the work of the Economic and Social Council.*
- *The Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Division, on which the mandate of the Commission on Population and Development is based, and the 2030 Agenda have a number of goals and targets in common, including, but not limited to, sustained economic growth in the context of sustainable development; education, especially for girls; gender equity and equality and women's empowerment; infant, child and maternal mortality reduction; the provision of universal access to reproductive health services, including family planning and sexual health; sustainable urbanization, and the promotion of safe, orderly and regular migration.*
- *A critical way for the Commission to contribute to the HLPF is by adopting a resolution on its annual theme. For instance, in 2021, the negotiations and agreement on the resolution on population, food security, nutrition and sustainable development by the Commission in April assisted delegations in shaping language on this issue contained in the 2021 ministerial declaration.*



- *The Commission’s assessments on the status of implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action and related SDGs as well as its main policy recommendations, which are included in the annual resolution on the theme, support an integrated action-oriented approach to the SDGs.*

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body’s mandate?

- *The Population Division is mandated to prepare a report of the Secretary-General on the annual theme of the Commission. This report provides a global, evidence-based overview of the status of implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in relation to the annual theme.*
- *This report is complemented by a report of the Secretary-General on programmes and interventions for the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in the context of the annual theme, prepared by the United Nations Population Fund, which serves as observer in the Bureau.*
- *Both reports review how this progress contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.*
- *With the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the creation of the UN Network on Migration, coordinated by IOM, to support its implementation, the role of the Commission in assessing the contribution of international migration to sustainable development has diminished. This raises the question how ECOSOC/HLPF can be remain fully informed about this issue, given that IOM is not a member of ECOSOC.*

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

- *Holding regular briefings with Member States and stakeholders on substantive and organizational aspects.*
- *Systematic distribution of minutes of Bureau meetings to list of delegates and through e-delegate.*
- *Before each Bureau meeting, the secretariat meets with the Chair.*

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

- *In organizing the expert meeting and preparing the SGs report on the annual theme, the Population Division involves experts from other UN entities.*
- *In recent years, the Chair has convened a briefing with UN entities with expertise on the annual theme.*
- *In 2022, the Bureau created a new panel to explore the linkages with other subsidiary bodies and to assess the contribution of the Commission to the annual theme of ECOSOC/HLPF.*
- *We could convene meetings of the substantive secretariats of subsidiary bodies whose mandates are complementary in order to discuss followup on agreed outcomes, planned themes and potential synergies (e.g. CPD, CSocD, CSW, UNSC).*

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

- *Demographic trends have important implications for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and vice versa. It would be useful if the Chair of CPD could hold a technical briefing with members of ECOSOC to highlight these linkages in a more comprehensive way than in the brief presentation of the report to the management segment.*
- *ECOSOC could request each subsidiary body to hold a dedicated discussion on its contribution to the annual theme of ECOSOC/HLPF (in the form of a dedicated agenda item, a panel, a keynote speaker, etc.)*
- *In preparing the zero draft for the ministerial declaration, the Secretariat could take advantage of the agreed outcome document from CPD (as well as from other subsidiary bodies) from the same year or, depending on the subject matter, from previous years.*

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Commission for Social Development (CSocD)

Inputs provided by the Global Dialogue for Social Development Branch, DISD, DESA (cleared by the Chair of the 60th and 61st sessions)

Questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies by the Chairs and Bureaux:

1. ***Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?***

Answer –

- Yes, the Commission for Social Development effectively contributed to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role by providing policy guidance to promote social development to accelerate the implementation of the social dimensions of the 2030 Agenda. The ECOSOC resolution on the methods of work of the Commission, which is adopted by the Council on the Commission's recommendation, (E/RES/2021/8, OP2) clearly stated that the Commission “**will contribute to the follow-up to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, within its existing mandate**, by supporting the thematic reviews of the high-level political forum on sustainable development on progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including cross-cutting issues, reflecting the integrated nature of the Goals as well as the interlinkages between them, while engaging all relevant stakeholders and feeding into and being aligned with the cycle of the high-level political forum, according to the organizational arrangements established by the General Assembly and the Council”. (E/RES/2021/8, OP5)
- The same resolution reaffirms its decision that, in selecting its priority themes, the Commission shall consider, **in addition to the follow-up to and review of the World Summit** and the outcome of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, as well as **the 2030 Agenda, the programme of work of the Council and the main theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development**, so as to build synergies and contribute to the work of the Council (OP5); and requests the Commission to **adopt a multi-year programme of work**, subsequent to the review of General Assembly resolution 70/299 of 29 July 2016, when considering the future organization and methods of work of the Commission at its **sixty-first session**, to allow for predictability and adequate time for preparation (OP6).
- The 60th session of the Commission, by fully aligning its priority theme with that of the 2022 HLPF and ECOSOC this year, produced a resolution on “***Inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19 for sustainable livelihoods, well-being and dignity for all: eradicating poverty and hunger in all its forms and dimensions to achieve the 2030 Agenda***” that directly focused on **SDG 1** (eradicate poverty) and **SDG 2** (end hunger and address food insecurity). The draft resolution was negotiated intensely during the informal negotiations which took place two weeks before the opening of the annual session, and adopted by consensus at the closing session. The Commission for Social Development recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of this resolution.

- The Commission, through the resolution, has made a number of recommendations on inclusive and resilient recovery from COVID-19, focusing on eradicating poverty and hunger, including labour policies, social protection, financing for social development, focusing on the poorest and most vulnerable, including **youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples**, so that recovery efforts will **leave no one behind** and support countries to **get back on track in fully implement the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs**.
- The Commission held **five panel discussions on the priority theme, the Ministerial Forum, Emerging Issues, Interactive Dialogue with UN senior officials, and Multistakeholder Forum**, which provided a space for various stakeholders and social partners to participate in the discussion to bring their perspectives, and share innovative approaches and concrete solutions.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?

Answer:

- Yes. The work of the Commission is supported by Reports of the Secretary-General containing solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its mandates on the theme under consideration. The 60th session was supported by two **Secretary-General's reports, one on the priority theme** and the other on the **"Social dimensions of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)"**, and the **Note by the Secretariat on "Emerging Issues"**.
- In addition, the Commission's work is also supported by inputs received from academia, scientific communities, research institutions, UN entities, and civil society organizations, as well as inputs from Member States, social partners and NGOs, representatives of youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and those living in poverty and vulnerable situations. These inputs are received through participation of representatives of these stakeholders in the panel discussions, general discussion and interactive dialogues held during the annual sessions of the Commission. These also come through expert group meetings organized by the Secretariat in preparation on the themes of the Commission. For example, an EGM was organized on the priority theme of CSocD60 in collaboration with FAO and Regional Commissions (July 29 – 3 August 2021), in which experts across regions was invited. Experts' papers, presentations, publications, and the summary (Key issues addressed and policy recommendations) were made available on the Commission's website, which allowed in-depth analysis, assessment and action-oriented recommendations and used as key input to the preparation of the Secretary-General's report on the priority theme.
- The outcome of these reports has supported an integrated and action-oriented approach to SDGs and led the negotiated outcome (the resolution), which focused on poverty (**SDG 1**) and hunger (**SDG 2**) but also addressed cross-cutting issues, in particular an overarching commitment of **"leaving no one behind"** by addressing the specific needs of **those who are vulnerable and in vulnerable situations**, including women and children, youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples

(SDG16). It also promoted long-term integrated policy framework that will enable an inclusive and resilient recovery by simultaneously address poverty, hunger, and inequalities (SDG10); investing in and promoting affordable and equitable access to quality formal and non-formal education at all levels (SDG4) and health-care services, including through the acceleration of the transition towards equitable access to universal health coverage (SDG3), social protection systems (SDG1, target 3.1) and affordable housing (SDG11, target 11.1), nutrition, food and ICTs; promoting inclusive growth, productive employment and decent work for all (SDG8), social protection (SDG 1 target 1.3); closing the digital divides and promote digital inclusion (SDG10). Finally, the resolution calls upon the international community to strengthen multilateral cooperation, and encourages them to continue to support global efforts towards sustained and inclusive growth, sustainable development and the external debt sustainability of developing countries (SDG17)

- During the general discussion, delegations **appreciated the work of the Commission and high quality and comprehensive reports of the Secretary-General** in informing and enriching the deliberations and discussions. Based on these background documents and the preparatory meeting, Member States identified common challenges, exchanged effective policies and measures implemented to respond the negative impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and explored ways to emerge from the pandemic better positioned to end poverty and hunger, during the general discussion as well as five panel discussions.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

Answer –

- The Commission’s agenda includes “**Emerging issues**” to address most pressing global challenges to social development and respond to themes of ECOSOC and the HLPF if these themes were not known at the time the Commission had to decide its annual priority theme in its February session. The theme of “Emerging Issues” is usually decided by the Bureau in the fall before the Commission’s annual session in February next year. This will allow the Commission to address pressing social challenges in a timely manner. For example, the theme of the 2022 session was decided in October 2021 as “**National policies and measures implemented by Member States to combat hunger and poverty in times of the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond: Challenges to get on track towards the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda**”. Member States supported to create a user-friendly compilation of these good policies and practices in a systematically manner.
- Under the strong leadership of the Chair, the Commission for the first time organized an **informal preparatory meeting on the priority theme** in early December 2021, by inviting FAO high-level officials who provided substantive inputs, to assist Member States in their preparation of the work of the 60th session, which was welcomed by Member States.
- The hybrid format with possibility for virtual participation allowed more than 300 representatives from the civil society organizations with ECOSOC consultation status participated in the 60th Commission. The Commission received more than 47 NGO written statements and hosted over 50

side events, organized by Member States, UN entities, and civil society organizations accredited to the ECOSOC. The session was well-covered in social media with more than 3 thousand engagement and 45 million potential reach on social media platforms.

- In parallel to the Commission sessions, the Civil Society Forum was organized by the NGO Committee for Social Development, which adopted the Civil Society Declaration on the priority theme. Morning briefings were organized during the Commission in order to inform NGOs on the work of the Commission, including the status of the draft resolutions.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

- The effective collaboration with key **UN entities** from the preparatory stage has proven to be effective to join forces in the substantive preparation, create synergies, crafting integrated policy recommendations, and expanding the outreach (For CSocD60: FAO, ILO and Regional Commissions; CSocD59: UNCTAD, ITU and Regional Commissions; CSocD58: UN-Habitat and regional commissions). ECLAC, ESCWA, FAO, ILO and UNWomen participated in the Interactive Dialogue panel.
- The Commission invited the Chair of the Commission for Science and Technology for Development as the keynote speaker, and the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities as a panellist at its 2021 session. a member of the Committee on Development Policy to the EGM and to the panel discussions. (2021: Prof. Rolph van der Hoeven; 2020 Prof. Sakiko Fukuda -Parr). The linkage between the Commission and other subsidiary bodies could be further strengthened to create synergies and coordinated actions.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

It is suggested that ECOSOC could use the negotiated outcome (resolution) adopted at the Commission as an important input to address social dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, and thus integrated into the draft Ministerial Declaration of the 2020 HLPF.

ECOSOC could invite the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Commission as panelists of one of the thematic sessions during the 2022 HLPF.

ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies by adopting its main themes and that of the HLPF with sufficient lead time. This will facilitate the alignment of subsidiary body's work with that of the Council and the HLPF.

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Annex: Questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies by the Chairs and Bureaux:

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

- In the draft resolution [E/CN.6/2022/L.5](#) (to be adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its upcoming Management Segment in June) the Council reaffirms the commitment to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls contained in the 2030 Agenda, and that the Commission will continue to contribute to the gender-responsive implementation of the Agenda.
- In selecting its priority theme, the Commission takes into consideration, the programme of work of ECOSOC and the 2030 Agenda so as to build synergies and contribute to the work of the Council system and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. Aligning the Commission's themes with the programme of the Council has not always been possible, owing to the difference in the periodicity of the themes of the Council and the Commission. In such cases, the provision for the consideration of an emerging issue or focus area can be an opportunity for the Commission to address topics relevant to the annual theme of the Council.
- In its methods of work, the Commission is mandated to report on the aspects relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women of the agreed main theme of the Council, in order to contribute to its work.
- The Commission holds a general discussion, ministerial round tables, interactive expert panels and interactive dialogues, all of which produce expert analysis.
- The Commission's main outcome, the agreed conclusions on the priority theme of the session are negotiated by all Member States, and focus on action-oriented recommendations for steps and measures for closing remaining gaps, meeting challenges and accelerating implementation.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?

- The Commission's thematic approach to its work has allowed predictability and adequate time for substantive preparations and strengthened its capacity to undertake a careful analysis of the selected themes.
- Annually, the Secretary-General prepares a report on the priority theme, with conclusions and recommendations for further action. Such annual reports are informed by expert analysis from UN-Women and expert group meetings that bring together cutting-edge knowledge, experience and expertise on the subject matter under consideration and result in recommendations that inform the basis for action by policymakers.

- The Secretary-General also submits to the Commission, on an annual basis, a report on the review theme, on progress at the national level in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on a priority theme of a previous session.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

- The Commission cooperates with other intergovernmental processes and functional commissions through, as appropriate, the exchange of information, and transmission of the outcomes of its work, joint informal interactive events and the participation of its Chair in relevant processes.
- The Commission ensures that its expert panels are inclusive by inviting experts from Governments, the United Nations system, civil society and other stakeholder groups that work on the theme under consideration.
- The Bureau of the Commission consults with Member States through their regional groups on many issues related to the Commission's work.
- In the new methods of work to be adopted by the Council, all Member States are invited to meaningfully involve civil society organizations and other relevant stakeholders in preparatory processes for the work of the Commission, including by considering holding consultations with them at the national level on the priority theme and the review theme.
- The Council encourages Member States to ensure the participation of relevant stakeholders from all regions, including non-governmental organizations, civil society and youth.
- The Commission will consider organizing an interactive dialogue on the priority theme to facilitate exchanges among youth representatives from delegations during future sessions.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

- In its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on gender mainstreaming, the Council called upon all of its functional commissions and subsidiary bodies to mainstream a gender perspective in their work. The review is an opportunity for the Council to take stock of how its subsidiary bodies are implementing the letter and spirit of 1997/2 – how their discussions look at the impact of policies on women and girls, men and boys and whether documentation to those bodies include gender analysis and provide recommendations to advance gender equality.
- The CSW Bureau should continue to enhance collaboration with ECOSOC subsidiary bodies, including through inviting Bureau members of subsidiary bodies to the CSW sessions in order to engage them in CSW work.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

- By requesting subsidiary bodies to systematically implement agreed conclusions 1997/2, drawing on relevant recommendations from CSW outcomes.

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Review of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies

Responses by the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

I. Introduction

General overview

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) is the policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters and one of the two governing bodies of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The CND has treaty-based functions originating from the three international drug control conventions² and activities based on the international drug policy commitments, reiterated most recently in the 2019 CND Ministerial Declaration³.

The Commission has seen in recent years a high interest in its work, as demonstrated by large **numbers of participation and a broad variety of various stakeholders (Member States, UN entities, international organizations and non-governmental organizations)** participating in its meetings, including in the sixty-third, sixty-fourth and sixty-fifth regular sessions, held in 2020, 2021 and 2022 respectively⁴.

² Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1954, as amended by the 1972 Protocol; Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971; and United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988:

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/Int_Drug_Control_Conventions/Ebook/The_International_Drug_Control_Conventions_E.pdf.

³ [Outcome document](#) of the 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem; [Joint Ministerial Statement](#) of the 2014 High-Level Review of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem; and 2009 [Political Declaration and Plan of Action](#) on International Cooperation Towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem

⁴ Figures for the 63rd regular session (March 2020): 1500 participants representing 137 Member States, 17 UN entities and intergovernmental organizations and 99 NGOs.

Figures for the 64th regular session (April 2021): 1400 participants representing 132 Member States, 17 UN entities and intergovernmental organizations and 76 NGOs

The Commission's regular meetings also **attract yearly a large number of side events covering a wide range of topics** related to addressing and countering the world drug problem: 100 events were held in the margins of the sixty-third session in 2020, 111 side events were organized in an online format during the sixty-fourth session in 2021 and 128 side events were organized in an online format during the sixty-fifth session in 2022.

In terms of the **policy outcomes shaping the global action in drug-related area**, the regular sessions of the Commission **result yearly in a number of negotiated thematic outcomes**: the Commission adopted five resolutions and 15 decisions at its sixty-third session in 2020; five resolutions and eight decisions at the sixty-fourth session in 2021 and four resolutions and seven decisions at its sixty-fifth session in 2022.

The Commission is meanwhile **substantively active throughout the year**, it is holding an increased number of intersessional meetings and special events **to be able to implement its mandated substantive work**, which cannot longer be covered during its annual regular and reconvened session: In 2021, in addition to the annual regular session and reconvened session the CND held 26 meetings in the intersessional period, in an online or hybrid format.

Whereas the CND attaches great importance to the promotion of multilingualism in its work, the **inter-sessional work, including the thematic sessions, does not benefit from interpretation entitlements**. Moreover, the online and hybrid formats of meetings which resulted from restrictions for in-person participation due to the COVID-19 pandemic have led to a **reduction of the duration of overall interpretation time within existing entitlements**: E.g. the reduction of the duration of interpretation per entitlement from three to two hours during the recent 65th session of the CND resulted in a significant limitation of interpretation during the meetings of the Committee of the Whole, in which draft resolutions were negotiated, and created impediments in the promotion of multilingualism in the work of the Commission.

In conducting its work, including preparations for, conduct of and follow-up to in-session and intersessional meetings, the Commission relies on the substantive support provided by its Secretariat. **While the CND's activities have been increased and the amount of work has been doubled over the last two decades, the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies, acting as the Secretariat to the CND and to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, has not seen any increase in its RB human resources, and is hence, increasingly also dependent on XB resources to be able to service the Commission.**

Preparatory process for ECOSOC review

Following the launch of the review of the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council in November 2021, the Commission immediately initiated the preparatory process. A note summarizing the concept of the review and containing the five guiding questions, prepared on the basis of information shared by the ECOSOC Secretariat, was circulated among the members of the Extended Bureau of the Commission on 1 December 2021. The note was subsequently

Figures for the 65th regular session (March 2022): 1400 participants representing 132 Member States, 17 UN entities and intergovernmental organizations and 86 NGOs

brought to the attention of the reconvened sixty-fourth session of the CND, held on 9 and 10 December, as a conference room paper.⁵

Matters related to the ECOSOC review were discussed at the ninth meeting (30 November 2021) of the Extended Bureau of the Commission at its sixty-fourth session and at the first (12 January 2022), second (11 February 2022), third (2 March 2022) and fourth (9 March 2022) meeting of the Extended Bureau of the CND at its sixty-fifth session.

Considering the similar and synergistic nature of the work and working methods of the two Vienna-based Commissions, the CND and the CCPCJ, their Chairs – with the support of the respective extended bureaux – have decided to conduct the ECOSOC review together. On 17 February 2022, the Chair of the CND at its sixty-fifth session, H.E. Ambassador Ghislain D’Hoop, initiated, together with the Chair of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) at its thirty-first session, H.E. Ambassador Takeshi Hikihara, a trilateral discussion with the Vice-President of the Council, H.E. Ambassador Lacherzera Stoeva, to seek further clarifications on the review, including its purpose, timeline and envisaged outcome. The outcome of the meeting was disseminated among members of the Extended Bureaux of the two Commissions.

The Commission was informed about the ongoing review during its regular sixty-fifth session in March 2022.

The CND and the CCPCJ Chairs had undertaken the necessary preparations to conduct early March joint dialogues with the membership of each of the five regional groups, to obtain views of all Member States. However, due to developments beyond the work of the Commissions, these dialogues had to be cancelled and an alternative approach had to be chosen. The Chair drafted an initial proposal, which was circulated on 24 March – through the Chairs of the Regional Groups – with all Member States, which was provided with an opportunity to review and adjust. This document reflects the contributions received in writing by 1 April and during the joint CND-CCPCJ meeting with members of all five regional groups, held on 8 April.

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II. Assessment of the work of the Commission and recommendations

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council’s role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), as one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and the policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility for drug control matters, works on a large portfolio of issues. In fulfilling its mandate, including its treaty-based functions originating from the three international drug control conventions and its

⁵ [E/CN.7/2021/CRP.14-E/CN.15/2021/CRP.8](#)

activities based upon the international drug policy commitments, the Commission also supports Member States in building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(a) Action-oriented policy outcomes

In the **2019 Ministerial Declaration** on “Strengthening actions at the national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of joint commitments to address and counter the world drug problem”, adopted at the sixty-second session of the CND, Member States reiterated that efforts to achieve the sustainable development goals and to effectively address the world drug problem are complementary and mutually reinforcing.

This is well manifested in the **resolutions** adopted by the Commission each year, that address different aspects of the world drug problem, while having explicit and strong links to the sustainable development agenda.

For example, in 2021, the CND adopted a **joint statement on the impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic on addressing and countering the world drug problem**, which was subsequently submitted as a substantive contribution to the 2021 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development of the Council. In that statement, the Commission urged Member States to ensure that **no one affected by the world drug problem is left behind** in the health response to the COVID-19 pandemic and in efforts to mitigate the drug-related consequences of the pandemic.

The principle of ensuring that no one is left behind, as the central promise of the 2030 Agenda, has been reiterated in other resolutions adopted by the CND in 2021. In resolution 64/2⁶, Member States are encouraged to increase efforts in promoting alternative development programmes to support populations affected by or **vulnerable to the illicit cultivation of drug crops**, which may contribute to efforts to build back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Resolution 64/3⁷ highlights, among others, the importance of ensuring **non-discriminatory access to treatment for drug use disorders**, including for those incarcerated as well as women, youth and vulnerable members of society. Finally, in its resolution 64/5⁸, the Commission calls upon Member States to facilitate non-discriminatory access to drug-related: prevention, treatment, education, care, sustained recovery, rehabilitation, social reintegration and support services, for people who may face obstacles when accessing those services; **including those impacted by social marginalization**.

(b) Other Contributions

In addition to the action-oriented policy outcomes, the Commission also organizes events to facilitate interactive discussions among Member States on topics closely linked to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. On the opening day of its sixty-fifth session in March 2022,

⁶ CND resolution 64/2 “Promoting alternative development as a development-oriented drug control strategy, including in the context of COVID-19 and its consequences”

⁷ CND Resolution 64/3 “Promoting scientific evidence-based, quality, affordable and comprehensive drug prevention, treatment, sustained recovery and related support services”

⁸ CND Resolution 64/5 “Facilitating access to comprehensive, scientific evidence-based drug demand reduction services and related measures, including for people impacted by social marginalization”

the Commission, together with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization and the International Narcotics Control Board, launched a Joint Call to Action on Scaling Up the Implementation of International Drug Policy Commitments on Improving Availability of and Access to Controlled Substances for Medical and Scientific Purposes. The event, addressed by the CND Chair, the Executive Director of UNODC, the Director-General of WHO and the President of INCB, raised awareness for the critical need to improve availability and access to controlled medicines globally, including in emergency situations, to **ensure no patient is left behind**. This event will be followed by other awareness-raising activities during the 65th session, as a Chair’s initiative.

In addition, in July 2021, the CND held, together with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, a high-level side event on “Sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19”, to discuss the impact of the pandemic on drugs and crime in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body’s mandate?

(a) Pre-session documentation

At its regular sessions in spring, the Commission has before it a comprehensive set of pre-session documentation covering various aspects of addressing and countering the world drug problem. These pre-session documents contain information, inter alia, on the activities carried out by the Office that contribute to the attainment of different sustainable development goals.

For example, at its sixty-fifth session in 2022, the Commission considered the **report⁹ on the world situation with regard to drug abuse**, summarizing the information available to UNODC on the extent of drug use and its health consequences, and the **report¹⁰ on the world situation with regard to drug trafficking**, which provided an overview of the latest trends in the illicit production of and trafficking in drugs worldwide. The data contained in the two reports contributes to measuring and monitoring progress towards the sustainable development goals, in particular Goal 3 and 16.

At the same session, the Commission had before it a **conference room paper¹¹ on inter-agency cooperation and coordination of efforts in addressing and countering the world drug problem**. The conference room paper outlines the work conducted by the Commission in follow-

⁹ <http://undocs.org/E/CN.7/2021/4>

¹⁰ <http://undocs.org/E/CN.7/2021/5>

¹¹ E/CN.7/2021/CRP.3:

https://www.unodc.org/documents/commissions/CND/CND_Sessions/CND_64/CRPs_NGO_papers/ECN72021_CRP3_V2102053.pdf

up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration, involving relevant United Nations entities and specialized agencies, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations – in line with Goal 17 on partnerships for the goals.

(b) Substantive contribution to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

The Commission also submits an annual **substantive contribution** to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. This contribution outlines Commission’s work towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to support the Council in this regard, including through contributions to its main theme. In particular, it provides information on the activities of the CND that showcase strong and direct links to different sustainable development goals. The HLPF contribution also elaborates on how policy outcomes of the Commission are integrated into the broader framework of the 2030 Agenda.

(c) A summary of deliberations held during the regular and reconvened session of the Commission

In addition, the Commission has, at its regular and reconvened sessions, a standing agenda item¹² under which Member States and other stakeholders discuss contributions to the follow-up to and the review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Reports of these sessions contain a summary of the deliberations made under this agenda item.

Furthermore, for the sixty-fifth regular session of the CND, held from 14 to 18 March 2022, Member States were specifically encouraged to link their statements to the main theme of the Council, also during their interventions at the general debate.¹³

The reports of the Commission and the HLPF contribution are published on the CND website, with a view to ensuring wide distribution of key messages and recommendations contained in these documents.

(d) Gaps to be addressed

In terms of gaps to be addressed: it is important to mention that the Regular Budget resources have not grown commensurate with the increased number of mandates given to the Commission. These gaps have partially been filled by some extra-budgetary resources provided by donor countries, but it would be important that additional Regular Budget resources be allocated.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

¹² Agenda item on “Contributions by the Commission to the work of the Economic and Social Council, in line with General Assembly resolution 72/305, including follow-up to and review and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

¹³ “Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”

(a) “Vienna spirit”

The Commission works **consensus-based**, whereby policy documents, resolutions and decisions are usually adopted by consensus. This so-called “**Vienna spirit**” allows all interested Member States to actively participate in the work of the Commission, not limiting negotiation of resolutions and decisions to the 53 Members. As these outcomes are agreed by all participants, Member States have a greater sense of ownership of the commitments contained therein.

(b) Inclusive multi-stakeholder intergovernmental processes

The Commission translates the principle of “leaving no one behind” into action not only from the substantive point of view – through its policy documents and resolutions, but also in organizing its **intergovernmental processes**.

For example, in organizing its meetings, the CND ensures a broad outreach to all relevant stakeholders, namely: Member States, UN entities, intergovernmental organizations and civil society – to ensure that all voices are heard. Specific attention is also given to youth representatives and academia who have the opportunity to address the Commission, inter alia, at its annual regular sessions.

One example of this multi-stakeholder approach is the organization of **intersessional thematic discussions on the implementation of international drug policy commitments, in follow-up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration**. These thematic discussions facilitate a platform for dialogue among different stakeholders and exchange of good practices and lessons learned in addressing all aspects of the world drug problem¹⁴.

An interactive exchange on challenges and good practices in addressing and countering the world drug problem is also fostered among **practitioners and policymakers at the regional level**, through meetings of the **subsidiary bodies of the Commission**, namely meetings of the Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Subcommission on Illicit Drug Traffic and Related Matters in the Near and Middle East. During these meetings, law enforcement authorities come together to identify and analyze salient drug-related policy and enforcement issues in their respective region. Recommendations developed during these regional discussions are subsequently brought to the attention of the Commission at its regular sessions.

(c) Integrating a gender perspective

The CND also takes action to integrate a **gender dimension** into its work. Together with the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, the CND organized a number of interactive events, such as:

- a high-level event to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and discuss the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls (June 2020);

¹⁴ [Thematic sessions on the implementation of all international drug policy commitments, following-up to the 2019 Ministerial Declaration \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/en/press/news/2020/06/20200617.html)

- an interactive discussion on the use of gender-inclusive communication in the work of Vienna-based Commissions (November 2019); and
- a brainstorming meeting on ways to promote gender equality and women empowerment in the work of Vienna-based intergovernmental bodies (September 2019).

In 2016, the Commission adopted resolution 59/5 on “Mainstreaming a gender perspective in drug-related policies and programmes”.

The CND also encourages Member States to give due consideration to gender parity and inclusion of youth in the composition of their delegations to its meetings.

(d) Harnessing technology

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the CND and its subsidiary bodies had to quickly transition to the online/hybrid mode of conduct of their meetings as a temporary measure to ensure continuity of their work under the new extraordinary circumstances and against the backdrop of the restrictions posed by the pandemic, such as travel impediments, quarantine requirements and limitations to the number of in-person participants.

The Commission continued, despite these challenges, to discharge its operational and normative functions, including through the organization and conduct **of intergovernmental meetings in a hybrid format**, combining in-person with an online component, which has provided opportunities for a broad range of stakeholders to meaningfully contribute to its work.

In addition, the Commission has its meetings publicly **webcast** on its website, thereby allowing even for a broader group of interested stakeholders to follow its deliberations. Also worth mentioning is the useful practice of pre-recorded video statements, which has been used in the Commission even before the outbreak of the pandemic, to ensure a broader contribution of relevant stakeholders to its deliberations.

Commission’s work and its main outcomes are also widely promoted through **social media channels**, including Twitter, Youtube and Flickr, which enhances its public visibility and allows to connect, inter alia, with youth as agents of change.

Taking into account the increased reliance on the online channels of communication, an online **e-learning tool** on the implementation of international drug policy commitments was developed. The e-learning tool, comprising eight interactive modules addressing different aspects of the world drug problem, aims at reaching as broad an audience of practitioners and policymakers as possible.

(e) Joint discussion on governance and financial matters

The CND and CCPCJ, as the governing bodies of UNODC, consider budgetary and administrative matters of the Office and approve the budget for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the budget of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund, respectively.

To exercise this role, each Commission has a dedicated agenda item at the respective regular sessions and also holds a joint discussion at the joint meeting during the reconvened sessions.

To further facilitate an in-depth discussion on the governance and financial matters of UNODC, a standing intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC (FINGOV) was established in 2009. While the working group does not have a decision-making role, it reports back to the two Commissions on the issues under its consideration and also submits recommendations, as relevant.

In 2021, the format and working methods of FINGOV were revised. The working group meets four times a year for two-day meetings each, and discusses matters related to, inter alia: budget, human resources, evaluation and oversight, and contributions of UNODC to the 2030 Agenda as well as matters pertaining to programmatic implementation.

During its meeting, the working group also fosters an interactive **discussion between Member States and staff at field offices of UNODC**, enabling the latter to report on their achievements as well as on the challenges faced in the implementation of their work on the ground.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

The Commission has a strong record in terms of cooperating with other functional commissions of the Council. In addition to the multiple events it holds together with the CCPCJ, the CND has recently organized following joint initiatives:

- In September 2021, the experience and working methods of the CND and CCPCJ were shared during the informal brainstorming workshop organized by the Commission on the Status of Women;
- In June 2020, the CND and the CCPCJ hosted a joint online high-special event in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The meeting was addressed, inter alia, by the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women and the President of the Human Rights Council;
- At the sixty-second session of the CND in 2019, the Chair of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development addressed the CND, under the agenda item on contributions by the Commission to the work of ECOSOC;
- In July 2019, a side event was organized on the occasion of the Integration Segment of ECOSOC, which provided a platform for the CND, CCPCJ, Commission on the Status of Women and others to contribute to the preparations for the Fourteenth UN Crime Congress.

Other possible opportunities for joint work include:

- Organization of joint side events at the margins of the HLPF and on other occasions, including at regular sessions of functional commissions;
- Interventions made at the regular sessions and other meetings of other functional commissions of the Council on topics relevant to the mandate;
- Organization of dialogues with participation of Chairs of functional commissions and other governing bodies, such as for example the Executive Boards of Funds and Programmes.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

Among the recommendations for the Economic and Social Council would be the following:

- Ensuring that the thematic issues under purview of subsidiary bodies (e.g. addressing and countering the world drug problem for the CND) are duly reflected in the policy documents of the Council, through inviting subsidiary bodies to provide mandate-specific inputs, as well as preparation by the Council of comprehensive decisions building on the inputs contained in different resolutions and decisions adopted or recommended by its functional commissions and the specialized agencies, with a view to ensuring a coherent and comprehensive approach and response by the United Nations System to the issues under purview of different bodies, that are interlinked or being addressed in different fora;
- Continuing to give Chairs of Functional Commissions the opportunity to present the outcome of their regular sessions at the ECOSOC (management) meetings;
- Circulating information on Council-related meetings well ahead of time, to ensure meaningful input from the subsidiary bodies;
- Drawing the attention of Member States to the limited resources at the disposal of the Commission (including in terms of meeting entitlements) and its Secretariat that have not grown commensurately with the increase in requests addressed to the Commission, including in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Organization by the Council of pilot cross-sectorial meetings, in a hybrid format, on thematic issues, such as for example on “Health and Drugs”, with participation of the entire memberships of the relevant governing bodies;
- Continuing to have regular informal meetings between the ECOSOC President and the Chairs of the CND/CCPCJ and of other subsidiary bodies to discuss matters of joint interest (this could include, for example, methods of work);

- Conducting trilateral meetings between the ECOSOC President and the membership of the CND and CCPCJ once a year, with a view to institutionalizing the substantive exchange on relevant matters between the Council and the Vienna-based Commissions;
- Supporting the subsidiary bodies in further strengthening their participation in and contributions to the Coordination Segment.

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Review of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies

Responses by the Chair of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

III. Introduction

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) is the principal policymaking body of the United Nations in crime prevention and criminal justice matters and one of the two governing bodies of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

The Commission has seen in recent years a high interest in its work, as demonstrated by large **numbers of participation and a broad variety of relevant stakeholders (Member States, UN entities, international organizations and non-governmental organizations)** participating in its meetings, including in the twenty-eighth and thirtieth regular sessions, held in 2019 and 2021 respectively.¹⁵

The Commission's regular meetings also **attract yearly a large number of side events covering a wide range of topics** related to crime prevention and criminal justice: 120 events were held in the margins of the twenty-eighth session in 2019 and 84 side events were organized in an online format during the thirtieth session in 2021.

In terms of the **policy outcomes shaping the global action on advancing crime prevention and strengthening criminal justice**, the regular sessions of the Commission **result yearly in a number of thematic outcomes**: the Commission adopted, or negotiated for subsequent adoption by the ECOSOC or General Assembly, 11 resolutions at its twenty-eighth session in 2019 and 7 resolutions at the thirtieth session in 2021.

The Commission is meanwhile **substantively active throughout the year**, it is holding an increased number of intersessional meetings and special events **to be able to implement its**

¹⁵ The twenty-ninth session of the Commission, scheduled to take place in May 2020, was postponed, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and subsequently held in December 2020 in a scaled-down format.

Figures for the 28th regular session (May 2019): 1500 participants representing 120 Member States, 18 UN entities and intergovernmental organizations and 51 NGOs;

Figures for the 30th regular session (May 2021): 1150 participants representing 125 Member States, 15 UN entities and intergovernmental organizations and 49 NGOs.

mandated substantive work, which cannot longer be properly covered during its annual regular and reconvened session: In 2021, in addition to the annual regular session and reconvened session the CCPCJ held 29 meetings in the intersessional period, in an online or hybrid format.

Whereas the Commission attaches great importance to the promotion of multilingualism in its work, the mandated **inter-sessional work, including the thematic discussions, does not benefit from interpretation entitlements and are compelled to be only in English.**

In conducting its work, including preparations for, conduct of and follow-up to in-session and intersessional meetings, the Commission relies on the substantive support provided by its Secretariat. **While the CCPCJ's mandates have been increased and the amount of work has doubled over the last two decades,** the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies, acting as the Secretariat to the CCPCJ and to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, **has not seen any increase in its regular budget human resources,** and is hence, **increasingly also dependent on extrabudgetary resources to be able to service the Commission.**

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IV. Assessment of the work of the Commission and recommendations

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), as one of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and the policymaking body of the United Nations with prime responsibility in crime prevention and criminal justice matters, supports Member States' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including primarily Goal 16 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels', but also a wide range of other specific goals and targets.

Commission's mandates and priorities include: international action to combat national and transnational crime, such as organized crime, economic crime and money-laundering; promoting the role of criminal law in protecting the environment; crime prevention in urban areas, including juvenile crime and violence; and improving the efficiency and fairness of criminal justice administration systems.

(a) Action-oriented policy outcomes

The Kyoto Declaration

The Commission also acts as a preparatory and follow-up body for the United Nations Congresses on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The Fourteenth Crime Congress, held in March 2021 in Kyoto, Japan, adopted the Kyoto Declaration on “Advancing Crime Prevention, Criminal Justice and the Rule of Law: Towards the Achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, which will represent in the years to come the key political commitment on crime prevention and criminal justice for all United Nations Member States.

The Declaration, negotiated since 2019 under the auspices of the CCPCJ, firmly builds on the commitments of the 2030 Agenda and the sustainable development goals. In the Declaration, Member States undertook to contribute to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development through efforts in crime prevention and criminal justice, with the firm recognition that sustainable development and the rule of law are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, that crime is an impediment to sustainable development and that achieving sustainable development is an enabling factor for States to effectively prevent and combat crime.

The Commission promptly started the Kyoto follow-up process. The first round of thematic discussions on the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration was successfully conducted in November 2021, by sharing information, good practices and lessons learned on “Advancing Crime Prevention” among various participants such as national practitioners, policymakers, United Nations entities, civil society, and a representative of the first Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness.

Resolutions

The Commission adopts each year a number of action-oriented policy outcomes that address different aspects of crime prevention and criminal justice.

All resolutions adopted or negotiated by the Commission in 2021 contain many substantial elements that contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Equally important, most of these resolutions reflect the need to take into account the challenges either posed or further exacerbated by the pandemic, while designing and implementing crime prevention and criminal justice policies – thereby also contributing to the overall theme¹⁶ of the Council in 2021.

For example, in General Assembly resolution A/RES/76/184¹⁷, negotiated at the thirtieth CCPCJ, adopted at the thirtieth session, Member States are encouraged to take into account lessons learned and best practices applied during the pandemic in an effort to make criminal justice systems more effective, accountable, transparent, inclusive, responsive and better prepared for similar future challenges. The resolution also stresses the importance of taking into account the specific needs of women prisoners and women offenders during the development, monitoring and evaluation of responses to the challenges posed by COVID-19 to the criminal justice system.

¹⁶ “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development”

¹⁷ General Assembly resolution A/RES/76/184 “Strengthening criminal justice systems during and after the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic”

Another General Assembly resolution (A/RES/76/183¹⁸) encourages Member States to integrate sports-based interventions into crime prevention and criminal justice strategies and programmes with a view to addressing risk factors of crime and victimization, including during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

In CCPCJ resolution 30/1¹⁹, Member States are requested to address challenges in combating the smuggling of migrants resulting from COVID-19. The resolution also encourages States to effectively promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of migrant children, stressing the need to avoid approaches that might aggravate their vulnerability, particularly in the wake of the pandemic.

(b) Other Contributions

The Commission also takes action to facilitate discussion among Member States on its contributions to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as on topics relevant to the main theme of the Council. For example, in July 2021, the CCPCJ held, together with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, a high-level side event on “Sustainable and resilient recovery from COVID-19”, to discuss the impact of the pandemic on drugs and crime in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

In May 2019, the Commission held, in preparation for its twenty-eighth regular session, a series of informal meetings, referred to as “brown-bag lunches”²⁰ on the implementation of Goal 16, that fostered an exchange of views on the activities carried out by UNODC in support of different targets of Goal 16.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body’s mandate?

In our work of the CCPCJ, we always remain mindful of its relevance to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As we are dealing with harsh realities on the ground, our work should be strictly fact/evidence-based to be effective. Here are some concrete examples:

(a) Thematic discussions

Expert discussion on crimes that affect the environment

¹⁸ General Assembly resolution A/RES/76/183 “Integrating sport into youth crime prevention and criminal justice strategies”

¹⁹ CCPCJ resolution 30/1 on “Strengthening international cooperation in addressing the smuggling of migrants”

²⁰ https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/commissions/CCPCJ/session/28_Session_2019/brown-bag-lunches.html

Crimes that affect the environment are among the most profitable crimes with manifold negative impact on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

UNODC has conducted a number of research in this field including the 2020 World Wildlife Crime Report, which contains the review and analysis of data in relation to the actions made by States to combat these crimes as well as recommendations to improve measures to prevent and combat these crimes.

These evidence-based researches were one of the basis that the Commission had decided to hold the CCPCJ expert discussions on crimes that affect the environment from 14 to 16 February 2022. In the discussion, participants discussed concrete ways to improve strategies and responses to effectively prevent and combat these crimes and to strengthen international cooperation at the operational level on this matter.

Annual thematic discussion on smuggling of migrants

Some of the SDGs are of particular relevance in the endeavour to prevent and combat smuggling of migrants.

On 8 December 2021, the Commission held its annual thematic discussion on ‘Effective measures to prevent and counter the smuggling of migrants, while protecting the rights of smuggled migrants, particularly women and children, and those of unaccompanied migrant children’. The discussion aimed to improve the measures to prevent and counter the smuggling of migrants.

This work was also led by the UNODC reports and documents with rich variety of evidence including data, research and other relevant information to improve Member States’ capacities to combat migrant smuggling, such as the Global Study on Smuggling of Migrants 2018.

(b) Substantive contribution to the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

Furthermore, the Commission submits an annual **substantive contribution** to the **High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**. This contribution outlines Commission’s work towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to support the Council in this regard, including through contributions to its main theme. In particular, it provides information on the activities of the CCPCJ that showcase strong and direct links to different sustainable development goals. The HLPF contribution also elaborates on how policy outcomes of the Commission are integrated into the broader framework of the 2030 Agenda.

(c) Gaps to be addressed

In terms of gaps to be addressed: it is important to mention that the Regular Budget resources have not grown commensurate with the increased number of mandates given to the Commission. These gaps have partially been filled by some extra-budgetary resources provided by donor countries, but it would be important that additional Regular Budget resources be allocated.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

(a) “Vienna spirit”

The Commission works **consensus-based**, whereby policy documents, resolutions and decisions are usually adopted by consensus. This so-called “**Vienna spirit**” allows all interested Member States to actively participate in the work of the Commission, not limiting negotiation of resolutions and decisions to the 40 Members. As these outcomes are agreed by all participants, Member States have a greater sense of ownership of the commitments contained therein. This working method and its positive effects have been preserved even amid peculiar difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

(b) Inclusive multi-stakeholder intergovernmental processes

The Commission takes an inclusive multi-stakeholder approach in operationalizing its intergovernmental processes, to allow a broad range of stakeholders to contribute to its deliberations. One example is the thematic discussions on the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration, adopted at the Fourteenth Crime Congress. These thematic discussions are held annually and feature an extensive list of panellists and speakers representing Member States, UN entities, intergovernmental organizations and civil society.²¹

(c) Integrating a gender perspective

The CCPCJ also takes action to integrate a **gender dimension** into its work. Together with the CND, the CCPCJ organized a number of interactive events, such as:

- a high-level event to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and discuss the impact of COVID-19 on women and girls (June 2020);
- an interactive discussion on the use of gender-inclusive communication in the work of Vienna-based Commissions (November 2019); and
- a brainstorming meeting on ways to promote gender equality and women empowerment in the work of Vienna-based intergovernmental bodies (September 2019).

In 2017, the CCPCJ adopted resolution 26/3 on “Mainstreaming a gender perspective into crime prevention and criminal justice policies and programmes and into efforts to prevent and combat transnational organized crime”.

The Commission also encourages Member States to give due consideration to gender parity and inclusion of youth in the composition of their delegations to its meetings.

²¹ [CCPCJ thematic discussions crimes that affect environment \(unodc.org\)](https://www.unodc.org/en/press/news/2020/06/ccpcj-thematic-discussions-crimes-that-affect-environment.html)

(d) Harnessing technology

Among the many areas challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic are intergovernmental processes that have been established and designed to allow for inclusive decision-making and the exchange of views, ensuring that all voices are heard.

The Commission continued, despite these challenges, to discharge its operational and normative functions, including through the organization and conduct of intergovernmental meetings in a hybrid format, combining in-person with an online component to ensure continuity of its work under the new extraordinary circumstances

One of the major intergovernmental meetings held by the Commission amidst the COVID-19 pandemic was the **Fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice**, for which the Commission acts as a preparatory and follow-up body.

This Congress was a Congress of many firsts: the first major UN meeting hosted away from headquarters during COVID-19, the first UN meeting **hosted on a customized online conference platform** and the first Crime Congress organized in a hybrid format.

The online conference platform, specifically designed for the Congress, unified over 1,000 in-person participants in Kyoto with over 4,000 participants joining online globally in “one Congress experience”. Its unique set-up enabled online participants to easily switch between different meetings and events of the Congress, including plenary meetings, workshops, special events, ancillary meetings and online exhibitions, thereby allowing all participants, in-person and online, to equally and meaningfully contribute to the Congress deliberations. Networking, being an important element of the intergovernmental processes, was also taken into consideration, with the integration of a lobby function which enabled all participants to network in live mode on the same platform.

The Commission has its regular, reconvened and intersessional meetings publicly **webcast** on its website, thereby allowing even for a broader group of interested stakeholders to follow its deliberations.

Commission’s work and its main outcomes are also widely promoted through **social media channels**, including Twitter, Youtube and Flickr, which enhances its public visibility and allows to connect, inter alia, with youth as agents of change.

Taking into account the increased reliance on online channels of communication, an online **e-learning tool on the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration** was developed. The e-learning tool, comprising three interactive modules, provides information on the background of the Kyoto Declaration, its relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the substantive areas covered in the Declaration.

(e) Joint discussion on governance and financial matters

The CND and CCPCJ, as the governing bodies of UNODC, consider budgetary and administrative matters of the Office and approve the budget for the Fund of the United Nations International Drug

Control Programme and the budget of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund, respectively.

To exercise this role, each Commission has a dedicated agenda item at the respective regular sessions and also holds a joint discussion at the joint meeting during the reconvened sessions.

To further facilitate an in-depth discussion on the governance and financial matters of UNODC, a standing intergovernmental working group on improving the governance and financial situation of UNODC (FINGOV) was established in 2009. While the working group does not have a decision-making role, it reports back to the two Commissions on the issues under its consideration and also submits recommendations, as relevant.

In 2021, the format and working methods of FINGOV were revised. The working group meets four times a year for two-day meetings each, and discusses matters related to, inter alia: budget, human resources, evaluation and oversight, and contributions of UNODC to the 2030 Agenda as well as matters pertaining to programmatic implementation.

During its meeting, the working group also fosters an interactive **discussion between Member States and staff at field offices of UNODC**, enabling the latter to report on their achievements as well as on the challenges faced in the implementation of their work on the ground.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

The CCPCJ already works very closely with other functional commissions of the Council on a wide array of topics for the sake of greater added value of its work. In addition to the numerous events organized jointly with the CND, most recent examples of horizontal cooperation between the CCPCJ and other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC include the following:

- In February 2022, the Director of the Secretariat supporting the United Nations Forum on Forest (UNFF) addressed the CCPCJ expert discussions on crimes that affect the environment, focusing on the prevention of crimes that affect the environment;
- In November 2021, one of the Vice-Chairs of the Statistical Commission addressed the CCPCJ thematic discussions on the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration, focusing on evidence-based crime prevention;
- In September 2021, the experience and working methods of CND and CCPCJ were shared during the informal brainstorming workshop organized by the Commission on the Status of Women;
- In June 2020, the CND and the CCPCJ hosted a joint online high-special event in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The meeting was

addressed, inter alia, by the Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women and the President of the Human Rights Council;

- In July 2019, a side event was organized on the occasion of the Integration Segment of ECOSOC, which provided a platform for the CND, CCPCJ, Commission on the Status of Women and others to contribute to the preparations for the Fourteenth UN Crime Congress.

Other possible opportunities for joint work include:

- Organization of joint side events at the margins of the HLPF and on other occasions, including at regular sessions of functional commissions;
- Interventions made at the regular sessions and other meetings of other functional commissions of the Council on topics relevant to the mandate;
- Organization of dialogues with participation of Chairs of functional commissions and other governing bodies.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

Among the recommendations for the Economic and Social Council would be the following:

- Ensuring that the thematic issues under purview of subsidiary bodies (e.g. crime prevention and criminal justice matters for the CCPCJ) are duly reflected in the policy documents of the Council, through inviting subsidiary bodies to provide mandate-specific inputs;
- Preparing the comprehensive decisions of the Council building on the inputs contained in different resolutions and decisions adopted or recommended by its functional commissions and the specialized agencies, with a view to ensuring a coherent and comprehensive approach and response by the United Nations System to the issues under purview of different bodies, that are interlinked or being addressed in different fora;
- Continuing to give Chairs of Functional Commissions the opportunity to present the outcome of their regular sessions at the ECOSOC (management) meetings;
- Circulating information on Council-related meetings well ahead of time to ensure meaningful input from the subsidiary bodies;
- Drawing the attention of Member States to the limited resources at the disposal of the Commission (including in terms of meeting entitlements) that have not grown commensurately with the increase in requests addressed to the Commission, including in the context of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Continuing to have informal meetings, as necessary, between the ECOSOC President and the Chairs of the CND/CCPCJ and of other subsidiary bodies to discuss matters of joint interest (this could include, for example, methods of work);

- Conducting trilateral meetings between the ECOSOC President and the membership of the CND and CCPCJ once a year, with a view to institutionalizing the substantive exchange on relevant matters between the Council and the Vienna-based Commissions;
- Supporting the subsidiary bodies in further strengthening their participation in and contributions to the Coordination Segment.

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An assessment of the CSTD work

Background

In resolution 75/290A, ECOSOC was invited to continue strengthening the oversight, guidance, and coordination role of its subsidiary bodies. The resolution invited the President and Bureau of the Council to work with the bureaux of its subsidiary bodies and, in consultation with delegations during the 2022 session of the Council, to identify possible actions to be taken to implement the provisions regarding enhancing the work of subsidiary bodies contained in paragraphs 28 and 29 of the annex to General Assembly resolution 72/305.²²

The review launched by resolution 75/290A²³ should aim to achieve similarly clear guidance, building on these and earlier recommendations to subsidiary bodies on their work. The review may also lead to suggestions for improving ECOSOC's oversight, coordination, and guidance of its subsidiary bodies. In general terms, the review should ensure that subsidiary bodies are fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda and produce high-quality assessments and policy recommendations on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. The review should also ensure that subsidiary bodies adequately support the work of ECOSOC.

The review commenced in December 2021. The bureau of each subsidiary body is requested to provide an assessment within ten days after its annual session in 2022. The assessment will be used as inputs to the synthesis that the ECOSOC secretariat will prepare for the discussions that the ECOSOC Vice President leading the review will organize in April 2022 to identify the changes to be introduced in the work of the subsidiary bodies.

The ECOSOC Vice President leading the review proposed the following five questions to the subsidiary bodies for consideration in their respective review:

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments, and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?
2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?

²² Para 28. The Economic and Social Council should strengthen its oversight and coordination role of its subsidiary bodies. It should review their work with a view to ensuring their continued relevance. It will also ensure that they produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to inform the integrated view of the Council and inform efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda. It should effectively integrate the outcomes of its subsidiary bodies into its own work.

²³ <https://undocs.org/en/A/RES/75/290A>

3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?
4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?
5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

The Bureau invited the CSTD Member States to provide their replies to the above questions. The Bureau also designated Mr. Peter Major (Hungary), vice-chair of the CSTD as the focal point for this exercise. Mr. Major prepared an informal note with the Bureau's replies to the five questions which was circulated to the CSTD Member States for comments on 1 March 2022.

The present note contains the CSTD Bureau's final assessment of the work of the Commission, on the basis of the informal note of 1 March 2022 and the feedback received from Member States.

Bureau's Review of the CSTD work

Member States appreciate and value the work of the CSTD as the focal point in the UN system on STI for development and appreciates the work undertaken by its secretariat, in terms of discussing and analyzing the challenges and impacts of science, technology, and innovation (STI) on the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and facilitating and providing a space for consensus-building and dialogues to share good practices and lessons learned not only among the Member States but also with other stakeholders and the relevant UN bodies. Member States wish to maintain a constructive dialogue at the CSTD. The role of CSTD as part of the policy-making process of the United Nations (for example through the negotiation of draft resolutions and decisions) distinguishes it from other mechanisms discussing STI for SDGs like the STI Forum.

Member States recognize the high technical value of the CSTD work through its annual sessions and inter-sessional panels and emphasize the need to integrate the CSTD's technical work into the policy negotiations in ECOSOC. This can be done through CSTD's deeper and regular contact with ECOSOC.

The technical cooperation work conducted by the secretariat is also much appreciated. In particular since the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic the secretariat has continued offering CSTD-related technical assistance to developing countries including least developed countries by using virtual means, as well as by facilitating technical cooperation among Member States, both South-South and North-South cooperation.

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Q1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments, and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the CSTD has sought to systematically align its work programme with the 2030 Agenda. This is considerably facilitated by the fact that science and technology are essential

means of implementing the 2030 Agenda, as recognized in SDG 17. More specifically, the SDGs under review by the HLPF guide the Commission in its choice of priority themes for its annual session. Every year the Commission's consideration of its priority themes includes inputs from top international experts and leads to the identification of good practices and policy lessons about the contribution of science and technology to the achievement of specific SDGs and formulate direct recommendations in this regard to governments and the international community.

The Commission has also provided a forum for practical cooperation initiatives to build science and technology capacities in developing countries targeting specific SDGs (for example, the CropWatch programme using satellite technology to monitor crops or a capacity-building programme on STI policy management; and a young scientist programme aims at building human capital in STI-related fields in developing and LDCs, with particular attention to young women scientists to close the gender gap in scientific research).

The Commission holds annual discussions on the outcomes of voluntary [national science, technology, and innovation policy reviews](#). The reviews, prepared by the UNCTAD secretariat, provide expert analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the national innovation systems of participating developing countries and include recommendations for the improvement of STI policies in the country. The discussion of the STI policy reviews at the CSTD provides further opportunities to identify relevant policy lessons. More recently, the CSTD's recommendations have led to a new technical cooperation programme to build capacity in developing countries to conduct [technology assessment](#) exercises.

The work carried out by the functional commissions has contributed significantly to strengthening actions to achieve the 2030 agenda and the SDGs. Member states welcomed the solid technical expertise necessary to advance multilateral goals. In addition, several Member States pointed out national actions and international collaboration that were attributed to the ideas that emerged during the CSTD discussions.

Member States have reported various initiatives and actions catalyzed by the contributions from the CSTD. Furthermore, it has been suggested that these activities (including missions in the context of STIP Reviews) have resulted in further national activities related to STI policies in some Member States. It has also been argued that annual sessions and inter-sessional panel meetings provide opportunities to share good practices and lessons learned. The STI policy reviews carried out in several countries put forward concrete steps for those countries to better leverage STI for development.

While members recognize that the technical value created during intersessional and plenary sessions is high, it has been suggested that these activities could benefit further from being aligned effectively with policy negotiations.

Finally, Member States have highlighted the importance of international cooperation in bridging and managing new technologies, especially in times of crisis such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. It has been suggested that international collaboration is set to remain a leading and reliable tool to broaden and strengthen technology transfer and diffusion mechanisms.

Regarding the gaps to be addressed, it has been suggested the Commission could guide ways to operationalize a United Nations-backed database on open-source technologies to help achieve the SDGs, as pointed out in the 24th session of CSTD last year.

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Q2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?

The Commission's work is supported by extensive technical documentation prepared by the secretariat regarding its priority themes. These materials also include inputs from experts from Member States coupled with the secretariat and independent experts' research and analysis. The draft reports are thoroughly discussed during an intersessional panel meeting, reflected in the final documents. In addition to the Secretary-General's reports on the priority themes, more detailed publications are developed as part of [a current series of studies, technical notes](#), and policy briefs.

The CSTD's mandate includes the system-wide follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS). In this context, the [reports](#) prepared every year with inputs from many international organizations and the outcome of the various [working groups](#) convened by the CSTD on the implementation of WSIS outcomes represent a significant knowledge base on the subject of information and communication technologies for development.

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Q3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

The Commission has organized regional consultations for the priority themes in preparing the Secretary-General reports and sought good practices and lessons from the Member States that are fed into the Secretary-General's reports. The Commission also held informal ministerial and other high-level networking sessions around CSTD annual sessions, side events, site visits etcetera. to share good practices and engage world-renowned experts.

In the follow-up to the WSIS, the Commission's work has enabled it to generate significant experience in the active engagement of non-governmental stakeholders. This experience has contributed to the CSTD work in areas associated with its traditional mandate. For example, many CSTD sessions have been broadcast over the Internet to allow the general public to follow the work of the Commission. In addition, leading scientists and innovators regularly engage with the Commission's members in open discussions about critical issues on the interface of technology, development, and policy such as Artificial Intelligence, advanced biotechnologies or gender, science, technology, and innovation.

Some Member States have re-emphasized the importance of collaboration with the UNCTAD secretariat, whose contributions are based on inputs from experts, evaluation tools, and policy recommendations in STI towards the sustainable development goals (SDG). In addition, it has been suggested that there is potential for further collaboration with a specific objective on identifying shared opportunities for partnership and financing of STI projects.

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Q4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

The CSTD has actively sought to engage with other actors within the ECOSOC system, most notably the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Social Development (including the organization of joint expert meetings). Through the chairs' addressing to the respective Commission's meetings, a synergy is built among their work towards contributing to sustainable development, particularly under the 2030 Agenda. The Commission has also established close cooperation and collaboration with regional commissions to support consultations, notably in the follow-up to WSI and on emerging and new issues such as the themes of frontier technologies and space technologies (in ESCAP).

Moreover, the Commission has established coordination mechanisms with the STI Forum under the Technology Facilitation Mechanism and developed synergies in their activities through the Chair's participation in every year's STI Forum, briefing to the CSTD by the STI Forum co-chairs.

Given the clear relevance of STI to most of the ECOSOC's work areas, these efforts should be integrated with a greater and more regular level of participation of the CSTD representatives in the activities of other bodies and vice versa. In the case of the bodies in which the mutual relevance is more evident, a standing invitation for the Chairs of each body to participate in the annual sessions of the other bodies could be particularly beneficial to all parties involved. In addition, the regional consultations on priority themes could be strengthened with more funding available for the Commission.

Some Member States stressed that for STI to provide solutions to global challenges it is increasingly necessary to reinforce a new paradigm of international STI cooperation that places more value on challenge-driven, transdisciplinary research. It was argued that governments need to work together on financing and governance mechanisms, where national research funding agencies and private sectors, on the one hand, coordinate with multinational agencies and international development banks to co-finance STI solutions for global challenges.

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Q5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

Some Member States suggested that there might be good opportunities for joint work between the UN SG's Technology Envoy to be appointed and the CSTD as the focal point for WSIS Follow-up in the process of reviewing the mandates of WSIS.

Some members have expressed that synergies between the CSTD and STI forum would need to be clarified, particularly in terms of division of labour.

The newly created coordination segment could play an essential role in this regard. In addition, more opportunities should be made for the results of the work of the subsidiary bodies, particularly those based outside New York, to be presented in more detail to delegations so that they could inform more substantively the ECOSOC's work.

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UN Forum on Forests (UNFF)

Committee of Experts on the Transport of Dangerous Goods and on the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (TDG-GHS)

Reply to the letter of ECOSOC Vice-Chair (Letter 3 February 2022)²⁴

ANNEX: Questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies by the Chairs and Bureaux:

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

Ad.1: The Committee of Experts on TDG and on GHS and its two subsidiary subcommittees effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role by providing detailed technical expertise in the biannual publications of the Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, so-called UN Model Regulations, the Manual of Tests and Criteria and the Globally Harmonized System of Classification and Labelling of Chemicals (GHS). These publications support an integrated and action-oriented approach, as they are transposed into national regulations and regional agreements, thereby ensuring that best practices are widely disseminated, and thus harmonization is achieved across countries and industries.

The Committee also provided a quick response to the COVID-19 pandemic by facilitating the global supply chain of COVID-19 vaccines. The TDG Sub-Committee confirmed in December 2020 that such vaccines authorized for use, including those in clinical trials, are not subject to the UN Model Regulations as currently written.

The work of the Committee and its two sub-committees builds on best practices, sound science, data, evidence, technical expert analysis and on the interlinkages across the Sustainable Development Goals. It is aligned with SDG goals and targets: in particular, Goal 3 (Good health and well-being: targets 3.4 and 3.9), Goal 6 (Clean water and sanitation: target 6.3), Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth: targets 8.1, 8.2, 8.4 and 8.8), Goal 12 (Responsible consumption and production: targets 12.4, 12.6 and 12.A), Goal 13 (Climate change: targets 13.1 and 13.2) and Goal 14 (Live below water: target 14.1).

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?

Ad.2: Details on the outcome of sessions and an evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the Model Regulations and the GHS can be found in report E/2021/10 of the

²⁴ For more details, please refer to the following documents: [UN/SCETDG/59/INF.31/Rev.1](#) and [UN/SCEGHS/41/INF.5](#).

Secretary-General on the work of the Committee of Experts on TDG and on GHS. In June 2021, ECOSOC considered that report and adopted without change the resolution E/RES/2021/13 for the Committee's mandate for its activities during the biennium 2021-2022.

The recommendations developed by the TDG and GHS sub-committees during the period 2021-2022 will be considered by the Committee in December 2022. The Committee will also consider an ECOSOC draft resolution on its work during 2021-2022, as well as a detailed report for consideration by ECOSOC in 2023. It will also cover the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and an action-oriented approach to the SDGs covered by the Committee.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

Ad.3: The TDG and GHS experts meet twice a year (June/July and November/ December) to discuss amendments to the recommendations from experts, other UN organizations, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs. Additionally, TDG also takes account of proposals by experts of other UNECE bodies administering agreements or conventions on the transport of dangerous goods for the different modes of inland transport (road, rail and inland waterways). Experts from other UN organizations and agencies WHO, IMO, ICAO, IAEA also participate in the subcommittee sessions to align the recommendation with their specifications (i.e. IMDG code, ICAO Technical Instructions, IAEA Safety Standards). The purpose of this close cooperation aims at ensuring the alignment and worldwide harmonization of the recommendations for the carriage of dangerous goods for all modes of transport. All 3 publications (namely the UN Model Regulations, the Manual of Tests and Criteria, and the GHS) are available at the UNECE website in the 6 United Nations official languages (available at: <https://unece.org/publications/transport/dangerous%20goods>).

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

Ad.4: The GHS, UN Model Regulations and the Manual of Tests and Criteria are regularly updated by the TDG and GHS Sub-Committee in close cooperation with other organizations, such as WHO, IAEA, ICAO, IMO, FAO, OECD, UNECE, ILO, UNITAR and many others.

5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

Ad.5: ECOSOC could raise awareness of the importance of the work done by the TDG and GHS Sub-Committees and increase their visibility by recognizing the global relevance of the Model Regulations, Manual of Tests and Criteria and the GHS. The provisions/recommendations in these publications may be implemented by emerging economies lacking the framework or resources to independently develop

their own national chemical safety program. This work enhances both safety as well as economic growth by providing a regulatory platform critical to engaging in global trade and transport.

In this respect, the UN Model Regulations cover principles of classification and definition of classes, listing of the principal dangerous goods, general packing requirements, testing procedures, marking, labelling or placarding, and transport documents. With the harmonized provisions in the Model Regulations carriers, consignors and inspecting authorities will benefit from simplified transport, handling and control procedures and from a reduction in time-consuming formalities. Similarly for GHS addresses classification of chemicals by types of hazard and proposes harmonized hazard communication elements. It aims at ensuring that information on physical hazards and toxicity from chemicals be available to enhance the protection of human health and the environment during the handling, transport and use of these chemicals. The Manual of Tests and Criteria contains criteria, test methods and procedures to be used for the classification of dangerous goods according to the provisions of the Model Regulations, as well as of chemicals presenting physical hazards according to the GHS. The Manual therefore also supplements national or international regulations which are derived from the Model Regulations or the GHS.

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Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR)

Questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies by the Chairs and Bureaux:

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

The Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) assists countries with the implementation of international standards and best practices on accounting and reporting with the goal to foster financial stability, international and domestic investment, and social and economic progress. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) serves as ISAR's secretariat, providing substantive and administrative inputs to its activities. ISAR fully contributes to the implementation of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda and to the role of ECOSOC in this regard.

ISAR contributes to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in 3 ways:

- *Financing for Development. Accounting and reporting is a fundamental prerequisite for access to finance. Strengthening accounting and reporting capacity in firms of all sizes and with a focus on the least developed countries supports their integration in the financial system.*
- *Sustainable finance and Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) Reporting. "Sustainability reporting is the basis for sustainable investment"; therefore, promoting the preparation of reliable and comparable sustainability or ESG reports will enable responsible investment and facilitate the mobilization of funds for SDG investment.*
- *SDG reporting and monitoring. Company sustainability/SDG reporting can be a primary source of information on company performance towards implementation of the SDGs monitoring framework by providing stakeholders with the means to assess the economic, environmental, and social performance and impacts of the private sector on the SDG implementation. The private sector is also a key player in the implementation of the SDGs. Thus, companies should report on their progress and their contribution needs to be accounted for in the global consideration of the SDGs' progress. ISAR supports the preparation of these data and contributes to ECOSOC's work and the HLPF by supporting the measurement of the contribution of the private sector. This information can be used by member States in preparing their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs).*

ISAR works by promoting consensus building, developing policy guidance and tools, and providing technical assistance. ISAR produces tools, guidance, policy recommendations and other documents based on evidence and data collected by the UNCTAD Secretariat. ISAR's work is fully aligned with the theme of ECOSOC and the HLPF in 2022 "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

The ISAR sessions allow experts from all over the world to discuss developments, emerging issues and progress in the sustainability and financial reporting areas. Representatives from all key international organizations in charge of accounting and reporting participate in the discussions, as well as representatives from governments, other UN agencies, national financial and sustainability reporting standard setters, the Accountancy Profession, Academia, etc.

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, ISAR has strengthened its focus on measuring the contribution of the private sector to the achievement of the SDGs. Moreover, the UNCTAD Secretariat has also conducted work in this area in its role as co-custodian, together with UN Environment, of indicator 12.6.1 “number of companies publishing sustainability reports”. Accordingly, the co-custodians have developed a measurement methodology of the indicator and are overseeing the data collection and reporting process to the global SDGs database used to assess progress on this indicator up to 2030. This promotes harmonization of the SDG reporting by companies and facilitates countries reporting on the contribution of the private sector to the implementation of the SDGs.

The work on promoting harmonization on sustainability reporting and measuring the contribution of the private sector to the achievement of the SDGs also includes supporting member States to establish or reinforce their sustainability reporting infrastructure to enable them to properly implement the upcoming international sustainability reporting standards. These new standards which will be issued soon and become mandatory for listed companies will require sound regulation, institutions and human capacity to be adequately implemented. Therefore, ISAR has requested the UNCTAD Secretariat to continue providing policy recommendations, guidance and tools to support member States in their efforts to implement them and promote high quality sustainability reporting.

With a view to provide additional support, ISAR also requested the UNCTAD Secretariat to facilitate the sharing of experience and the identification of lessons learned to improve the quality of corporate reporting. High quality sustainability reporting will contribute to boosting investment on SDG related areas and embedding sustainability practices in companies’ business cycles. The *Guidance on Core Indicators for entity reporting on contribution towards implementation of the SDGs* (GCI) was developed by the UNCTAD Secretariat in accordance with the agreed conclusions of the 34th session of ISAR which requested to develop a guiding document on a limited number of core indicators for entity reporting, aligned with the SDGs. The GCI is based on deliberations during three ISAR annual sessions, intersessional forums, and Consultative Group meetings from 2016 to 2018. With a view to validate the feasibility of the GCI implementation, 36 Case studies with companies from 20 countries and 27 industries were conducted. The GCI promotes an action-oriented approach to the SDGs. Its 33 indicators are applicable to all companies regardless of their size or industry and cover the economic, environmental, social and institutional performance and impacts of the private sector on the SDG implementation, such as on the use of energy and water, carbon dioxide emissions, waste generation, human resources, gender equality, practices anticorruption, and community development, among others. Furthermore, at its 38th session ISAR asked the UNCTAD Secretariat to continue efforts to facilitate wider awareness, dissemination, and implementation of the GCI.

Moreover, at the request of ISAR, the UNCTAD Secretariat has also encouraged the creation of regional partnerships for the promotion of sustainability and SDG reporting, which will provide continuous support to facilitate exchange of experience, allow consultation among peers and identification of good practices in the implementation of the new global sustainability reporting standards.

Another key tool used to support member States is the Accounting Development Tool which allows to conduct a comprehensive diagnostic of the national infrastructure for corporate reporting, to promote collaboration and coordination at national level and to prepare an integrated action plan to promote high quality sustainability reporting. Moreover, ISAR called on the UNCTAD Secretariat to convene a Consultative Group meeting to build on the work already accomplished with the development of sustainability/SDG reporting related tools, activities implemented in the beneficiary countries of technical assistance and at regional level with the creation of the partnerships. As a response, the UNCTAD Secretariat organized such Consultative Group at the beginning of March 2022 to collect inputs for the development of a policy recommendations document which will also contain main lessons learned and good practices in addressing practical implementation aspects pertaining to policymaking, regulation, and institutional and human capacity-building to establish and strengthen the national infrastructure for high quality sustainability reporting.

In addition, ISAR called upon the UNCTAD Secretariat to continue using the accounting training manual for MSMEs to foster financial literacy, improve business management, decisions making and access to finance.

The outcomes of the ISAR sessions are included in the agreed conclusions of the session, which detailed the work programme for the next cycle and the issues that will be considered in the next session. The agreed conclusions contained the views and recommendations of the Group of Experts and are specific and action oriented. They are included in the summary report of the session. As previously mentioned, ISAR's work is fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?

There is continuous reporting on ISAR activities in support of the implementation of the SDGs, as well as its contribution to other key summits and conferences such as COP26 in the context of the reports of the UN Secretary General on these conferences, the Financing for Sustainable Development Report, etc. In addition, ISAR prepares three key sets of reports:

- *Issues notes for discussion at the annual ISAR meetings, prepared through a process of consultation.*
- *Meeting report of the annual ISAR session, containing a summary of discussions and agreed conclusions.*
- *Substantive reports, including policy guidance (e.g., sustainability reporting, reporting for MSMEs), training manuals and technical assistance reports.*

An issues note is prepared by the UNCTAD Secretariat on each one of the main agenda items as a background document for discussions at the ISAR session. The issues notes contain recent developments and trends on the topic up for discussion, as well as findings, analysis and policy recommendations based on evidence and experiences and lessons learned gathered through technical assistance activities,

research, and consultations. These documents are made available online in the 6 UN languages before the meeting. They include a list of suggested issues for discussion at the session.

In addition, other documents such as case studies, proposed guidance, etc., are prepared on an ad hoc basis and shared with participants, and presented and discussed during the ISAR session. In addition, key international players in the area of accounting and reporting join the discussion panels and share their insights, as well as representatives of different countries who share challenges and best practices and/or results of national accounting and reporting infrastructure assessments or their action plans for sustainability reporting.

Finally, a summary report of the ISAR session is prepared. The report contains a summary of the discussions and results of the session, as well as the agreed conclusions that will guide the work leading to the next session. The report is also translated to the 6 UN languages and published online. In addition, it is presented to the Commission on Investment and Enterprise or to the Trade and Development Board of UNCTAD.

With a view to properly addressing the needs to fulfill the 2030 Agenda and related conferences and summits, ISAR has requested the UNCTAD Secretariat to continue supporting members States in their efforts to implement international standards of accounting and reporting, through technical assistance activities and by providing policy recommendations, making available the necessary tools and guidance and supporting the exchange of experience. For this purpose, among other instruments, the Accounting Development Tool and the Guidance on Core SDG Indicators for company reporting on sustainability impact are being used. Moreover, at the request of ISAR, the UNCTAD Secretariat convened a Consultative Group meeting in March 2022 to build on the work already accomplished with the development of sustainability/SDG reporting related tools, activities implemented in the beneficiary countries of technical assistance and at regional level with the creation of the partnerships. The meeting allowed to gather inputs for the development of a policy recommendations document that will complement the sustainability/SDG reporting toolkit. The document will also contain main lessons learned and good practices in addressing practical implementation issues to establish and strengthen the national infrastructure for high quality sustainability reporting. Moreover, feedback received from participants will be included into ISAR's communication with the ISSB on key challenges for countries in the adoption of international sustainability reporting standards.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

Effective assistance by the UNCTAD Secretariat

UNCTAD has an important and strong mandate to work on Accounting and Reporting. UNCTAD reports on the results of its activities on Accounting and Reporting through the Trade and Development Board (TDB) of UNCTAD, this information is then conveyed to the General Assembly.

Inclusive forum

ISAR is an inclusive forum, and its annual sessions are attended by participants from all over the world representing Governments, international organizations in the corporate reporting area, other UN agencies, national financial and sustainability reporting standard setters, the Accountancy Profession, Academia, etc.

Consultations with the ISAR official membership

The ISAR sessions are opened to all UNCTAD members States. A special meeting with ISAR official members is organized during every session in order to gather their views on emerging issues and possible future agenda items. It also allows to brief members on technical assistance activities, tools and new instruments being developed, as well as to discuss other issues as needed.

ISAR Bureau

The chair and vice chair of the ISAR sessions are fully involved in the consultations during the session and also participate in intersessional activities, depending on the work programme. They provide their views and recommendations to increase the effectiveness and impact of the work of ISAR. In addition, it is customary that the chair comes from a different geographical regional every session with a view to ensure fair representation.

Publicly available documents

All ISAR documents including issues notes related to the main agenda items of the session, the presentations during the panel discussions, the summary report of the session and materials presented and discussed such as case studies, guidance documents, etc. are made available online.

Full alignment with the 2030 Agenda

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, ISAR has strengthened its focus on measuring the contribution of the private sector to the implementation of the SDGs; also used to assist member States in preparing their VNRs.

Sustainability reporting is the basis of sustainable investment; therefore, UNCTAD will further support member States to reinforce their accounting and reporting infrastructures to cope with related developments. It will also conduct a review on practical implementation issues regarding international standards of accounting and reporting in the public and private sectors. Accordingly, ISAR's work is fully aligned with the theme of ECOSOC and the HLPF in 2022. As it will promote the preparation of reliable and comparable sustainability reports that enable responsible investment and facilitate the mobilization of funds for SDG investment.

Intersessional activities tailored to meet requests of the agreed conclusions and to gather evidence and collect data

Depending on the work programme set up on the agreed conclusions of the ISAR session, a series of additional activities such as expert meetings, consultative group meetings, technical assistance activities, capacity building, and research are conducted. These activities allow to gather evidence and collect data for the development of publications, guidance, tools and case studies. The results are presented and discussed at the ISAR session.

Development of tools and useful instruments to provide technical assistance and guidance

Throughout the years several documents have been prepared. Some of the key tools and instruments available to support countries include:

- The Accounting Development Tool – which allows to conduct a comprehensive diagnostic of the national infrastructure for corporate reporting, gives an integrated approach to achieving high-quality financial and sustainability reporting.
- The Guidance on Core Indicators for company reporting on sustainability impact and its related training manuals and e-learning.
- Accounting training manual and related tools, to facilitate access to finance for MSMEs.

Collaboration with key international players and other UN agencies working in this area

ISAR has continued fostering collaboration and partnerships with key players in the financial and sustainability reporting area, including with the International Financial Reporting Foundation (IFRS Foundation), the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB), the newly created International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB), the Value Reporting Foundation, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) and other UN entities working in this area such as: UNDESA, UNEP, UN Global Compact (UNGC), FAO and UNRISD, etc.

Moreover, UNDESA is using the GCI as an input for business statistics for the national accounts which highlights the relevance of sustainability reporting in measuring the contribution of the private sector to the SDGs and the usefulness of the GCI. Additionally, UNGC, FAO and UNRISD have also included the GCI core SDG indicators in their extended versions of sustainability indicators.

At the same time, these key international players and other UN agencies have actively participated in ISAR sessions where beneficiary countries have presented and discussed results of technical assistance activities, and challenges and lessons learned, and in Consultative Group meetings that have led to the development or revision of tools such as the one organized in March 2021 which discussed possible updates to the GCI based on international developments, feedback from case studies and beneficiary countries. In addition, a series of conference calls have taken place to coordinate efforts in the area of sustainability/SDG reporting to ensure coherence and support countries in their efforts to establish or strengthen their sustainability reporting infrastructure.

Sharing of experience

With a view to maximize the benefits of technical assistance activities, UNCTAD has promoted the sharing of experience and results at the ISAR sessions and in regional activities. It has also been facilitating the creation of regional partnerships for the promotion of sustainability reporting.

Consultations with experts

A Consultative Group meeting on national infrastructure for high quality sustainability reporting was organized in March 2022, featured discussions with *experts from* different geographical regions on main lessons learned in addressing practical implementation aspects pertaining to policymaking, regulation, and institutional and human capacity-building to establish and strengthen the national infrastructure for high quality sustainability reporting. Feedback received from participants will be included in a policy guideline and will feed into ISAR's communication with the ISSB on key challenges for countries in the adoption of international sustainability reporting standards.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

There are opportunities for collaboration between ISAR and ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and UN agencies. For instance, at the request of ISAR, UNCTAD has been collaborating with colleagues from the UN Statistical Commission, due to the development of the metadata guidance of SDG indicator 12.6.1 on number of companies producing sustainability reports, of which UNCTAD is co-custodian together with UNEP. In addition, the ISAR Secretariat (UNCTAD) has collaborated with the UN Statistics Division of UNDESA in the development of Business Statistics particularly in the task team on wellbeing and sustainability. In addition, it has also been collaborating with FfD for Sustainable Development Office of UNDESA, UNGC, UNRISD, UNEP, FAO, and UNDP with relation to the work they conduct in the sustainability reporting area. In this regard, the indicators contained in the GCI have been used by many of these UN agencies as a baseline to further develop sustainability indicators for specific industries or types of companies, and as part of their reporting mechanisms. These group of UN agencies holds a series of meetings throughout the year to ensure consistency and share information on current activities. They also participate in ISAR sessions as appropriate.

We stand ready to further cooperate with ECOSOC subsidiary bodies as required.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

ECOSOC can:

- *Highlight to member States the importance of high-quality sustainability reporting and SDG reporting to facilitate responsible investments, address “SDG washing” concerns, measure the positive and negative impacts of companies’ operations and influence behavioral change of companies towards more sustainable practices, including through HLPF debates and consideration of key ISAR recommendations for inclusion in the Ministerial Declaration.*
- *Support dissemination of all ISAR recommendations and activities and inform on technical assistance available to member States.*

In this regard, ISAR is currently working to ensure the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by:

- Supporting member States in their efforts to establish or strengthen their national sustainability reporting infrastructure to promote high quality sustainability reports by companies with a view to enable responsible investment and facilitate the redirection of funds to SDG related areas.
- Developing a policy recommendations document including lessons learned, best practices and examples of successful approaches in addressing practical implementation aspects pertaining to policymaking, regulation, and institutional and human capacity-building for high quality sustainability reporting,

- Promoting collaboration and coordination at the national, regional, and international levels with all key players in sustainability reporting to promote consistency and comparability and facilitate availability of data for the SDG indicator 12.6.1.
- Identifying key challenges for countries in the adoption of international sustainability reporting standards and conveying these issues to the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB).
- Providing support to the Regional Partnerships for the promotion of sustainability reporting to facilitate the exchange of experience and to identify good practices in the implementation of the new global sustainability reporting standards.
- Continuing to create awareness and disseminating the GCI and related capacity building materials to improve the quality of data to measure the contribution of the private sector to the implementation of the SDGs and enable governments to include this information in their VNRs.
- Continuing efforts in strengthening financial literacy in the MSME sector through dissemination of the accounting training manual for MSMEs with a view to improve financial literacy, increasing resilience and resistance of all companies to shocks such as the COVID 19 Pandemic and facilitate access to finance.

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Review of the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council

The United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN)

The Preparatory Process

The UNGEGN Bureau met on 11th February 2022, discussed, and outlined responses to the five questions asked. With research and compilation support from the UNGEGN Secretariat a draft response was prepared and reviewed by the Bureau. With the objective of being inclusive the draft response was circulated to the UNGEGN expanded bureau (comprising chairs of working groups and task coordinators) and chairs of linguistic and geographical divisions for their review and input. Given the short consultative time frame six responses were received, five from divisions and one from a working group. All supported the response as prepared with few non substantive edits. At the UNGEGN Bureau meeting of 11 March 2022 the draft was approved with further edits. The final responses to the questions are presented below.

Responses to Questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies by the Chairs and Bureaux:

1) Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council’s role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

1) Geographical names constitute the basic reference framework for indicating location and orientation but ambiguity in names can lead to confusion. Geographical names standardization is required to improve communication between peoples, countries and cultures. It is therefore a key element of the communication needed to enable the United Nations to become the world’s most effective voice for international cooperation on behalf of peace, development, migration, refugee resettlement, human rights and the environment. Governments and all sectors of society’s operations depend on authoritative naming of locations, including regional and local authorities, legal institutions, statistical bureaus, tourism authorities, public works departments, transportation companies – air, land and sea, national security agencies, disaster management authorities, users of the internet, businesses and the public in general.

2) UNGEGN, a body of experts consisting of cartographers, geographers, geographical names experts, historians, linguists, planners and surveyors nominated by their governments, is mandated to recommend the establishment of national organizations to standardize and disseminate geographical names. The body works towards every country having a fully functioning and globally aligned structure and policy framework, based on common principles for national standardization of authorized geographical names that identify location and respect the associated culture and heritage, and to have these names easily accessible for national and international use - facilitating consistent worldwide use of geographical names to foster communication and cooperation.



3) UNGEGN recognizes the 2030 Agenda as the blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all. The monitoring of SDGs needs to be supported by thematic analyses based on geospatial data, of which geographical names are a core element. Therefore, optimizing the use of nationally standardized authorized geographical names is a prerequisite, for which UNGEGN’s expertise is advantageous. The use of nationally standardized geographical names applies to all seventeen SDGs.

4) Through cultural, heritage and language recognition, UNGEGN supports the “Transformation: leave no one behind” agenda, including the poorest and most vulnerable, and Member States in need of special attention. Particularly, the work being done by the Group of Experts contributes to achieving Goal 11.4 “Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage.” Further, the dissemination of UNGEGN principles and standards for geographical names included in its resolutions and recommendations helps strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body’s mandate?

1) A major element in the modification of its working methods and operating modalities between 2017 and 2018 (E/RES/3028/2), was the alignment of UNGEGN’s work programme with the overarching 2030 Agenda. In recognition of the 2030 Agenda, UNGEGN’s [Provisional Agenda](#) (GEGN.2/2019/rev.1) was modified (approved by ECOSOC E/2018/264) to include the item “*Social and economic benefits, supporting sustainable development, measures taken and proposed for the implementation of resolutions and evaluation of the work of the Group of Experts*”. It remains a standing agenda item for subsequent sessions, including May 2021.

2) Through its [Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029](#), approved by ECOSOC decision [E/2021/259](#), the Group of Experts has aligned its programme of work to that of the wider United Nations and ECOSOC’s. This flagship document guides the work of the Group of Experts, allows for more effective communication within the group and across its stakeholders, strengthens the Group’s accountability, and deepens the impact of its work, particularly relating to sustainable development. The 2021 session of UNGEGN was successfully convened from 3-7 May 2021 in virtual mode, under the theme “*Geographical Names Supporting Sustainable Development and Management of the Pandemic*” (aligned to the theme of the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development for 2021).

3) Other key recommendations and decisions from the 2021 session included: Decision [E/2021/260](#), the exploration of current and potential connections between geographical names standardization and the environment, in support of sustainable development; [Report E/2021/69](#), Decision [2/2021/14](#), the development of guidelines aimed at equality and inclusion in geographical names, in harmony with the principles on restoring, protecting and preserving cultural heritage, noting the contribution to relevant UN SDGs, and Decision [2/2021/12](#), conducting further discussions on identifying guidelines that reconcile the current resolutions on exonyms and the acknowledgement of exonyms as part of cultural heritage. The bi-annual Bulletin of UNGEGN has begun to be used to mobilize the UNGEGN network about this issue.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

1) UNGEGN is not only unique in its discipline and functions, but also in its form and operations. The architecture in which UNGEGN conducts its work, is comprised of a bureau, nine working groups, two special task teams, [24 linguistic/geographical divisions](#), and officers to nine liaison international and regional technical bodies. Another unique working arrangement used by UNGEGN, is the seating arrangements at biennial sessions. For procedural matters, delegates are seated in alphabetical order by Member States. However, seating is arranged by linguistic and geographical divisions to facilitate optimal substantive technical discussions.

2) Member States decide for themselves the Division(s) to which they wish to belong; some belong to more than one Division. Each Division is expected to stimulate activities in the standardization of geographical names within the Division, through technical meetings, exchange of experiences, correspondence among other means. Working Groups are created to follow up topics and issues which cut across the divisional structure. A working group is disbanded when it has fulfilled its purposes. For specific tasks such as collating examples of good practices, specialist coordinators are identified to lead these tasks.

3) Two important cohesive features of the Group of Experts are: i) its five point Principles as laid out in its [Rules of Procedures](#), which calls on the Group to act as a collegiate and consultative body, and agree on non-procedural matters by consensus and not by voting, and ii) its Values – inclusive, collaborative, respectful, relevant and influential, as shared on page in its Strategic Plan and Programme of Work 2021-2029 .

4) UNGEGN also has a history of having liaison officers with supporting and relating international organizations for example the International Standardization Organization (ISO), the International Cartographic Association (ICA) and UNICODE Consortium, participating and reporting on relevant and collaborative activities at its sessions. The complete list of liaison bodies and their representatives are accessible here <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/ungegn/liaison/>

5) At the end of each session, the Working Group on Evaluation and Implementation in collaboration with the UNGEGN Secretariat conducts a session evaluation exercise. A questionnaire ([2021 session evaluation](#)) which examines: i) overall assessment, ii) programs and contents, and iii) resolutions and general work, is circulated to all attendees on the last day of the session. The responses are collated, and an analysis report prepared. The results are used as input to guide its programme of work and to plan and prepare for future effective and efficient meetings.

6) The [UNGEKN Information Bulletin](#) is issued twice a year by the Secretariat of the Group of Experts. The Bulletin is used to inform and share with experts, geographical names good practices, reports received from its Linguistic/Geographical Divisions and its Working Groups, notices of upcoming technical meetings and biennial sessions and other special thematic features relevant to intersessional activities. The contributions are reviewed and edited jointly by the secretariat and the UNGEGN Working Group on Publicity and Funding.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

1) A central tenet of UNGEGN's operations is forging and maintaining relations with relevant organizations. This principle/objective is included in the Group's Strategic Plan and Programme of Work, at Strategy 2, Relationships, links and connections. The objective is to strengthen UNGEGN's existing collaborations vis-à-vis other United Nations activities (including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and programmes of UNECA, UNESCO, UNPFII and other subsidiary bodies such as the Committee of experts on Global Geospatial Information Management). In addition, decision 2/2021/4 from the 2021 session itemized the United Nations bodies and agencies and the international organizations with which it intends to create new relations and strengthen existing ones. Since 2017 at the seventh Session of the Committee of Experts on UN-GGIM, UNGEGN holds a place on the Committee's agenda, where it reports on "Strengthening collaboration with the UN-GGIM". UNGEGN therefore continues to actively participate in the sessions of UN-GGIM and likewise UN-GGIM participates in UNGEGN biennial sessions and is open to developing similar arrangements with other bodies if relevant.

2) UNGEGN with the support of the UN Statistics Division manages and maintains a World Geographical Names Database. It is an authoritative repository of the short and full names of countries (193 UN Member States), their capitals, and the major cities with population over 100,000. As an authoritative standardized geographical names database which has been upgraded in compliance with the principles of the Secretary General's Data Strategy and the prevailing standards environment of web-based applications within the UN technical architecture, the intention is to integrate with other UN databases such as the UNSD's Demographic Yearbook and the UN Clear Map. In the long term the objective is to identify other databases which would benefit from having access to the geographical names database and to expand the content of the World Geographical Names Database, notably towards indigenous place names.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

1) Increasingly, Governments, Director Generals, CEO's and Head of Commerce have become aware of the fundamental importance of collecting, managing and disseminating data in support of national development, and are making the necessary investments to become data-driven in their operations. Despite this increasing awareness and use of data and technologies, UNGEGN's work is technical requiring unique expertise, and the importance and benefits of geographical names standardization and romanization²⁵, and their societal implications, are not well known and understood by others in related disciplines and are often taken for granted. Commitment and collective action are required to achieve UNGEGN's vision of every country having a fully functioning and globally-aligned structure and policy framework, based on common principles for national standardization of authorized geographical names that identify location and respect the associated culture and heritage. Possible approaches that may be considered are briefings and awareness raising activities for Mission representatives to New York, on the margins of ECOSOC's meetings and

²⁵ (Romanization → Conversion from non-Roman into Roman → script. Examples: Αθήνα → Athína; Москва → Moskva; תל-אביב → Tel-Aviv; ニホン → Nihon)



events could be convened to increase awareness on what the Group of Expert does and its value to Member States.

2) UNGEGN supports the emphasis on alignment of its work with that of ECOSOC, the shift in approach to the integration segment and the review exercise. Further UNGEGN appreciates with interest and remains available to assist ECOSOC in the delivery of its mandate and to address challenges the Group of Experts should be able to assist with its unique expertise.

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Date of last update 17 March 2022



Review of the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council mandated by resolution 75/290A of the General Assembly

Executive Summary

To ‘leave no one behind’ implies also to leave no location or place behind – everything happens somewhere. Geospatial Information reflects the physical world in which all human, economic and environmental activities take place, and provides the digital version of our world - without which a digital economy is not possible.

UN-GGIM, established in 2011, is the apex inter-governmental mechanism to enhance and coordinate global geospatial information management activities, including making joint decisions and setting directions on the use of geospatial information management. In its first decade, UN-GGIM has focused on delivering the mandates provided by ECOSOC by developing frameworks, overarching policy guidance, principles, methods and reports to enable Member States to integrate and strengthen their national geospatial information management arrangements according to their national circumstances.

UN-GGIM understands the need to emphasize the two ‘pillars’ for evidence-based policy and decisions. The ‘what and who’ are primarily provided by official statistics, and the ‘where’ is provided by authoritative geospatial information. Combined, the ‘what, who and where’ provides the evidence for the ‘how and when.’ ‘Everything happens somewhere!’ is a mantra for UN-GGIM. That is a fact, but it is not well understood. Location now underpins everything we do. Location information is geospatial information, and its full integration with other data of relevance to our lives and livelihoods provides us with better, and importantly, more useful and insightful information, and evidence towards shared understanding.

Led by Member States, primarily comprising nominated (by national government) technical experts from national geospatial information agencies (NGIAs), UN-GGIM coordinates, collaborates and ensures coherence in norm setting and implementation to address needs and drive outcomes that deliver UN-GGIM’s mandates, and through these, ECOSOC’s mandates. National delegates are supported by observers from across the global geospatial community, including from international geospatial societies, academia, the private sector, and the UN System. UN-GGIM’s working methods are inclusive and participatory, harnesses collective perspectives, and build consensus, guided by Member States. This inclusive and collaborative approach fosters trust, delivers globally accepted outcomes, epitomizing an African proverb that often says, “*if you want to go quickly, go alone, if you want to go far, go together.*”

ECOSOC should foster the development and strengthening of integrated, robust, reliable, quality, timely, and disaggregated data systems that harness the power of location-based information, leveraging the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for ensuring

evidence-based and data-driven policy development and decision making to attain the sustainable development and climate goals, to build back better, to build forward better, and leave no one behind.

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Review of the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council mandated by resolution 75/290A of the General Assembly

Responses to the Five Questions

Preamble

The UN-GGIM Bureau comprising of Ms. Ingrid Vanden Berghe (Belgium), Ms. Paloma Merodio Gomez (Mexico) and Ms. Rosamond Bing (Kingdom of Tonga) as the co-Chairs, and Mr. Kamal Outghouliast (Morocco) as the Rapporteur of UN-GGIM for its eleventh session met virtually with a group of national geospatial information expert representatives of Member States on 1 March 2022 to discuss and coordinate UN-GGIM Bureau's responses to its assessment as part of the broader review of the work of the subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council mandated by resolution 75/290A of the General Assembly.

This group of Member States included Chile, Ethiopia, Germany, India, Japan, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovenia, Sweden, United Kingdom, and the United States of America.

Responses

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

- Yes. To 'leave no one behind' implies also to leave no location or place behind – everything happens somewhere. Geospatial Information reflects the physical world in which all human, economic and environmental activities take place, and provides the digital version of our world - without which a digital economy is not possible. Geospatial information describes the physical location of geographic features and their relationship to other features and associated statistical information, a critical component of the national information infrastructure and knowledge economy.
- UN-GGIM, established in 2011, is the apex inter-governmental mechanism to enhance and coordinate global geospatial information management activities, including making joint decisions and setting directions on the use of geospatial information management. In its

first decade, UN-GGIM has focused on delivering the mandates provided by ECOSOC²⁶ by developing frameworks, overarching policy guidance, principles, methods, and reports to enable Member States to integrate and strengthen their national geospatial information management arrangements according to their national circumstances. The capstone of this work to date is the [United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework \(IGIF\)](#), which helps anchor UN-GGIM’s work in providing an integrated and action-oriented approach to the implementation of the SDGs.

- UN-GGIM, at its eleventh session in 2021, “emphasized that the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework now provided an overarching paradigm to further strengthen nationally integrated geospatial information management, not only for Member States that were in the early stages of adopting national spatial data infrastructures but also for those that had already successfully implemented spatial data infrastructure capabilities.”
- Importantly, guided by the IGIF, UN-GGIM fosters coordination and coherence through activities under its purview, including those of its regional committees, thematic groups, and functional groups. These activities and work interlink across the three pillars of sustainable development and each of the 17 SDGs, underscoring the important integrative role geospatial information provides for the SDGs. Globally developed frameworks, guides and principles are subjected to broad global consultation prior to adoption by UN-GGIM at its annual sessions. These key outcomes and outputs can be accessed at: <https://ggim.un.org/UN-GGIM-publications/> and are elaborated upon below –
 - The [United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework \(IGIF\)](#) provides a basis, a guide and a mechanism for developing, integrating, strengthening and maximizing geospatial information management capacities and capabilities to assist countries in bridging the geospatial digital divide, secure socio-economic prosperity, and to leave no one behind. It comprises three separate, but connected, parts. Part 1 is an *Overarching Strategic Framework*; Part 2 is an *Implementation Guide*; and Part 3 is a *Country-level Action Plan*. The three parts comprise a comprehensive Integrated Geospatial Information Framework that serve a country's needs in addressing economic, social and environmental factors; which depend on location information in a continually changing world;
 - The [SDGs Geospatial Roadmap](#) helps communicate, guide, and enhance the awareness of geospatial information, Earth Observations, and related data sources, tools, and methods, to inform and support the implementation, measurement, and monitoring of the SDGs, according to national circumstances;
 - The [Global Statistical Geospatial Framework \(GSGF\)](#) facilitates the integration of statistical and geospatial information, enables a range of data from both the statistical and geospatial communities to be integrated, and, through the application of its five

²⁶ [E/RES/2011/24](#) and [E/RES/2016/27](#)

- principles and supporting key elements, permits the integration of geospatial information, statistics, and other data to inform and facilitate data-driven decision making in support of national and local development priorities;
- The [Framework on Effective Land Administration \(FELA\)](#) improves advocacy, promotes coherence of concepts, and translates globally agreed methods and approaches for practical implementation by governments to determine, record, and recognize people to land relationships in all its forms for the well-being of people, planet, prosperity, partnerships, and peace. Effective land administration provides humanity with better access to and security of land and property rights, and to leaving no one behind;
 - [The Global Geodetic Reference Frame \(GGRF\)](#) provides the foundation for evidence-based policies, decisions, and program delivery. The GGRF²⁷ is an authoritative, reliable, highly accurate global spatial referencing infrastructure, including celestial and terrestrial reference frame products, underpinning all aspects related to the provision of accurate location data;
 - [COVID-19 Ready to Respond: The Response of the Geospatial Community](#) examined how geospatial information has been used to support national response efforts, the influence and impact of the geospatial data ecosystem in responding to the global COVID-19 pandemic, and identified resources to mitigate the impact of the current pandemic and strengthen global efforts to build back better in preparation for the future;
 - The [Strategic Framework on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters \(GIS4D\)](#) helps guide Member States towards the goal of “quality geospatial information and services are available and accessible in a timely and coordinated way to support decision-making and operations within and across all sectors and phases of disaster risk management,” guided by the overarching needs of the SDGs and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030;
 - Operational Framework for Integrated Marine Geospatial Information Management (IGIF-H) (in development) seeks to provide practical guidance that countries can use to enhance the availability and accessibility of marine geospatial information (inclusive of hydrography, oceanography, marine geology, marine biology, human-related activities, maritime governance, and other water-related jurisdictions) and to realize the greatest benefit from their integrated geospatial information management arrangements for the betterment of society, environment, and economy;
 - [The Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes](#) are 14 themes considered fundamental to strengthening a country’s geospatial information infrastructure;

²⁷ See also General Assembly resolution 69/266 “A global geodetic reference frame for sustainable development” [A/RES/69/266](#)



- [The Report on Future Trends in Global Geospatial Information Management: the five to ten year vision](#) recognizes the crucial role that geospatial information and its technologies will bring to leveraging the potential of the ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution’;
- The [Guide to the Role of Standards in Geospatial Information Management](#) promotes the recommendations regarding the use of standards for geospatial information management, and provides detailed insights on the standards and good practices necessary to establish and maintain geospatial information management systems that are compatible and interoperable with other systems within and across organizations; and
- The [Statement of Shared Guiding Principles for Geospatial Information Management](#) provides a set of values to guide the choices and actions of geospatial organizations within Member States, crucial for the successful operation and growth of the geospatial industry, the geospatial organization and the geospatial individual/professional.
- Geospatial information is presented in many forms and mediums including maps, satellite imagery, and aerial photography. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the need for “high quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data, including earth observations and geospatial information.”²⁸ Further, in its resolution 71/313, the General Assembly adopted the Global Indicator Framework of the SDGs - “Sustainable Development Goal indicators should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.”²⁹
- Since UN-GGIM’s establishment in 2011, the UN-GGIM’s work has focused on responding to these needs by delivering on the mandates provided to it by ECOSOC³⁰ by developing frameworks, common principles, policies, methods, mechanisms, and standards to enable Member States to integrate and strengthen their national geospatial information management arrangements according to their national circumstances.
- Alongside this programme of work, DESA in collaboration with national host governments, convenes a UN Global Geospatial Information Congress (UNWGIC) every four years. The first³¹ was convened with the support of the Government of China through its Ministry of Natural Resources in collaboration with the Government of Zhejiang Province on 19-21 November 2018. The second will be convened with the support of the Government of India at the Hyderabad International Convention Centre, Hyderabad, India in October 2022 with the theme “Geo-Enabling the Global Village: No One Should Be Left Behind.”

²⁸ [A/RES/70/1](#) Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

²⁹ [A/RES/71/313](#) Work of the Statistical Commission pertaining to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and [A/RES/68/261](#) Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics

³⁰ [E/RES/2011/24](#) and [E/RES/2016/27](#)

³¹ <https://ggim.un.org/unwgic>

- To help strengthen further the interlinkages among the global geospatial information community, UN-GGIM is supporting Member States jointly with the United Nations and other key stakeholders with the establishment of:
 - **The United Nations Global Geospatial Knowledge and Innovation Centre (UN-GGKIC)**, Deqing, China, with the overarching goal to work towards the ambitions of UN-GGIM to implement the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework³², as developed and adopted by Member States, to develop capacity, promote and support the required innovation, leadership, coordination, and standards to develop, strengthen, integrate, and deliver national geospatial information policy, data, systems, tools, services, and capabilities into their national government development policies, strategies, and arrangements. This, inter alia, strengthens and advances the geospatial information management capacity and capabilities of Member States, especially developing countries, and strengthens knowledge sharing and innovative cooperation of Member States;
 - **The United Nations Global Geodetic Centre of Excellence (UN-GGCE)** at the UN Campus Bonn, Germany is first in an envisaged network of geodetic centres of excellence. UN-GGCE will begin to implement the General Assembly resolution 69/266 and assist in sustaining the Global Geodetic Reference Frame (GGRF) as the authoritative, reliable, high accurate global spatial referencing infrastructure. As the fundamental infrastructure empowering Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS - such as GPS), the GGRF includes the celestial and terrestrial reference frame products, the infrastructure used to create it, and the data, analysis, and product generation systems. The GGRF also includes gravimetric observations, products, and height systems, which underpin measurements of elevation. As a foundation for evidence-based policies, decisions, and program delivery, the GGRF underpins the collection and management of nationally integrated geospatial information and is used to monitor our dynamic Earth.

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2. **Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body's mandate?**

³² The Integrated Geospatial Information Framework (IGIF) was adopted by UN-GGIM at its eighth session in August 2018. <http://ggim.un.org/meetings/GGIM-committee/8th-Session/documents/Part%201-IGIF-Overarching-Strategic-Framework-24July2018.pdf>

- Yes. Apart from the report of UN-GGIM on its annual session that is submitted to ECOSOC under the agenda item ‘geospatial information’, outcome declarations or statements from global forums convened by UN-GGIM are also reported to its annual sessions. In particular, ECOSOC is invited to review recent agenda items on:
 - The “[Strengthening of geospatial information management](#)³³” item provides a comprehensive discussion on its work in its intersessional period. Further, at the eleventh session, UN-GGIM considered its practical and strategic actions to report back to ECOSOC this year as requested by ECOSOC Resolution 2016/27.
 - The “[Integrated Geospatial Information Framework](#)” item covers UN-GGIM’s work on advancing the IGIF as a mechanism for strengthening national geospatial information management arrangements within Member States at the institutional level and supporting the implementation of the SDGs, especially in developing countries;
 - The “[Geospatial information for sustainable development](#)” item reports on the progress of the Secretariat and the Working Group on Geospatial Information of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
- Alongside its substantive work, UN-GGIM has conducted numerous international workshops and global forums to promote comprehensive dialogue on global geospatial information management with all relevant governments, non-governmental organizations and the private sector to adequately address the availability and accessibility of high quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data³⁴ and to exploit the contribution to be made by a wide range of data, including earth observation and geospatial information.
- UN-GGIM understands the need to emphasize the two ‘pillars’ for evidence-based policy and decisions. The ‘what and who’ are primarily provided by official statistics, and the ‘where’ is provided by authoritative geospatial information. Combined, the ‘what, who, and where’ provides the evidence for the ‘how and when’. ‘Everything happens somewhere!’ is a mantra for UN-GGIM. That is a fact, but it is not well understood what happens where, when, how, and why. Location now underpins everything we do. Location information is geospatial information, and its full integration with other data of relevance to our lives and livelihoods provides us with better, and importantly, more useful and insightful information, and evidence towards shared understanding.
- Implementing national development priorities and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will be sub-optimal without globally developed, consulted and adopted frameworks, strategies and mechanisms to integrate geospatial information for the measuring, monitoring and reporting processes.

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³³ [E/C.20/2021/4/Add.1](#)

³⁴ A/RES/70/1, Paragraph 76 (Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development)



3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

- Led by Member States, primarily comprising nominated (by national government) technical experts from national geospatial information agencies (NGIAs), the UN-GGIM Committee of Experts work and collaborate to address needs and drive outcomes that deliver on UN-GGIM's mandates, and through these, ECOSOC's mandates. National delegates are supported by observers from across the global geospatial community, including from international geospatial societies, academia, the private sector, and the UN System. UN-GGIM's working methods are inclusive and participatory, harness collective perspectives, and build consensus, guided by Member States.
- In norm setting and development of frameworks, overarching policy guidance, principles, methods, and reports, UN-GGIM worked collaboratively. These frameworks, guidance, principles, and reports are globally developed and subjected to broad global consultation prior to adoption by UN-GGIM at its annual sessions.
- UN-GGIM worked over the past decade to develop an inclusive 'architecture' that fully encompasses and reflects the comprehensiveness of its programme of work and promotes collaboration.
- Anchored by the IGIF, UN-GGIM's substantive work is primarily undertaken by its [Functional Groups](#)³⁵, led by its Bureau, to ensure that it provides an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs. This work is interlinked across the three pillars of sustainable development and each of the 17 SDGs, underscoring the important integrative role geospatial information can have for the SDGs.
 - [High-level Group on the Integrated Geospatial Information Framework](#)
 - [Subcommittee on Geodesy \(formerly WG on Global Geodetic Reference Frame\)](#)
 - [Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information](#)
 - [Expert Group on Land Administration and Management](#)
 - [Working Group on Geospatial Information and Services for Disasters](#)
 - [Working Group on Policy and Legal Frameworks for Geospatial Information Management](#)

³⁵ Past Working Groups that have delivered their ToRs and Mandate include the [Working Group on Development of a Statement of Shared Principles for the Management of Geospatial Information](#); [Working Group on Trends in National Institutional Arrangements in Geospatial Information Management](#); and, [Working Group on Global Fundamental Geospatial Data Themes](#)

- [Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information](#)
- Further, UN-GGIM supports the IAEG-SDGs (under the Statistical Commission) with its [Working Group on Geospatial Information](#).
- In line with recommendations emanating from ECOSOC, most recently, the 2021 HLPF’s statement ³⁶ for “extraordinary levels of international cooperation on research, infrastructure, access and capacities are needed in order to overcome the technology gaps within and between countries and social groups and to avoid long-run low-technology traps,” UN-GGIM provides a forum to liaise and coordinate among Member States, and between Member States and international organizations. The substantive architecture is supported by [five regional committees](#) (Africa, Americas, Arab States, Asia and the Pacific, and Europe) and four thematic networks³⁷. Additionally, the three international standards development organizations (the International Hydrographic Organization, the International Organization for Standardization Technical Committee 211, and the Open Geospatial Consortium) supports the programme of work on geospatial standards and jointly report into UN-GGIM.
- UN-GGIM is cognizant of Member States stating in the 2012 report on “The Future We Want” that sustainable development “can only be achieved with a broad alliance of people, governments, civil society and the private sector, all working together to secure the future we want for present and future generations.”³⁸ These [Thematic Groups](#) provide this broad alliance, and include:
 - The Geospatial Societies are a coalition of recognized international organizations involved in the coordination, development, management, and standardization geospatial information and matters related thereto. Notable recent accomplishments, the International Cartographic Association (ICA) in collaboration with the United Nations, has recently published the book “[Mapping for a Sustainable World](#)” as a publication that shares best practices, conventions, and explaining how different mapping techniques reveal spatio-temporal patterns, such as global population growth, socioeconomic disparities, and climate change, to understanding challenges and achievements towards the SDGs.
 - The UN-GGIM Academic Network is a coalition of recognized universities and research and education centers involved in research, development, and education on geospatial information, land information, and related matters, run on a volunteer basis. Recently, it facilitated several contributions from members with their multi-sectoral expertise in the use of geospatial information in response to COVID-19 through the

³⁶ [E/HLPF/2021/6](#) - Multi-stakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals

³⁷ The Regional and Thematic Committee report to UN-GGIM under its agenda item “Contribution of regional committees and thematic groups to the global geospatial information agenda”

³⁸ [A/REF/66/288](#) – The Future We Want

- book “COVID-19 Pandemic, [Geospatial Information, and Community Resilience: Global Applications and Lessons](#)”.
- The Private Sector Network helps facilitate a direct connection and communication for the private sector to work with Member States towards achieving success in global geospatial initiatives. Recent highlights include a report which examines how the “[Geospatial Industry is Advancing the SDGs](#).” The report details the geospatial value and impact for a ‘Sustainability of Everything’ approach through Technology Innovations, Collaborative Workflows, Public Policies, and Partnerships; and,
 - UN Geospatial Network is an inter-agency network of senior geospatial professionals within offices, specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations System, reporting to Member States through UN-GGIM to strengthen the coordination and coherence of geospatial information management within the United Nations system. Since its establishment by UN-GGIM in 2017, accomplishments include the development of a UN system-wide “[UN Geospatial Network Blueprint: Geospatial for a Better World](#)” and its accompanying document a “[Geospatial Landscape of the United Nations system](#)”, [generic job profiles](#) for geospatial officers in the UN system, and reports on “[Geospatial for Humanity: Prevention, Response and Recovery of the World from the Pandemic COVID-19](#)” on the UN system’s geospatial response to COVID-19; and, “[Geospatial In Action: Data and Insights for the SDGs](#)” that showcases how the UN system geospatially supports the SDGs.
 - UN-GGIM promotes comprehensive dialogue on global geospatial information management with all relevant governments, the UN system, non-governmental organizations, academia, and the private sector. This inclusive and collaborative approach fosters trust and delivers globally accepted outcomes, epitomizing an African proverb that often says, “*if you want to go quickly, go alone, if you want to go far, go together*”.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

- UN-GGIM embraces collaboration that enhances its abilities to develop, consult and adopt integrated frameworks, overarching policy guidance, and implementation guides. It has established formal and ongoing working relationships with the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) and the UN Group of Experts on Geographic Names (UNGEGN), both ECOSOC subsidiary bodies. These relationships have led to joint efforts to address ‘cross-over’ identified challenges, which include the integration of statistics and geospatial information and the standardization of geographical names.



- Through the working group on geospatial information of the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDGs Indicators (IAEG-SDGs) under the Statistical Commission, the [SDGs Geospatial Roadmap](#) was developed to support efforts to integrate data and produce more robust national indicators for the SDGs.
- The UN Geospatial Network, established by UN-GGIM in 2017, as an inter-agency network of senior geospatial professionals within the Secretariat, offices, specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system. The Geospatial Network reports to Member States through UN-GGIM on its efforts to strengthen the coordination and coherence of geospatial information management within the United Nations system.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

- Evidence-based policy and decisions require ‘two pillars.’ The ‘what and who’ are primarily provided by official statistics and other forms of data, but it is the ‘where’ component that can only be provided by geospatial information. Combined, the ‘what, who, and where’ provide the evidence to inform the ‘how and when.’
- In February 1948, ECOSOC, in resolution 131(VI) recommended that Governments of Member States stimulate surveying and mapping of their national territories and that the Secretary-General of the United Nations take appropriate action to further such efforts. Over the years, a number of subsidiary bodies and conferences were established that took ‘appropriate action to further such efforts,’ and this responsibility now rests with UN-GGIM. In 2016, with E/RES/2016/27, ECOSOC decided that “the substantive mandates and obligations of the United Nations Regional Cartographic Conferences for Asia and the Pacific and for the Americas shall be assumed by the Committee of Experts at the global level, and their technical and substantive activities at the regional and national levels assumed by the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Asia and the Pacific and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for the Americas” and that ‘the Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management to report on all matters relating to geography, geospatial information and related topics’ under the Council’s agenda item ‘Geospatial information’.
- While Member States have decisively led and driven the programme of work with outcomes that have included integrated frameworks, overarching policy guidance and implementation guides, UN-GGIM as the global mechanism for strengthening geospatial information management, considers that ECOSOC must further efforts to “think

geospatially” in a digitalized world. Geospatial information is now pervasive in our global community and provides the digital version of our world in which all human, economic, and environmental activities take place. The annual reports of UN-GGIM demonstrate the in-depth deliberations of Member States urging for the integration of UN-GGIM’s work and outcomes to build back better, to build forward better, and to leave no one behind.

- The very nature of ‘geospatial information’ has evolved and changed through the ongoing and significant contributions of UN-GGIM over the past decade. Commensurately, technologies that harness the ‘power of location’ have moved from innovation to a crucial component of the global data ecosystem.
- But, today, we must acknowledge that geospatial information with its enabling technologies and innovations have been unequally adopted and the ‘where’ is critically underserved at the moment when it is needed most. Through geospatially integrating data, we can have data that underpins everything we do and help others, including the subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC and Member States, realize the true potential of their data.
- ECOSOC should foster the development and strengthening of integrated, robust, reliable, quality, timely, and disaggregated data systems that harness the power of location-based information, leveraging the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework for ensuring evidence-based and data-driven policy development and decision making, to attain the sustainable development and climate goals, to build back better, to build forward better, and leave no one behind.

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*Bureau of the eleventh session of the
United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management
15 March 2022*

ECOSOC review of subsidiary bodies

During its 24th session the Committee for Development Policy (CDP) considered the ECOSOC review of subsidiary bodies and conducted an evaluation and discussion of its own work, its alignment with the 2030 agenda, relevance to ECOSOC and its working arrangements. This evaluation followed the instructions provided by the ECOSOC vice-presidency and deliberations were framed within guiding questions provided. The forthcoming report to ECOSOC on CDP's 24th session, will have a dedicated chapter detailing the outcomes and findings of the assessment. The following text is a draft of that chapter and should not be considered final.

1. The Committee welcomes the ECOSOC review of its subsidiary bodies and looks forward to supporting the review process over the coming months. The Committee assessed its working methods, program of work and engagement with ECOSOC and its subsidiary system in line with the guidance provided by the ECOSOC Vice-Presidency and found them to be effective and closely aligned with the 2030 Agenda and relevant conferences.
2. The Committee is mandated to provide recommendations to ECOSOC on the graduation of countries from, and inclusion into, the LDC category. These recommendations are evidence-based and rooted in a comprehensive methodology to assess progress on LDC criteria and indicators, as well as country-specific analyses. The Committee recently further strengthened the evidence-based nature of the graduation process by introducing supplementary graduation indicators into the methodology and by developing an enhanced monitoring mechanism for countries that are graduating and have graduated from the LDC category (see chapter VI).
3. The Committee undertakes analysis on key development challenges affecting all LDCs³⁹ and provided proposals for the new Doha Programme of Action for the least developed countries. These analyses and proposals are well reflected in, among others, the draft Programme of Action and the 2021 HLPF Ministerial Declaration, indicating the impact of the Committee in this area of work. The Committee also guides the capacity building and information services of its Secretariat on LDCs in general and LDC graduation in particular.
4. The Committee has established a VNR subgroup that has been analysing VNRs presented at the HLPF every year since 2017. The CDP report provides points for consideration by governments and other stakeholders participating in the VNRs. Its recommendations are aimed at enhancing the role of the VNRs as an effective instrument in accelerating SDG implementation.
5. Guided by the ECOSOC theme, the Committee produces reports and policy papers with analysis to inform its recommendations. The CDP has consistently advocated for the centrality of productive capacity to achieve the SDGs, both in LDCs and other developing countries. In response to this year's theme, Chapter II discusses how industrial policy can help address multiple and simultaneous challenges related to

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³⁹ Recent examples include the [comprehensive study on the impact of COVID-19](#) and the [multi-year work on expanding productive capacities](#).

climate change, inequality, and recovery from the COVID-19 crisis. The CDP intends to work on green transition and issues of debt and international finance in response to the ECOSOC theme for 2023.

6. The Committee is actively involved and in contact with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies and other UN entities. Committee Members participated in the High-Level Segment, the Integration Segment in the past and, since 2022, the Coordination Segment, the Development Cooperation Forum, the HLPF and its side events, and other ECOSOC events as well as other fora within the UN. The Committee has engaged in collaboration with OHRLLS, UNCTAD, RCOs, Regional Commissions, UNDRR and, outside the UN system, WTO, ITC, OECD, the Enhanced Integrated Framework, and multiple other partners in the area of coordination of support to graduating countries and policy analysis. Since 2018, it has conducted briefings on LDC issues for ECOSOC members. In 2021 the Committee also introduced an “ECOSOC interaction” held after the conclusion of its plenary, which allowed for a more open discussion between ECOSOC members and the CDP. Concrete feedback on these events could assist the CDP in effective dissemination of its findings and recommendations as well as enhanced engagement with ECOSOC.
7. In terms of good practices with respect to its working arrangements, the Committee notes that activities are undertaken in sub-groups, thereby allowing members to focus on certain aspects of the workplan (ECOSOC theme, LDC issues and VNRs). In its work on one of the key mandates, identifying countries for graduation from the LDC category, the Committee appoints, among its members, country rapporteurs to ensure continuity of participation in the graduation process during the years leading to a country’s exit from the LDC category and closer engagement at the country level.
8. Through the establishment of the LDC graduation assessment, the Committee fostered closer interaction with the LDCs and RCO offices, allowing the LDC graduation process to be more inclusive and transparent. The CDP has also been organizing virtual webinars and Expert Group Meetings over the past two years and found them to be an efficient, effective, transparent, and inclusive means to disseminate work and engage with Member States and other stakeholders.
9. The CDP integrates its analytical work with the inter-governmental process as well as (through its Secretariat) undertakes important capacity development work that informs the analysis and recommendations of the Committee to ECOSOC.
10. With respect to the ECOSOC reform and review of subsidiary bodies, the Committee is looking forward to receiving additional guidance, and to learn from the experiences of other subsidiary bodies. In particular, the CDP invites ECOSOC to identify more targeted and specific questions or problems related to the broader ECOSOC theme to which it could contribute its unique and diverse experience and expertise. The CDP would also welcome a review by the Council of how the policy recommendations made by ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, including the CDP, are implemented by Member States and United Nations entities.
11. While a central resource for accessing the proceedings and schedules of subsidiary bodies exists in the “ECOSOC subsidiary bodies” webpage on the UN Secretariat website, a more comprehensive and searchable repository consolidating all events, reports and outputs/publications of different subsidiary bodies and their secretariats could facilitate coordination and collaboration among ECOSOC’s subsidiary bodies.

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Review of the work of the ECOSOC subsidiary bodies

Assessment by the Chair and Bureau of the work of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration following its 21st session, held 4 to 8 April 2022

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively **contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda** and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce **technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations** to this end? Do those outcomes support an **integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs**?

- Since September 2015, CEPA has placed the 2030 Agenda at the centre of its work.
- In each ECOSOC cycle, the Committee considers the annual theme of the HLPF and ECOSOC from a governance and public administration perspective. The contribution from CEPA is transmitted by the Chair to the President of ECOSOC, at the President's invitation, as an input to the thematic review of the HLPF. The key messages are also brought to the attention of the Council in the Committee's sessional report.
- The reflections of the Committee draw on the full range of issues on its agenda. Thus, in addressing the theme, CEPA aims to convey a broad view of emerging issues in institution-building while relating them to the pressing global challenges before the Council as encapsulated in the theme. The theme of CEPA at its 21st session (4-8 April 2022) was "**Transforming institutions and governance to build forward better towards 2030**". The theme of the 20th session (12-21 April 2021) was "Building inclusive, effective and resilient institutions for sustainable recovery from the coronavirus disease pandemic and timely implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals".
- The Committee's deliberations are based on expert papers prepared by the members, the papers themselves comprising technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations. In preparing the expert papers, members regularly draw on the work of the respective communities of practice and consolidated evidence research. When adopting recommendations for consideration by the Council, the Committee functions by consensus. The recommendations thus reflect an attempt to convey a consensus view among leading experts on the issues on the Committee's agenda.
- CEPA is fully aware that SDG 16 and SDG 17 are not stand-alone Goals but are cross-cutting and key to the implementation of all Goals. Alongside the specific institutional targets of SDGs 16 and 17, the Committee more and more considers the particular implications of institutional challenges and successes in the context of the SDGs to be reviewed in depth by the HLPF.
- In 2022, for example, the Committee examined questions relating to "Building strong institutions to combat climate change and its impacts and for the sustainable management, protection and restoration of natural resources" (SDGs 13, 14 and 15) in collaboration with the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting of the Statistical Commission.
- In its discussion of working methods at the 21st session (4-8 April 2022), CEPA members stressed the importance of being action-oriented and generally agreed that it would be helpful to focus on policy solutions and "how-to" in addition to analysis of problems. To this end, the language of the

CEPA agenda itself could sometimes be framed in a more positive way with a focus on “solutions” rather than “issues” and “challenges”, which had on occasion led to as many questions as answers.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of **a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda** and of **the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area** on the theme under consideration? Are there **gaps to be addressed** to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body’s mandate?

- CEPA produces a report on its annual session that is transmitted for consideration by ECOSOC and forms part of the official record of the United Nations. The report is a substantive document (with procedural elements) that summarizes the main observations and policy recommendations arising from the deliberations.
- The Committee’s consideration of its own theme, based on the annual theme of the HLPF and ECOSOC from a governance and public administration perspective, is supported by an expert paper prepared during the intersessional period by an informal working group of members, which generally follows the guidance communicated by the President of ECOSOC for such inputs. The expert paper is released as an official UN document in six languages. See, for example, “Transforming institutions and governance to build forward better towards 2030” ([E/C.16/2022/2](#)).
- CEPA is comprised of experts serving in a personal capacity. The Committee is aware of the need for evidence-based reviews of progress in the areas covered by its agenda. Constraints include the official reporting format, which tends to obscure the texture of the Committee’s deliberations, and the limited Secretariat resources available to support the experts’ research and analysis during the intersessional period. The expert members of CEPA are all volunteers.

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3. What are some of **the best practices** you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an **efficient, effective, transparent, and inclusive manner**?

- CEPA regularly reviews its working methods to ensure that they are in keeping with the needs and with the times. At the 21st session:
 - CEPA found its practice of engaging working groups of members during the intersessional period to be valuable. The members were encouraged to join no more than 3 working groups in order to focus efforts.
 - In order to enrich the expert papers further, the WGs were encouraged to share drafts of their papers with all members for comment at all stages of development.
 - The experts could use the convening power of CEPA to engage research institutes in their work, including in the intersessional period.

- The experts thought it would be helpful to consider cross-cutting themes throughout their work (e.g., institutions issues related to climate change in conflict-affected countries, procurement at both national and subnational levels, etc.).
- An interdisciplinary approach could be further enhanced by having panels during CEPA that include members from various study areas.
- The quality of the analysis was important if the ideas emanating from CEPA are to be scaled up and influence decision-makers.
- CEPA invites a large number of observers to participate in its meetings (member States, UN agencies, Permanent Observers, public administration institute and ECOSOC-accredited NGOs) as well as youth organizations. Open-ended Interaction with observers has been found to be less than satisfactory. Rather than opening to all observers, the Committee could consider focusing on fewer but highly relevant and qualified entities in their deliberations as this had led to important opportunities for collaboration. Members have also proposed that engagement with observers could be expanded during the intersessional period with a view to adding greater value to the discussions.
- CEPA has been engaging in recent years in a dialogue with VNR countries, and now VLR cities. The dialogue could be expanded to refer to institutional aspects of both SDG 16 and SDG 17 (policy coherence, digital government, public finance, partnerships). Promoting peer exchange among countries was key and, where the annual CEPA session was concerned, adequate preparation based on advance documentation. In line with greater emphasis of CEPA on solutions, participants could also be invited to refer to implementation success stories to provide inspiration to others.
- Virtual preparatory meetings were challenging for members due to time zone differences. Email was suggested as an alternative but this mode of communication had its limits.
- A “midpoint” virtual meeting of CEPA should be considered in September.
- Break-out groups could be considered during the annual session if additional servicing were provided.
- Some experts share the CEPA papers widely in their networks and regions. This was to be encouraged and the Secretariat should include regional and subregional organizations in its mailing list.
- The members felt that additional resources for the Secretariat would be helpful in supporting the intersessional work, as well as to expand operationalization of the principles of effective governance in response to the apparent demand.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

- CEPA regularly engages with other subsidiary bodies of ECOSOC to the extent that they share common interests. Examples include UN CEEA (noted above), the Praia Group on Governance Statistics of the Statistical Commission, the Committee for Development Policy and the Population Commission.

- In recent years, CEPA has been examining matters related to building strong institutions for sustainable development in countries emerging from conflict as a contribution to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.
- UN officials have been invited to present at annual CEPA sessions on different topics. In addition, CEPA members have in the past been invited to present their findings and recommendations at different UN-led meetings and Conferences, including in the context of HLPF.

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5. Do you have recommendations on **how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations** of your functional commission/expert body and on **whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination** of its subsidiary bodies?

- ECOSOC adopts a resolution on the report of CEPA under its annual item on public administration and development. The resolution provides an important reference point for member States, the Secretariat and other stakeholders such as institutes of public administration. Its implementation has led to a valuable and productive partnership between DESA and the African Peer Review Mechanism in relation to the principles of effective governance for sustainable development, developed by CEPA and endorsed by ECOSOC in 2018.
- The further engagement of ECOSOC in promoting and monitoring follow-up to its resolutions on the reports of CEPA could both provide an opportunity to examine, informally, the impact of CEPA's work on a regular basis and provide specific guidance to the Committee, as appropriate, beyond the review and approval of its annual agenda.

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Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

ANNEX: Questions to support the review of the work of subsidiary bodies by the Chairs and Bureaux:

1. Does your functional commission/expert body effectively contribute to advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to the Council's role in this regard? Does it produce technical and expert analysis, assessments and policy recommendations to this end? Do those outcomes support an integrated and action-oriented approach to the SDGs?

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is actively engaged in advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In preparation for the Session, each year the Secretariat prepares a note to provide an update on implementation of the 2030 Agenda from the perspective of indigenous peoples. Additionally, the Forum has included in its annual sessions a standing agenda item on the 2030 Agenda in order to gather input and suggestions on better integrating the rights of indigenous peoples into the process at the global, regional and country levels.

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has made a number of recommendations relating to indigenous peoples, including indigenous women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities, in all areas of the Forum's mandate - economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health and human rights. The outcome of each annual session of the Forum is a report that contains policy analysis and recommendations to Member States, UN system, indigenous peoples as well as ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and other relevant stakeholders. The recommendations of the Forum contribute to the implementation of a number of SDGs and cross-cutting issues.

Several recommendations from the 21st session of the Permanent Forum (25 April – 6 May 2022) were made to advance progress for indigenous peoples in relation to the 2030 Agenda. The Forum emphasized its concern about the lack of data on indigenous peoples across the UN system, especially in relation to Target 17.18 of the 2030 Agenda on the development of inclusive policies to leave no-one behind. The Forum also underlined the need to establish standards on the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistical information related to indigenous peoples. The Forum offered its support to engage with relevant stakeholders to achieve these ends, reflecting an action-orientated and collaborative approach to delivering on the SDGs.

During the meeting on the thematic dialogue on the International Decade on Indigenous Languages, the Permanent Forum recognized the important interconnections between the SDGs and indigenous languages. The Forum called for the inclusion of language indicators within the post-2030 development agenda, to ensure the sustainability of outcomes and the continuity of efforts established by the International Decade. Further, the Forum invited UNESCO and Member States, with the possible assistance of the Statistical Commission, to initiate work on indigenous language-related data, with adequate funding to support post-2030 priorities.

The 21st session held regional dialogues on indigenous peoples and the pandemic recovery, in accordance with the theme of the High Level Political Forum (HLPF), "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development".

The theme of the 20th session of the Forum (19-30 April 2021) was “peace, justice and strong institutions: the role of indigenous peoples in implementing Sustainable Development Goal 16”. The Forum focused on recommendations relating to SDG 16, while also recognizing its cross-cutting and complementary nature with other SDGs.

Owing to the contributions, participation and focused recommendations of the Permanent Forum, as well as the work of indigenous peoples’ organizations and representatives, indigenous peoples’ priorities have been included in major global frameworks, including the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on climate change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development. These priorities have also been incorporated into the work of the Commission on the Status of Women and other policy processes of the United Nations system, and have resulted in concrete commitments, as the \$1.7 billion pledge in support of indigenous peoples made at COP26 of the UNFCCC demonstrates. These global frameworks and platforms provide valuable opportunities to advance indigenous peoples’ rights at the policy level, to be followed through at the operational level.

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2. Is the work of your functional commission/expert body supported by the provision of a report or other document containing a solid, evidence-based review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and of the outcomes of conferences and summits within its area on the theme under consideration? Are there gaps to be addressed to adequately cover the 2030 Agenda and conferences and summits within your subsidiary body’s mandate?

Following its annual session, the Permanent Forum produces a report that is transmitted to ECOSOC. The report contains substantive analysis of the current issues facing indigenous peoples around the globe, and provides recommendations to indigenous peoples, Member States, and UN entities. Given the standing agenda item relating to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Forum’s report includes a review of progress on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The work of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues is supported by a range of inputs from Indigenous Peoples, Member States, UN entities and academia. This includes annual responses from UN entities on their efforts to advance the rights and well-being of indigenous peoples in response to a questionnaire that the Forum sends them. This also includes in-depth studies of the expert members of the Permanent Forum as well as dozens of written submissions by Member States and Indigenous Peoples.

The Permanent Forum has used integrated approaches such as high-level panels, expert reports and cross-cutting themes to place emerging and critical issues facing indigenous peoples on the global agenda. Furthermore, in response to the input and feedback received by Indigenous Peoples, Member States, UN entities, the Forum incorporated an innovative approach to its methods of work, with the aim of striking a strategic balance in providing space for them to share good practices and challenges for implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, considering that the 2030 Agenda consists of 17 goals and 169 targets of which 92 % are closely linked to human rights. 73 out of the 169 targets have substantial links to the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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3. What are some of the best practices you could share on the working methods of your functional commission/expert body, notably practices allowing it to work in an efficient, effective, transparent and inclusive manner?

The Permanent Forum has developed a working culture that facilitates equal participation of indigenous peoples with Member States, supporting partnership building and sharing of information. In recent years, the Forum has organized regional dialogues where indigenous peoples and Member States from each region explore in depth some of the issues and challenges that are a specific priority in each region. This allows for increased cooperation and more in-depth analysis.

Similarly, the Forum conducts dialogues with various agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations to discuss the implementation of its recommendations and learn on their activities to promote respect for the rights of indigenous peoples at the local, national and international levels. Through these years, several United Nations agencies, funds and programmes have informed that specific policies and programmes relating to indigenous peoples have been developed in consultations with the Permanent Forum and indigenous peoples, who help to guide their work.

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4. What are the opportunities for joint work among the subsidiary bodies as well as with the UN system, and how can they be facilitated so as to promote integrated policy approaches?

The Permanent Forum is already engaged with various agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations. However, there is little collaboration between different ECOSOC subsidiary bodies. This is primarily due to the different mandate areas that each body works on.

It is suggested that subsidiary bodies as well as the UN system can promote and use international instruments such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in their work. Additionally, it is important to ensure greater participation of the Permanent Forum in the work of some subsidiary bodies. Permanent Forum Vice Chair Ms Anne Nuorgam was invited to speak at the 17th session of the UN Forum on Forests, during the opening ceremony in May 2022. This is a positive illustration of cooperation between subsidiary bodies and contributes to efforts to ensure coherence on overlapping policy issues. Invitations to participate in other subsidiary bodies and cross-collaboration should be encouraged and strengthened.

The Permanent Forum also engages with the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF). At the 2021 HLPF, Permanent Forum member Irma Pineda Santiago participated in a panel related to building more peaceful, equal and inclusive societies (SDGs 3, 10, 16, 17). It is suggested to increase further participation of indigenous peoples at the HLPF, and to encourage greater reference to indigenous peoples in Member States' Voluntary National Reviews.

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5. Do you have recommendations on how the Economic and Social Council can best use the expertise and policy recommendations of your functional commission/expert body and on whether and how ECOSOC could strengthen its oversight and coordination of its subsidiary bodies?

It is suggested that ECOSOC encourages States to continue to consider including in their voluntary national reviews for the high-level political forum on sustainable development and their national and global reports information related to indigenous peoples on the progress made and challenges in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as recommended by the Permanent Forum.

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