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| Policy Studies

Follow-up and review of the SDGs: Implications for Canada

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Canada in the Post-2015 World

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My focus today

- “Follow-up and review” is not “accountability”
- Brief sketch of the emerging architecture
 - Based on UN Secretary-General report on follow-up and review released last week
 - Final negotiations still to come
- What can and should Canada do?

Follow-up and review is not accountability

- SDGs in themselves will not cause anything to change
- Nor does writing them down cause policy coherence
- The review process might do both
- An exciting paradigm shift underway
 - Universal obligations
 - Bottom-up implementation and review

Basic architecture

- 17 SDGs, dozens of targets, hundreds of indicators
- Dozens of international organizations, hundreds of think tanks and NGOs
- National reviews
 - Most important place to review implementation and its effects
- Regional reviews
 - Comparison of similar countries, peer review
- Global orchestration

HLPF is the focal point

- High Level Political Forum on sustainable development
 - Meets annually under ECOSOC (1st 2014)
 - Meets every four years at level of Heads of State under UNGA (1st 2019)
- **Orchestrating** the efforts of states, UN entities, business, NGOs
 - Incentives and a framework for everyone to participate.

Parts of each eight (8) day HLPF

1. Review of overall progress
 - ❑ SDG progress report, National and Regional Reviews
2. Review of progress in specific areas
 - ❑ thematic review; reviews of a subset of SDGs
3. Review of SDG 17 and other inputs on the implementation of the AAAA; and
4. New and emerging issues

1. Elements of Voluntary National Reviews

- How different levels of Government, and stakeholders from civil society, academia and business were involved
- How SDGs will be kept under review, including dissemination of findings
- Efforts to adapt SDGs and integrate into legislation, and policies, including the sustainable development strategy
- How the country has adapted its institutional framework in order to implement the 2030 Agenda
- How means of implementation are mobilised
- Statistics on progress towards goals and targets

1. Ensuring ambition and impact of VNR

- Process culminates with ministerial presentation in HLPF
 - Reviews synthesized in advance?
 - more detailed review, perhaps at the level of ambassadors?
- Each country to do “up to 2” in the next 15 years.
 - Implies presenting 25 per year in HLPF: too many each year?
 - Doing one every 7-8 years—too few?
- For comparison
 - WTO TPRM: Every 4-6 years for most; devotes two days to every review
 - Universal Periodic Review: average of 1.4 countries per day, for 6 weeks

2. Chair's proposal for HLPF 2016

- Theme “Ensuring that no one is left behind”
 - Reports from international organizations etc to explore cross-cutting issues
- Thematic “pilot” review:
 - Goal 1 (poverty)
 - Goal 6 (Water and sanitation)
 - Goal 8 (employment/work, economic growth)
 - Goal 10 (inequality)
 - Goal 17 (means of implementation).

Giving impetus to the network

- Among the bodies mentioned in S-G report
 - ECOSOC functional and regional commissions
 - UNEP, World Education Forum
 - WHO, FAO, UNCTAD, UNIDO, Human Rights Council
 - World Bank Group and IMF
 - UNFCCC (SDG 13)
 - Non-UN bodies (e.g. OECD), NGOs, think tanks
- “It will be important to help the HLPF to derive political guidance from the multiple inputs it will receive. The secretariats ... must work coherently to support effective global review.”

3. Inputs to HLPF on Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA)

- Financing for Development (FFD) Forum
- Multistakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation (STI)
- Development Cooperation Forum (DCF)
- Infrastructure Forum led by MDBs,
- Meetings of the IFIs
- Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation

Ensuring inclusiveness

- support **reporting** by all relevant stakeholders
- **engage** major groups and other stakeholders through **appropriate** mechanisms
- Ample space for events before and during the HLPF, with links to official meetings
- **“Only by hearing multiple perspectives, ideas and evidence can the HLPF break new ground.”**

It's a universal agenda (that means us)

- All new ministers received a mandate letter
- International Development minister's letter was the only one to mention the SDGs.
- Note to the PM: Canadian implementation takes place at home too
- Note to the S-G: too much on the development dimension; too little on how developed countries should review themselves

Canada's national report on SDGs

- Volunteer to do one soon
- What we do at **home** and what we do to help others
- Sustainable development is a whole-of-government responsibility
- Should engage business, think tanks, civil society organizations

What else can Canada do?

- Improve the architecture
- Encourage all international organizations to strengthen peer review relevant to SDGs
- Support others: many will need help synthesizing the vast number of reports on their countries

Similarities between UNFCCC Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda

- Universality, but bottom up
- Goals adapted to national circumstances
- No “binding” targets; no penalty for missing aspirational objectives
- Paris only works IF:
 - ❑ everybody notifies INDC, and steps being taken to achieve it; and
 - ❑ there is robust surveillance.

Essence of the new paradigm

- States change policy because
 - fear the consequences of failure to comply?
 - wish to avoid public embarrassment?
 - learned about successful behavior?
- Purpose of review: enhance capacity to learn and adapt, with access to the means of implementation as an incentive