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Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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Report of the High-level Committee on Programmes at its forty-third session

(31 March and 1 April, London)

I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its forty-third session at the International Maritime Organization (IMO) headquarters in London on 31 March and 1 April 2022. The agenda of the session and the list of participants are contained in annexes I and II, respectively, to the present report.

2. In his welcoming remarks, the Secretary-General of IMO, Mr. Kitack Lim, expressed pleasure to host the Committee's first in-person meeting since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. He observed that HLCP provided an important platform for harmonization and concerted performance among United Nations system organizations and acknowledged the busy session agenda, with topics including intergenerational equity, artificial intelligence, inequality, data and progress beyond gross domestic product (GDP), all of which were very relevant to the work of IMO. He commended the Committee on the launch of the debate on a system-wide contribution on international data governance and underscored that the protection of data as a global public good deserved particular attention by the United Nations system. He went on to highlight that IMO was making progress in many important policy areas, for example on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from international shipping and championing research, innovation and development for a greener and more sustainable future. The Secretary-General shared his hope that the HLCP discussion would also provide input for IMO on these matters. He conveyed his appreciation to Mr. Guy Ryder, Director-General of the International Labour Organization (ILO), for his excellent contributions as Chair of HLCP.

3. In opening the session, the HLCP Chair thanked the IMO Secretary-General for his hospitality and presented the agenda for the meeting. On the first day, the Committee would take up the topic "new global public goods" for the first time since the adoption of the HLCP strategic narrative in October 2021, with a focus on international data governance; the state of inequalities, with findings and recommendations of the HLCP inequalities task team, as put forward in their paper "A New United Nations System Agenda for Equality"; and the United Nations system contribution on Beyond GDP. In addition to a continuation of the discussion on progress beyond GDP, the second day would feature three topics, namely: a progress report from the inter-agency support group on indigenous peoples' Issues regarding the implementation of the CEB Call to Action on Indigenous Peoples, an update from the inter-agency working group on artificial intelligence, and a discussion on the concept of intergenerational equity under the pillar on "duties to the future" of the HLCP strategic narrative.

4. The Chair acknowledged the somber time at which the HLCP was meeting and stated that the work of the Committee was meaningful in the context of war and its impacts, the pandemic response and recovery, and the fears that the opportunity to combat climate change might soon be lost. HLCP had an important role to play in helping to build the safer, more resilient and inclusive world foreseen in the 2030 Agenda. Accordingly, the Chair encouraged members to bear in mind how HLCP could best contribute to efforts to respond to present crises and prevent future ones, including by safeguarding multilateralism.

5. Acknowledging the heavy demands on the United Nations family with multiple ongoing processes, compounded by pressures from the crises mentioned, the Chair reminded members that HLCP should ensure that its coherence and coordination mandate and its analytical capabilities enabled related efforts – and in particular contributed to rescuing the Sustainable Development Goals, as the Secretary-General had called for. He appealed to members to be mindful not to pursue processes or products for their own sake but rather because they could make a meaningful contribution to solutions and help the system to rise to the challenges with which it was confronted.

II. Progress beyond GDP

6. Turning to progress beyond GDP, the Chair thanked the co-leads, core group and drafting teams for producing three overview papers for the consideration of the Committee, in line with the concept note adopted at the HLCP intersessional meeting in February 2022. The three papers presented to the Committee addressed *Uses of GDP and Beyond GDP*, *Improvements to GDP and the System of National Accounts*, and *Complements to GDP*. The Chair underscored the transformative opportunity presented by this work and encouraged the Committee to continue its focus to deliver a vision that reflected the high-level of ambition of CEB grounded in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while keeping in mind the need to consider practical applications of Beyond GDP and its utility for policymakers. It was acknowledged that as economic, social, environmental, political, and technological transformations gather pace, a dynamic and iterative approach to Beyond GDP might be necessary. The Chair appreciated the depth of engagement across the HLCP membership.

7. The Chair invited Mr. George Gray Molina, Head of Strategic Policy Engagement, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Mr. Stefan Schweinfest, Director, Statistics Division, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA), and Ms. Anu Peltola, Senior Statistician, United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), representing the co-lead entities to present the three papers. Mr. Molina outlined the many different uses of GDP and distinguished between the descriptive and normative uses of GDP, including GDP used inappropriately as a measure for progress, well-being, and sustainability. Using other metrics, including Beyond GDP, in policy processes was seen as something that would be relevant for developing and developed countries, as well as multilateral institutions. Issues around using GDP for access to concessional development finance, climate finance, and graduation to middle income status were also raised.

8. Mr. Schweinfest focused on improvements to GDP itself and explained the System of National Accounts (SNA) as the broader information system in which GDP is embedded. GDP was being used for purposes it was not intended for when designed over 75 years ago; however, its continued influence was built on it being an established metric in a coherent accounting framework that was country-owned, available for all countries and comparable across time and space. The system of environmental-economic accounting (SEEA) adopted by the Statistical Commission was an expansion of the SNA, and further revisions around the social accounts, distributional measures, globalization, and digitalization were being discussed as part of the 2025 revision of SNA. Support to capacity development was also important to implement existing extensions to the SNA, as well as to collect additional data and support their appropriate use.

9. Ms. Peltola gave an overview of broad thematic areas that might be included in complements to GDP, built on discussions in the core group and presented under six broad thematic areas which were: respect for life, the planet, and its ecosystems; responsible and ethical economy; governance and institutions; from vulnerability to resilience; greater solidarity to address inequality; and well-being, living conditions, agency, and opportunities. The need to balance GDP with other important headline indicators that went beyond income, beyond averages, and beyond today was underscored, as was the importance of credible and comparable data. It was also acknowledged that there were gaps in what was measured, and a dynamic and iterative approach was important to address that, including in rapidly changing contexts. Importantly, it was viewed as vital that Beyond GDP was developed to be useful and attractive for policymakers.

10. In the ensuing discussion members agreed that a high level of ambition was required to improve and complement GDP. The 2030 Agenda was seen as a foundation for this work, providing a values base for informing Beyond GDP, including the importance of putting people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnerships at the centre. This involved addressing the gaps in existing GDP and taking into consideration environmental, social, digital, distributional and vulnerability dimensions. It was also emphasized that, akin to the universal spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals, Beyond GDP should be a tool for all countries to improve policymaking to support the well-being of peoples around the world. Members saw the continued utility of GDP as an economic and financial metric, with technical and specialized use cases for GDP at national and international levels.

11. The view that Beyond GDP should be forward-looking and fit-for-purpose was raised. Members emphasized the importance of environmental sustainability and planetary boundaries, and questioned whether growth measured only via GDP was an inherent good if there were resource and environmental costs. The services provided by ecosystems were insufficiently captured, and incentives to restore natural resources that enabled life on this planet were also not adequate. The concern for future generations was also a key issue raised by members, with intergenerational equity seen as an important dimension to integrate into Beyond GDP. In this regard, the SEEA was welcomed by members as an important step forward with further support for implementation needed.

12. The digital transformation was another area where members advocated for increased attention, especially considering the increasing importance of digital technologies and connectivity during the pandemic. Digitalization was having significant impacts on many aspects of the economy and well-being, including on workers through digital platform economies and new forms of work, as well as issues around cybersecurity. Members also pointed to the value creation in the digital economy that was not well captured through GDP measures relying on price, therefore missing digital flows and stocks, as well as positive and negative externalities that affected different aspects of well-being. Inequalities in accessing connectivity, as well as resulting from digital technologies, were raised as important elements and were linked to Beyond GDP being fit-for-purpose and forward-looking.

13. Many social aspects were raised as areas of concern, including the issue of unpaid and informal work, including work within the household disproportionately performed by women. The misalignment between value and price was highlighted with regard to care work, again disproportionately provided by women. Inequalities arose again as an issue, including with respect to distribution of income and wealth, as well as inequalities between different groups. Addressing gender-based violence online and supporting the empowerment of women were emphasized specifically. Issues related to culture, food and agriculture, education, health, human rights, and the illicit economy were also raised for consideration.

14. An additional dimension was fragility and vulnerability given increasing stress on countries, hampering their ability to deliver services and enhance their populations' well-being. Economic, social, health, environmental and political shocks had demonstrated significant impacts on

national capacities in recent years. Resilience and the ability to absorb and adapt to shocks were seen as important areas for Beyond GDP.

15. Discussions underway for the planned extensions of the SNA for its 2025 revision were encouraging. Issues such as distributional measures of household income, consumption and wealth, unpaid work, globalization, and digitalization were areas that were being examined as part of the process under the United Nations Statistical Commission. Members supported the approach of exploring approaches to include externalities in the SNA and GDP calculations. The ongoing process in the United Nations General Assembly to develop a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index had connections to Beyond GDP, as did experiences of United Nations system entities in developing other well-being indicators.

16. It was acknowledged that, although improvements to GDP and SNA were necessary, there were aspects that were unlikely to be included in the short to medium term; therefore, complementary indicators were seen as important. Such indicators needed to be based on credible, high quality and timely data; comparable across countries; and able to be compiled and used by Member States and, to the extent possible, embedded within national statistical frameworks that were country-owned. It was acknowledged that some measures might not be valued in monetary terms, while other important dimensions of well-being might not have indicators that were widely accepted, and a forward-looking Beyond GDP should not be overly constrained by the indicators that existed and were widely available.

17. Members supported a values-based approach to Beyond GDP, acknowledging that some dimensions could not be a "trade-off" or substitute for other dimensions. The six broad themes covered many of the foundational elements, mapping out a range of issues that were important. Members also supported a Beyond GDP concept that was practical and easy-to-use for policymakers, bearing in mind the burden on Member States, especially countries with limited resources. The overall framework of Beyond GDP would also need buy-in from Member States and to be used by policymakers to be successful; therefore, the ease in which it could be compiled and used was of utmost importance.

18. There already existed examples of moving beyond GDP at national and international levels. Members shared examples in which international financial institutions were already using indicators beyond GDP in access to concessional financing, as well as in the assessment of contributions for United Nations Member States. Examples at the national level were also shared, and it was suggested that such examples could be highlighted as "good practices". Furthermore, it was suggested that concepts of Beyond GDP could be piloted at the national level to inform the framework and approach. In this regard, members felt that an interactive and dynamic approach was necessary to ensure that Beyond GDP could adapt to circumstances on the ground; leverage innovative methodologies as they arose; respond to the rapidly changing economic, social, environmental, political, and digital contexts; and over time address additional elements that might be left out.

19. It was recognized that capacity development was necessary to support Member States on Beyond GDP. That included implementing extensions and revisions to the SNA, including the SEEA, as well as supporting statistical offices to collect new data and implement new methodologies. The role of the United Nations system in capacity development and in providing policy advisory services was acknowledged as an important area for further action. Members welcomed the receptivity of Member States to the concept of Beyond GDP in the United Nations General Assembly and supported further engagement of Member States on this issue in appropriate multilateral forums.

20. In closing, the Chair recognized the significant efforts of the co-leads, core group and drafting teams to provide the Committee with a substantive direction and thanked HLCP members for engaging deeply with the topic to find areas of common ground. The valuable contributions from all members, reaching into the depth of expertise that existed across the system, was an essential ingredient to the finalization of the deliverables. The date of 28 July 2022 was selected to hold

a second HLCP intersessional meeting to consider the final deliverables, as outlined in the concept note on progress beyond GDP that HLCP had approved in February 2022.

Conclusion

21. **Taking note of the documents "Overview of Uses of GDP and Beyond GDP", "Overview of Improving GDP and SNA", and "Overview of Complements to GDP", the Committee:**

    a. **Called for a high level of ambition to improve and complement GDP following the universality principle contained within the 2030 Agenda, putting people and the planet at the centre, and taking into consideration areas that need to be further highlighted, including environmental, social, digital, distributional and vulnerability dimensions, and noting the continued importance of GDP.**

    b. **Noted the importance of considering existing normative uses of GDP and Beyond GDP metrics within the multilateral development system -- including examples of "good practice" as well as the evolving conversation on how organizations use metrics as yardsticks of well-being, risk, vulnerability, and sustainability. This includes examples from both "donor" and "non-donor" development organizations. Underlined the need to ensure visibility of Beyond GDP metrics alongside GDP for their widest possible use to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and follow-up actions to the Our Common Agenda report.**

    c. **Welcomed the current process in the United Nations Statistical Commission for planned extensions of the SNA for its 2025 revision, and encouraged the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounts with its Ecosystem Accounting extension and further work to strengthen national statistical frameworks to provide comprehensive data to enable the analysis of inequalities, sustainability, vulnerability, and other priority issues as they emerge, at the required level of granularity.**

    d. **Requested a Beyond GDP concept that is based on the six broad thematic areas outlined, keeping the concept practical and easy-to-use for policymakers, thus limiting the core set of complementary indicators ideally to below 20 while striving towards a set of measures that is closer to 10 indicators. Asked that the indicators be based on credible, high quality and timely data, comparable across countries, and such that can be compiled, easily accessed, and used by Member States, and be country-owned to generate buy-in.**

    e. **Asked the Core Group to explore dynamic and iterative approaches that enable adjustments to beyond GDP in a timely fashion, including based on potential pilots, benefitting from new data or innovative methodologies that support policymakers in making evidence-based decisions. The approach should respond to changing economic, social, environmental, political, and technological contexts striving to fill data gaps on important issues that are currently not measured.**

III. Duties to the future: intergenerational equity

22. The Chair recalled the decision of HLCP at its forty-second session to explore and unpack the concept of "intergenerational equity" as a first step towards developing future analytical products to support the United Nations system in fulfilling duties to the future, one of the three pillars comprising the Committee's new strategic narrative. He also highlighted that the Our Common Agenda report had dedicated an entire chapter to the theme, entitled "Succeeding generations: shaping the future", which he said underscored the salience of this workstream and the opportunity to contribute to the Secretary-General's vision. With that background, the Chair acknowledged the leadership of the workstream co-leads Ms. Jasmina Byrne, Chief of Policy, Office of Global Insight and Policy, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Mr. Adam Day,

Director of Programmes, Centre for Policy Research, United Nations University (UNU), and Mr. Andrew Raine, Head of the International Law Unit in the Law Division of United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), as well as the support of Ms. Tamara Rusinow, Policy Specialist, Society and Young People, UNICEF.

23. Ms. Byrne and Mr. Day presented the discussion paper on behalf of the three co-lead entities, first describing the collaborative process through which the HLCP duties to the future core group analyzed the concept of intergenerational equity and developed the recommendations for the Committee's consideration. The group approached intergenerational equity as a multi-sectoral and cross-cultural concept, looking both at what was owed to future generations and at solidarity with and accountability to younger and future generations. The paper examined duties to the future through moral, legal and development lenses. It outlined major challenges and opportunities in relation to: knowledge and data, demographics, inequalities, skewed economic and political incentives, institutional challenges, and legal opportunities. Two sets of actions were put forward aiming to (1) build a common, scientifically-backed understanding of the impact of today's actions across multiple generations and (2) support a concerted normative and legal push to enshrine a global responsibility towards future generations across the United Nations system. The co-leads highlighted linkages between this work and other ongoing efforts, in particular with the HLCP Foresight Network and the Futures Lab being pursued under the auspices of the Secretary-General in support of Our Common Agenda. They also underscored the possibility of this workstream generating synergies with the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism.

24. In the subsequent discussion, members appreciated that the paper clearly laid out key challenges and opportunities relating to duties to the future from the perspective of the United Nations system. It was important to overcome the "tyranny of the short-term" and to capture some of the optimistic potential, not only negative concerns. Members supported the two sets of actions proposed – both the analytical and the normative – highlighting ways in which their organizations were already active and could contribute as the workstream moved ahead, particularly in areas such as climate change, inequality, gender, and demographics.

25. Members emphasized the interlinkages between this workstream and others being taken forward under HLCP, including inequalities and Beyond GDP (for example, in terms of incentivizing a longer-term vision and also valuing unpaid care). The importance of ensuring that the HLCP work on duties to the future supported proposed initiatives under Our Common Agenda, including the Education Summit, Future Labs, Summit of the Future, and Declaration on Future Generations, was also underscored. Furthermore, the connection between this workstream and the Stockholm+50 meeting was highlighted, and in that context, members were invited to propose language that could be incorporated in the Stockholm+50 co-chairs' summary to further embed the concept of intergenerational equity in that intergovernmental process.

26. Hope was expressed that analysis undertaken and methodologies developed through this workstream as proposed under the first set of actions, such as forecasting and sustainable futures scenarios, could help United Nations system entities ensure that needs of today's youth as well as coming generations were part of longer-term projections about the future. Members mentioned relevant methodologies and tools currently used within their organizations, including scenario planning, debt sustainability assessments, shadow carbon pricing, and an initiative on "metrics of the future" that was modeling fair shares of carbon emissions as if there were already intergenerational equity. To feed analytical models, members stressed that more disaggregated data was needed. The representative of the United Nations Development Coordination Office (DCO) offered to help test tools and methodologies that might be applied through this workstream in country contexts.

27. With respect to the second group of actions, members supported seeing the United Nations system help move the intergenerational equity agenda through its normative work, for example, specifically looking at ways of formulating strong instruments to articulate how future

generations could be conceived as rights-holders, and exploring opportunities for ensuring that future generations had legal standing in international law.

28. The representative of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) reiterated its readiness to lead on analysis of age-specific inequalities and intergenerational benefits of universal social protection, which DESA also expressed interest to support. The World Food Programme (WFP) offered to join the workstream, in particular to contribute to the areas of employment, education and training. The member from the World Health Organization (WHO) indicated the organization would like to participate specifically on risk and preparedness. The representatives of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank agreed to engage on the proposed open-source methodology for future impact assessments that accounted for intergenerational fairness. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reinforced the connections with the Secretary-General's planned Futures Lab, of which it was a co-lead.

29. Members offered feedback on particular points made in the discussion paper, such as on the tension between the interests of future generations and current generations; the need to also address equity among current generations (e.g., across the whole life cycle, including youth and aging populations); cultivating youth agency; the importance of meaningful dialogue with young people; the extent to which a generation was itself homogeneous; uncertainty of trends relating to demographics and inequality; additional gender dimensions that needed to be taken into account; the importance of institutions for education, training and skills for current and future generations; and the need to think beyond social protection, for example to include transfer of land. Expanding the idea of existential threats to future generations, what would be key thresholds or tipping points, and applying the precautionary principle were also mentioned.

30. Other observations and suggestions were offered by members for the consideration of the core group in taking the work forward. In addition to exploring intergenerational benefits of social protection, it was suggested that another important area would be investment in quality care services for children, the elderly and people with disabilities. More life-long education and person-centred social protection needed to be encouraged if systems were going to change and take into account greater human longevity. It was proposed to explore the concept of "intergenerational due diligence" to limit harm to the rights of people in the future, with respect not only to environment, but also education, health, social protection and other areas. It was also suggested to consider taking forward an action on applying risk methodology under the first recommendation. Given that the recommendations had a number of implications for how the United Nations Development System conducted its work, it was proposed to identify practical implications with respect to political, economic and social modeling and incentive structures, starting with the common country analyses.

31. In reflecting on the discussion, the co-leads thanked members for their contributions and committed to take the feedback back to the core group. The forthcoming analytical papers and other products would benefit from the Committee's guidance and add depth and dimension to the content of the discussion paper produced as background for this item. They appreciated the entities that had volunteered to contribute to the various actions. The co-leads summarized the areas of greatest potential impact, namely: expanding the international legal framework to define, deliver and protect intergenerational rights; pursuing positive scenario analysis emphasizing opportunities, as well as incentives and behavioural science to gradually shift behavior and change direction; elevating risk analysis, including to explore implications of inadvertent risk transfer, discount rates and shadow pricing; and developing open source methodology for future impact assessments, which was aligned with the vision for inclusive networked multilateralism.

32. The co-leads reiterated the interconnectedness of this workstream with other HLCP efforts and looked forward to further collaborating with the HLCP Foresight Network and the HLCP inequalities task team, and also anticipated working more closely with the Futures Lab being pursued under Our Common Agenda. In follow-up, the co-leads would ask the core group to

think more about how the foresight, scenario analysis and futures planning capabilities in individual organizations could be put to maximum use for the benefit of the whole United Nations system.

33. In concluding the item, the Chair recognized the strong endorsement from members for the recommendations put forward in the discussion paper. Accordingly, the core group on duties to the future was requested to work with the volunteering entities to elaborate a plan to pursue the activities outlined, ensuring connectivity between this and other HLCP workstreams, as well as other relevant United Nations system processes. The Chair indicated that the plan would consequently be taken note of by the Committee and the item would be placed on the agenda of a future HLCP meeting once sufficient progress had been made.

Conclusion

34. **The Committee approved the recommendations set out in the discussion paper on duties to the future through an intergenerational equity lens, enriched based on members' comments, and requested the core group on duties to the future to work with the volunteering entities to elaborate a plan to pursue the activities outlined, for HLCP's subsequent consideration.**

IV. New global public goods: international data governance

35. In his introductory remarks, the Chair reminded the Committee that framing data as a global public good had been widely supported by members and that it had been proposed that HLCP undertake a scanning of processes related to international data governance. He also recalled that options included identifying present data governance bodies, looking at gaps that existed and pinpointing capacities that would be needed in the United Nations system to carry forward any data governance recommendations. The Chair noted that the System-wide Road Map for Innovating United Nations Data and Statistics, endorsed by CEB in 2020, articulated a "deep commitment to impartial, open United Nations data and statistics as a global public good" and the ambition "to guide and advise Member States…to convene to develop normative standards and international best practices and to support countries with capacity development." A working group, led by the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System (CCS-UNS), composed of 22 members from CCS-UNS entities as well as colleagues nominated by HLCP representatives, had been working on this subject. The Chair expressed his appreciation to the co-leads, Ms. Angela Me, Chief of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and Mr. Steve MacFeely, Director of Data and Analytics, WHO, for having led an inclusive preparation process and thanked them, their teams and the working group for the preparation of the concept note on a United Nations system paper on international data governance, which was before the Committee for its consideration.

36. In his presentation of the concept note, Mr. MacFeely noted that over the past twenty years the digital revolution had caused a data revolution, creating volumes of data unlike anything that had existed in human history, and that data was underlying every other topic, from artificial intelligence to digitalization. The competition to access and use data had triggered enormous risks and a potential for misuse and abuse of data. The concentration of data in a small number of hands raised issues around inequality and the marginalization of people without access to it. He observed that as data became more commodified, fewer people could access and capitalize on it. He acknowledged that the idea of data governance was not new, but that it represented an important opportunity for the United Nations to demonstrate leadership on this pervasive and ubiquitous subject. Expressing hope for agreement from members to begin a journey to develop the proposed paper, Mr. MacFeely emphasized that data was a crosscutting subject and that the input could contribute to the Summit of the Future, the Global Digital Compact, and the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. He also underlined that the aim was not to define an international agreement but to set the stage for Member States to start thinking about the topic.

37. Complementing those remarks, Ms. Me reiterated that the objective was to offer a narrative, an analysis, a rationale and argumentation with the paper that could be used as input by the United Nations for intergovernmental processes. It was recalled that a lot had been developed in the United Nations system, including data principles, which could be built upon, and that the idea behind the rationale was to explain the need for data protection and the consequences of not protecting data. She underlined the trade-off related to data, with the right to privacy on the one hand and the right to access data on the other hand. She also acknowledged that principles in themselves were not sufficient; the aim was to move beyond principles, creating a system that protected data with incentives, developed in consultation with various stakeholders inside and outside the United Nations system, including Member States and the private sector.

38. In the discussion that followed, members welcomed the concept note and the timely nature and importance of the topic and discussion, and acknowledged the ambition and tight timeline. Members viewed data as strongly linked to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially given increasing digitalization. The governance of data and the ability to access and use data for public good was seen as important for the acceleration of all three dimensions of sustainable development. Members noted that it was crucial to deal with the question of data not only from a global governance angle, but also in terms of its economic value, given that data harvesting for economic gain affected many countries, especially developing countries.

39. The social impacts of data were also highlighted, particularly with regards to inequalities and the status of women. To harness the full power of work in this area, it was considered key to produce data that was adequate and appropriate from a user's point of view, and that besides the public and private sector, civil society was also consulted and involved. Underscoring the need to adopt an inclusive approach, members recalled the need for engaging low- and middle-income countries in this debate. Members suggested paying particular attention to the principle of equal representation as this new area of governance was being navigated.

40. It was noted that data played an important role for accountability, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and to inform decision and policymaking more generally. Members stressed that although the availability of data in the long term was vital for tracking progress, funding for public good data was reliant on donors, whose priorities could shift, making it more difficult to obtain sustainable financing for data. Reusing and recycling data for greater efficiency and ensuring greater interoperability across data domains were considered extremely important.

41. It was felt that international data governance should examine all data, not just global public good data or data that could support the delivery of global public goods. Members acknowledged the difficulties of defining data; however, it was suggested a definition of what the paper viewed as global public good data, while noting the different categories of data, would be helpful. A distinction between data and information, as well as how data intersects with digitization and digital tools such as application programming interfaces, was worthy of clarifying.

42. Members recognized that it was very timely to engage in this discussion and facilitate the emergence of common language around this complex issue. It was felt that attention should particularly be paid to data that was for global public goods and served the development of global public goods. In the discussion, members stressed the importance of data in various fields, including for increased food security and nutrition, protection of the environment, climate change, disaster risk reduction, migration, nuclear activity, health, education, culture, freedom of expression and media.

43. Reflecting on the nature of the document, members proposed to clarify the audience, purpose and scope of the paper. For example, it was noted that the paper could provide input to many international intergovernmental bodies, whereas a focus on the United Nations as the main audience would require the principles to be reflected in the data strategies of the respective entities. In general, members emphasized that the United Nations should lead by example, while

being cognizant of confidentiality requirements of individual United Nations system organizations, and that credibility would depend on the application of the principles by the United Nations system. It was also suggested that the proposed Compact be forward-oriented, ongoing, iterative, and capable of addressing and adapting to changing circumstances.

44. Members welcomed that the concept note foresaw a role for the United Nations Statistical Commission and the national statistical offices as important partners. They highlighted different initiatives and documents to inform and complement the work, including the World Development Report 2021 with its spotlight on the role of data; the guidance note on a Human Rights-based Approach to Data, a methodology for developing human rights due diligence for the responsible choice and use of data and new technology; an initiative by the United Nations network on migration supporting Member States on the first objective of the Global Compact on Migration, focusing on data; and a forthcoming briefing on digital public goods for disaster risk reduction.

45. Acknowledging that the time was ripe to tackle this issue, members identified the Summit of the Future, the World Data Forum and the World Economic Forum, as opportunities to highlight and advance this work. Moreover, members suggested to clarify the relationship and engagement with ongoing processes such as the proposed Global Digital Compact and the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. They noted that the relationship with the broader aspirations of Our Common Agenda could more clearly outline how data was relevant to strengthening multilateralism and good governance and reinvigorating social contracts and social dialogue.

46. The Committee offered further comments to strengthen and improve the recommendations laid out in the concept note. It was suggested to conduct a clear analysis of the gaps that the data governance structure was trying to fill and to examine risks, such as the risk of weakening human rights standards. Members appreciated that data protection occupied a prominent place in the concept note and, against the backdrop of an increasing number of data protection offices in the agencies, proposed the creation of a network of professionalized data protection officers to inform and contribute to this work. It was also suggested to expand the focus on spatial data infrastructure, an area where the United Nations could do a lot more.

47. Members welcomed the emphasis on the importance of international technical standards in the concept note and saw potential for strengthening and concretizing this further. It was proposed to consult with stakeholders to ensure their buy-in and thus ease implementation when outcomes were to be formalized into standards. Additionally, it was recommended to include a reference in the concept note to the potentially significant costs and investments required for standardizing and labelling data.

48. Against the backdrop of the conflict in Ukraine and reflecting on calls by some Member States to limit data exchange with dual use purposes, it was noted that the United Nations tried to maintain a free and open data exchange even during crisis situations to protect global information, such as global weather forecast data. Robust information and trust were considered essential as data was used for policy purposes and decision-making. Based on the experiences from the COVID-19 pandemic, members also underlined the need to treat data as a non-rival public good. The pandemic had demonstrated the importance of timeliness in relation to cross-border access and data-sharing.

49. In their closing remarks, the co-leads emphasized the complexity of the task and the need to conduct a stakeholder consultation process involving Member States, especially developing countries whose voice had not been sufficiently heard, the private sector, and civil society. They underlined that this was not merely a statistical issue, but that there were also political, social and economic dimensions to it. Assuring members that representation in the “governance of the governance” would be considered, the co-chairs also echoed the need for staff time dedicated to the task and appreciated the expertise, passion and commitment of colleagues in the United

Nations system organizations. They also recalled that while the paper was not being written *for* Member States, it was produced for engagement *with* Member States at different occasions.

50. Summarizing the discussion, the Chair observed that despite comments about the level of ambition, scope and timeline, members had added new topics to the discussion. He reminded the Committee to bear in mind the specific purpose of this set of issues and its audience to achieve a coherent result and raised the question whether the focus of the discussion was on data *for* the global common good or data *as* a global common good. The Chair reiterated opportunities to link this initiative to existing processes, such as the Global Digital Compact, the Summit of the Future, and the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. He also recalled that the aim was to produce a contribution the United Nations system could leverage to inform ongoing intergovernmental processes. In concluding, the Chair reminded members of their offers to engage and contribute to the task as described in the concept note and encouraged them to support the co-leads in their work.

Conclusion

51. **The Committee approved the concept note on a United Nations system paper on international data governance and agreed to proceed with the next steps as outlined in the concept note.**

V. Strengthening the United Nations system's impact and visibility on reducing inequalities and Sustainable Development Goal 10, in support of the decade of action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030

52. The Chair recalled that the item on strengthening the United Nations system's impact and visibility on reducing inequalities and Sustainable Development Goal 10 was again on the Committee's agenda as a follow-up to its decision at the forty-second session to consider the state of inequalities in the world and to determine what United Nations efforts needed to be stepped-up, refocused or redirected. He observed that societies were fragmented and conflicted, and that inequalities had become cumulative, leading to situations of deeply entrenched social and structural injustice, amplified by conflict and the prolonged pandemic. The circumstances called for nothing short of a bold, ambitious, and transformational approach: as delivered by the HLCP inequalities task team in the form of a proposed New United Nations System Agenda for Equality. The Chair expressed his appreciation to the workstream co-leads, Ms. Aparna Mehrotra, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and Mr. Craig Mokhiber, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the members of the inequalities task team and its drafting group.

53. Recalling the origins of current mandate of the inequalities task team on the eve of the COVID-19 pandemic and stressing the need for far-reaching action in its wake, Ms. Mehrotra and Mr. Mokhiber presented the paper. The inequalities task team had been asked by HLCP to create a foundation for change, for a new and bolder United Nations system approach to combatting inequalities, based in United Nations norms and standards. The state of rising inequalities implied that the world and its institutions, including the United Nations, has not realized the promise of equality embodied in the United Nations Charter. Recognizing inequalities as a defining issue of our times, the paper proposed a break from the status quo. It called for the United Nations system to do more, beginning by recognizing that inequalities were not an accident of nature; rather, they were the result of policies that have had the effect of systemic and structural exclusion that have pushed some people behind while securing unfair advantage for others.

54. An inclusive and collaborative drafting process yielded a paper containing five recommendations for the consideration of HLCP:

a. To leverage the United Nations' moral authority and convening power to build political will for real change, by using the proposed intergovernmental Summit of the Future to enhance political support for action and by bringing the system together around a United Nations compact to commit to this agenda.
b. To take bold steps towards a more equitable global financial system, enabling it to better work with the United Nations system to reverse unequal trends; strengthening the United Nations system's position as a source of norm-based economic thinking; and better advocating for pro-equality economic policies and fairer fiscal and tax measures at the national and international levels.
c. To build a new social contract and strategic partnerships to reverse current trends and policies to address inequalities, bringing new constituencies and excluded voices into the United Nations; strengthening civic space and participation of civil society; advocating rule of law in the economic sphere, adequate regulation of private sector actors, and principled engagement with compliant businesses; defending and spearheading the United Nations anti-racism and gender agendas; and strengthening partnerships with local governments.
d. To systematically measure inequality at the top *and* bottom, and the gulf between them, capturing all aspects of inequality; disaggregating further, and fully leveraging data, including new sources and methodologies, going beyond GDP and aggregates to measure progress, to directly tackle inequalities; to engage people in monitoring; to overcome barriers to monitoring; to focus data analysis and research on policies; and to help Member States to do the same.
e. To change United Nations structures and how they work together to sharpen the focus on inequalities, designating a United Nations mechanism for coordination on inequalities; annually publishing a flagship report on the subject; enhancing public information, communications and outreach; fully integrating attention to political economy and inequality across the United Nations system's work at the global, regional and country levels; including dedicated attention in all Common Country Analyses and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks; strengthening accountability for inclusion of inequality work in United Nations system activities at all levels; and committing dedicated resources and staff to implement the CEB-endorsed Shared Framework for Action on Inequalities and other United Nations system inequality initiatives.

55. In the discussion that followed, members welcomed the paper as bold and thought-provoking. It responded well to the mandate to undertake a foundational reflection on the state of inequalities and to reorient the work of the United Nations system accordingly. It was observed that there was no choice but to challenge the status quo. The Committee agreed that the issue of inequality should remain a high priority for the United Nations system and that there was a need for a sustained coordination on the matter. Fighting inequalities was at the heart of mandates across the United Nations system and the work of almost all entities related to it; yet, inequalities continued to accelerate, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. It was a truly universal problem plaguing developing and developed countries alike. It was an area where the United Nations and its work could be both elevated and made more visible. Inequalities and its effects would clearly resonate were the United Nations to increasingly take a whole-of-society approach, which would bring it more directly in touch with the people.

56. Members appreciated that the envisioned United Nations system "agenda for equality" was firmly rooted in United Nations norms and standards, as well as the 2030 Agenda; there was a suggestion that the document could make even more use of the Sustainable Development Goal framework specifically. It was observed that connections to other HLCP workstreams – in particular on Beyond GDP, data and intergenerational equity – as well as related efforts in support of the 2030 Agenda, including the implementation of Our Common Agenda, were interwoven throughout the paper, presenting the opportunity to consolidate and strengthen the complementary initiatives.

57. Members were generally supportive of the five overarching recommendations and provided detailed feedback on specific action points (see below). The importance of the United Nations

system operationalizing the agreed proposals was stressed, in particular the need to translate the vision into action at the country level, in order to lead to better-informed national policies. Given the rich set of recommended actions presented, members supported prioritizing and sequencing their implementation. Additionally, it was suggested it could be helpful to differentiate global-level recommendations from those targeted at the country level. Members also requested a clearer indication of what mechanisms or actors (such as the inequalities task team or other ongoing efforts), as well as any partners, would be responsible to drive individual elements forward. Specifically recognizing that effective Member State engagement was required, it was further proposed to distinguish between what was within United Nations system organizations' abilities to implement and what would require a mandate from or action by Member States. In this context, it would be important for the United Nations system to have a strong position, intended also to be useful as it advocated for possible measures to be taken by governments.

58. Members were supportive of leveraging the United Nations' convening power, as put forward in the first recommendation. The Committee saw merit to making ending inequalities a key pillar of the proposed 2023 intergovernmental Summit of the Future, as an opportunity to address the issue at a global level, and noted that given the timelines for preparation of the Summit, advocacy for this purpose should begin as soon as possible. Also, in view of the urgency to act that the subject warranted, it was emphasized that implementation of the other elements should not wait for the Summit – many proposals could move forward independently. It was highlighted that the Digital Compact that was anticipated to emerge as an outcome of the Summit of the Future could address digital inequalities and narrowing the digital divide. In the lead-up to the Summit, it was suggested that the ECOSOC Commission for Social Development could help support Summit preparations and provide an institutional "home" for inequalities and Goal 10.

59. In addition to the Summit of the Future, other events were highlighted as possible forums to leverage and advance work on inequalities, including the September 2023 Sustainable Development Goal Summit, which would include a focus on Goal 10; the proposed Biennial Summit between the members of the Group of 20 and of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), the Secretary-General and the heads of the international financial institutions; and the proposed 2025 World Social Summit. Moreover, it was observed that the recent Food Systems Summit could serve as a source of both substantive information and lessons on inequalities and process-specific experiences, such as the use of whole-of-society consultations.

60. With respect to the recommendation on the global financial system, members recognized the important issues surfaced in the paper that had also been publicly highlighted by some organizations within the United Nations system and by the Secretary-General. However, some felt a more positive portrayal of the work of the international financial institutions was appropriate. Some members supported highlighting examples ("bright lights") where reformed economic systems have resulted in improvements that could be scaled up or replicated.

61. Stressing their entities' commitment to address inequalities within their limited technical mandates, the representatives of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank offered their views on the recommendation and proposed actions, some of which they could not support in their present form. In particular, it was suggested that the inequalities paper should build on the 2022 Financing for Sustainable Development Report prepared by the Inter-agency Task Force on Financing for Development, which had been discussed recently by United Nations system experts. Some issues highlighted in the HLCP paper would require additional consultation and revision, including on fiscal space, fiscal consolidation, debt sustainability, debt restructuring, and special drawing rights. It was felt that the area of mechanisms to finance the Sustainable Development Goals, which had a direct and critical bearing on inequalities, constituted a potential synergy, making it worthy for strengthening in the paper. The representatives appreciated the opportunity to further discuss the issues and committed to continuing to work cooperatively with other United Nations system entities, including at the country level.

62. Linked to this, it was suggested by others that the need for a new development paradigm should be highlighted, as "tinkering" with the existing development model had not produced the needed outcomes. More commitment needed to be generated to change the aid architecture, including in the context of the pandemic response and vaccine equity.

63. Responding to a specific proposal outlined in the paper, it was observed that the United Nations Economist Network might not be equipped to take forward the action to strengthen economic capacity of United Nations leadership to challenge policies that perpetuate inequalities.

64. The recommendation to build a new social contract and strategic partnerships was welcomed. This was seen as an opportunity for the United Nations system, which was well-positioned collectively to contribute; although, more could be done in a joined-up manner. The need to link discussions on inequalities and the functional distribution of income was stressed, and in that context the Global Accelerator on Social Protection and Jobs was highlighted as a means to create decent jobs supported by social protection. The larger business community, composed of many different actors beyond large corporations, also needed to be engaged. The focus on social dialogue was welcomed, and it was felt to be important to also mention the role of workers' organizations in view of trends towards a future world of work that might create more inequalities. Furthermore, the strong approach to rule of law in the economic sphere was appreciated and should also include promoting equal access to justice.

65. Members also supported the recommendation on comprehensively measuring inequality at both the top and bottom, and leveraging data to tackle inequalities. Better data disaggregation also remained critical, as did turning descriptions of gaps or problems into opportunities for action. Challenges such as disparity of data, weak data standards and regulatory frameworks, and access by national and non-government authorities were highlighted. It was noted that common indicators on inequalities could be useful to apply across the United Nations system and its partners. Collecting intra-household data was suggested as a way to obtain additional information on elements like work burden, bargaining power, and assets. The idea of a dialogue on the statistical policies related to inequalities was seen as an opportunity to connect with national statistical offices and help them be drivers for change.

66. Members supported increased transparency about the top end of wealth, as well as the bottom end and the gap between them. Several emphasized that focus on the furthest behind should also be maintained. It was noted that billionaires' wealth had increased dramatically, and a digital development tax as suggested in Our Common Agenda could be a creative way to help to fight inequalities. Specifically with respect to greenhouse gas emissions, statistics were cited on billionaires' contributions, with a call to establish more accountability.

67. With respect to the recommendation on changing how the United Nations system worked on inequalities, members placed importance on more coordination among otherwise fragmented approaches and on increasing the visibility of United Nations system work on the issue. Some members expressed support for a coordinating mechanism on inequalities, while seeking clarity on the form it could take and the resources needed. It was pointed out that some governance structures prevented United Nations system organizations from committing to accountability mechanisms or providing dedicated staff and resources. It was noted that such a coordination mechanism did not necessarily have to remain under the auspices of HLCP, given the Committee's operating modalities required timebound and deliverable-oriented approaches. In the meantime, a better understanding of how United Nations system entities were currently contributing to the reduction of inequalities was deemed to be useful.

68. To complement the proposals on a regular system-wide flagship publication on the state of inequalities and improving public visibility of related work, it was also suggested that having every United Nations system entity include a section on inequalities in its annual report or holding more dedicated events on the topic would also serve to increase the comfort level in addressing the issue.

69. Also under the fifth recommendation, HLCP recognized the vital role of United Nations country teams in combatting inequalities. Members were informed that the leave no one behind guidance, developed to help operationalize the CEB System-wide Framework for Action on Inequalities, had been widely disseminated and was a core part of every resident coordinator's induction. Furthermore, the common country analyses and cooperation frameworks strove to put the issue of inequality front and centre, and mandatory tags for leaving no one behind had been incorporated in the United Nations country teams reporting systems. Yet it was acknowledged that more could be done. The resident coordinator office economists and the human rights advisors, deployed by the human rights mainstreaming trust fund, should be seen as common assets of country teams in addressing inequalities. Members stressed that the cooperation framework was a particularly important tool to ensure the United Nations system work on inequalities was well integrated at country level, but improvements could be made. Systematizing the quality of the common country analysis and cooperation frameworks would ensure that the focus was even more robust. Moreover, it was felt that the issues-based coalitions could provide a space to work on inequalities regionally.

70. The point was also made that there were growing examples of practical engagement in collaboration on the ground with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, both on the country analysis and also on designing – and in some cases collaboratively committing to – the cooperation framework strategic priorities. This was a practical avenue through which collaboration at country level between the United Nations country teams and Bretton Woods Institutions could further advance, bringing together their respective capacities and influence with host governments to address the issue of inequalities.

71. Topics that were missing or could be strengthened in the proposal were highlighted by members over the course of the discussion. It was felt that inequalities between countries could have been better addressed, and that ideas on how to address international inequalities and assist countries to meet the Sustainable Development Goals could warrant further discussion. Climate change could have been emphasized more as a significant driver of inequalities, with disproportionate impact on the poor, rural populations, indigenous groups, future generations and other groups. Some felt that the relevance of humanitarian principles could be further fleshed out, as could the link between inequalities and prevention and peacebuilding. It was also observed that trade issues, including job creation and subsidies, ought to have been addressed more fully. "Twenty-first century inequalities" (relating to technology, data, digitization, automation, etc.) could also have been more prominent in the analysis. It was suggested that the specific vulnerabilities of 15 to 17 year-olds who faced barriers relating to access to education and decent employment could have been highlighted in the paper. Another topic that was mentioned as deserving more attention was agri-food systems, given that the agriculture sector could generate inequalities as well as be a means to implement equitable interventions. It was also stated that information – as distinct from data – as a driver of inequalities could have been further explored.

72. In their closing remarks, the co-leads expressed their gratitude to the HLCP inequalities task team and its drafting group for producing the proposal and to Laura Turquet (UN-Women) and Thérèse Björk (OHCHR) for coordinating the drafting process. They appreciated the wide-ranging feedback from members, recognized the diversity of the membership of the Committee – a feature to be valued – and observed that different views were to be expected. Specifically on the recommendation on the global financial system, the co-leads reiterated that many of the critiques presented in the paper represented existing positions grounded in United Nations norms and related guidelines; they appreciated the opportunity to highlight the issues in the forum that HLCP provided. The co-leads committed to revise the recommendations taking into consideration the comments before transmission to CEB for endorsement, and to subsequently develop a timeline for implementation through the inequalities task team. They stressed the urgency to act, as well as to redouble efforts to advance the equality agenda at country level.

73. In concluding the item, the Chair thanked the co-leads for their leadership and the members for a valuable discussion. There was a shared view that inequalities remained a major problem, and,

despite the fact that the member organizations were each working to combat inequalities in the context of their respective mandates, the collective sum of the efforts had failed. In that context, he stressed that the "reset" envisioned in the proposal was needed and justified.

74. The Chair recognized the appreciation that members expressed for the range of thought-provoking recommendations put forward in the paper. Recognizing the range of governance processes across the United Nations system, he clarified that the recommendations were not meant to be overly prescriptive instructions, but rather exhortations to take actions that had the potential to disrupt the status quo and make a deeper impact on inequalities. A revised version of the recommendations and associated actions would be transmitted to CEB for endorsement, after incorporating members' comments and concluding a second round of review by HLCP. In particular, the Chair noted the need to work further on the recommendation on the global financial system and encouraged continuing and deepening the discussion on the subject.

75. The Chair stressed that it was vital to act as a system, not only within United Nations country teams, but at all levels, and to maintain the sense of urgency and momentum to deal with all types of inequalities and deep-seated social injustices. He looked forward to the inequalities task team developing a plan to take forward the recommendations. He underscored that, while conferences and summits would be important occasions from which to benefit, progress should not be limited to or contingent on those milestones.

Conclusions

76. **[conclusion pending revision of the paper's recommendations and associated actions, and a second round of review by HLCP][1]**

VI. Ethics of artificial intelligence (AI)

77. Turning to the agenda item on ethics of artificial intelligence (AI), the Chair congratulated UNESCO on the adoption of the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI by its General Conference and thanked the co-leads for the significant progress made in HLCP's inter-agency working group on AI (IAWG-AI). The Chair noted the Committee's United Nations system-wide input into the process of developing the Recommendation, with many of its suggestions reflected in the final Recommendation. The diffusion of AI technologies had transformative implications in many areas of ethics and human rights, sustainable development and peace and security, and was highlighted in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The issue of inequalities also intersected with the ethics of AI. The significant potential for positive impact was recognized, but only if the risks were effectively mitigated, benefits shared by all, and human rights adequately protected. In this regard, the Chair welcomed the work of the IAWG-AI to develop a set of principles for the responsible use of AI in the United Nations system.

78. The Chair invited Ms. Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences of UNESCO, to deliver a presentation to the Committee on the Recommendation. Ms. Ramos emphasized the breakthrough nature of the adoption of the Recommendation and its values, principles, and areas for policy action, as well as areas of planned follow-up. The AI landscape was changing rapidly with increasing private investment and hiring for AI-related jobs, while it lacked a global standard and benchmarks. Therefore, it was important to have a global framework in the form of the Recommendation. The Framework included four values of respect, protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms and human dignity; environment and ecosystem flourishing; ensuring diversity and inclusiveness; and living in peaceful, just, and interconnected societies. The Recommendation also included ten principles for the governance of AI, as well as 11 policy areas for action, including on key issues such as data governance, gender equality, and human capital. The Recommendation had been adopted by 193 Member States, now interested in implementing the Recommendation, and UNESCO was working to support them in doing so and would ask them to report regularly on their progress

[1] Consultations on a revised version of the paper are ongoing under the guidance of the HLCP Chair.

and practices. Follow-up in support of Member States included developing key tools such as an ethical impact assessment and readiness assessment framework, as well as sharing AI expertise and supporting women working in ethical AI. The United Nations system, through the HLCP IAWG-AI, was focused on 'walking the talk' by translating the Recommendation into a framework on the ethical use of AI in carrying out their mandated activities throughout all stages of an AI system life cycle, taking into consideration other guidance, including on human rights due diligence and the ethical impact assessment. The work is progressing under an IAWG-AI workstream co-led by UNESCO and Office of Information and Communications Technology of the United Nations Secretariat.

79. In the following discussion, members strongly supported developing principles grounded in ethics and human rights for the use of AI across its life cycle for the United Nations system. Members were encouraged by the adoption of the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI and welcomed efforts to support its implementation by Member States. There was a strong sense that private sector self-regulation would be insufficient given the potential risks of AI and therefore regulatory action, grounded in ethics and human rights, was needed. Members also raised the potential upsides of AI for fulfilling their mandates more effectively and supporting Member States in sustainable development.

80. Members also appreciated the opportunity to continue discussing this vital issue, viewing it as one of the future-oriented issues that the HLCP should focus on. Members thanked the co-leads of the process to translate the Recommendation into a framework for the United Nations system for their consultative process. Members also expressed their willingness to share their experiences and contribute their expertise, including on the development of AI policy for children, the impacts of technology on environmental sustainability, AI for small and medium enterprises and smart industrialization, and the use of AI in the humanitarian context.

81. Inequalities arose as a recurring issue during the discussion, due to the inequalities in access to AI, inequalities in impacts of AI, and inequalities in the development of AI. These inequalities cut across income, wealth, gender, geography, race, age, and other indicators. The issue of bias in the data sets used by AI to train decision-making was also raised as an important issue to address, as AI could entrench and amplify existing biases. On gender equality specifically, there were concerns that the impacts of AI on women, including harassment through digital means, were not adequately addressed. The disparities of who was designing and developing AI was also of concern given the gender dimensions.

82. The impact of AI on democracy, peace and security was also identified as an important area. There were opportunities for AI to assist in democracy and peacebuilding; however, the requisite infrastructure might not necessarily be present in countries that would benefit from this. There were also risks associated with AI that negatively impacted on democracy, peace and security. These issues were also areas where the United Nations system could support countries to take regulatory action.

83. The risks of AI for economic development were also raised by members, including the impact AI might have on supply chains and labour markets. There was concern that AI might negatively impact decent work, and a human-centred approach was advocated. There was concern that cohorts of people with access to the growing employment opportunities relating to AI were different to the cohorts of people who may experience displacement resulting from the diffusion of AI, or might experience a dilution of wages, working conditions, and social protection as a result of changes to the labour market due to AI. The changes to employment, trade, and investment as a result of the diffusion of AI on developing countries was also of concern.

84. Members viewed the operationalization of ethics of AI as very important, raising questions for how to effectively implement AI principles. Engaging with Member States, the private sector, and other stakeholders was seen as an essential step in this process. Additional and timely expertise from outside the United Nations system to aid the development and implementation of ethical AI principles was welcomed, especially as norms and technologies evolved.

85. The proposed Global Digital Compact, contained in the Our Common Agenda report, would also address AI regulation and feature as part of the Summit of the Future. Additionally, further collaboration with HLCP's work on international data governance would be important.

86. Ms. Ramos appreciated the contributions and suggestions of members, as well as the collaborative approach of United Nations system entities in working with UNESCO on the issue, including through the IAWG-AI, and in contributing to the development of the Global Digital Compact. It was stressed that technology had significant potential for positive impact but was not neutral. Regulation and improved training of algorithms were crucial to deliver better for people around the world. The challenge was to develop regulations that were not overly onerous but created the right incentives. It was also important to understand what went wrong, for example why women were suffering more harassment, or why some candidates were not interviewed during a hiring process, and to limit black box AI where decisions could not be explained. Audits and transparency were also important to understand the problems so that the downsides could be controlled. Ensuring that human rights that exist in the real world could also be protected online and finding ethical guidance that avoided unintended negative consequences and reduced wrongdoing were important in the implementation process. Ms. Ramos viewed that as a starting point and expressed commitment to continue working through the IAWG-AI to address some of those issues.

87. In wrapping up, the IAWG-AI co-leads, Mr. Preetam Maloor, (International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and Ms. Clare Stark, UNESCO, recognized the significant interdependencies of different workstreams under the IAWG-AI and stressed the need to pursue a rights-based approach where ethics and human rights were the moral compass. The AI ethics principles would inform the work on developing AI procurement guidelines, also under way in the IAWG-AI, as well as other workstreams. In collaboration with ITU's AI for Good initiative, a compendium of over 220 activities on AI across 43 United Nations system entities and the AI for Good neural net had been launched, allowing entities to showcase their work. The United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) had collaborated with the IAWG-AI to develop guidance on using AI for small and medium enterprises, and UN-Habitat was working through the IAWG-AI on people-centred smart cities. There existed opportunities to convert domain-specific guidance into standards through mechanisms such as those of the ITU. The IAWG-AI could serve as a platform to contribute to the Global Digital Compact, on AI as well as on technology more broadly to ensure it developed in an ethical manner, consistent with human rights. Work on AI and education and AI and children, in collaboration with UNICEF and other members of the IAWG-AI continued. Further, the IAWG-AI held a futures literacy lab on reimagining humanity's relationship with technology in January 2022. The lab brought up additional issues for consideration including neurotech, the metaverse, digital and virtual assets, and the blurring between digital and physical realities. There existed a link between ethical AI and digital global public goods, as well as data as a global public good. In this regard, collaboration with the HLCP work on international data governance was welcomed given the importance of protecting individual data, ensuring the veracity of data sets to ensure fairness, as well as leveraging data to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The co-leads also informed HLCP that the first in-person meeting of the IAWG-AI was planned to be held in the margins of the World Summit on the Information Society Forum (31 May – 3 June 2022).

88. In closing, the Chair thanked Assistant Director-General Ramos for her presentation, as well as Mr. Maloor and Ms. Stark for their interventions. The Chair further encouraged the IAWG-AI to continue working on the translation of the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI into a framework for the ethical use of AI in the United Nations system, incorporating the views of HLCP based on the discussion, to be presented for the Committee's consideration once agreed by the working group, possibly as early as July 2022 when HLCP would hold an intersessional meeting.

Conclusion

89. **The Committee requested the Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence to present for its consideration a draft United Nations system-wide framework for the responsible use of AI grounded in ethics and human rights.**

VII. CEB Call to Action on Indigenous Peoples

90. In his opening remarks, the Chair observed that indigenous peoples, a particularly vulnerable group subject to persistent discrimination and recurrent human rights violations, had a lot to contribute as full and equal members of society, offering their traditional knowledge and holistic worldview to benefit humankind more broadly. He recalled that, with the presentation of the system-wide action plan for ensuring a coherent approach to achieving the ends of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UN-SWAP Indigenous Peoples) to CEB in November 2015, Board members had been encouraged to support the implementation of the plan in their respective organizations. Noting that the implementation had since been uneven and that the COVID-19 pandemic had more recently brought attention to discrimination against indigenous peoples and the disproportionate impacts they faced, the Chair appreciated efforts by United Nations system entities' indigenous peoples' focal points to support their organizations in implementing the November 2020 CEB Call to Action on building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future with indigenous peoples to step up efforts to implement the UN-SWAP Indigenous Peoples. The progress report produced by the inter-agency support group on indigenous peoples' issues for the Committee's consideration was presented by representatives of the group's co-chairs, UN-DESA and UNESCO.

91. Marion Barthélemy, UN-DESA, emphasized that the adoption of the Call to Action by CEB was an important step in strengthening the implementation of the system-wide action plan for indigenous peoples and in implementing the declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. She noted that, although progress was being made, the rights of indigenous peoples were only slowly being recognized and implemented within the United Nations system and among Member States. Ms. Barthélemy informed the Committee that the efforts highlighted in the report were a good example of how the work of HLCP influenced the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and the work performed at the country level by the resident coordinators and the United Nations country teams.

92. Since the adoption of the Call to Action, the support group had prioritized three initial areas of action. First, in view of increasing violence against human rights defenders, an internal guidance note on intimidation and reprisals against indigenous peoples had been finalized in December 2021 with feedback from country teams, which was to be validated, translated and shared with all United Nations staff. The note was designed to complement and build on work to implement measures in the Secretary-General's Call to Action on Human Rights, with a specific focus on protecting the human rights of indigenous peoples in the area of the environment. Second, the inter-agency support group had invited resident coordinators to share their experiences and highlight their needs to support and promote the implementation of indigenous rights. Through a series of virtual roundtables, organized in the first quarter of 2022 and dedicated to the topics of protecting human rights defenders, promoting participation of indigenous peoples in national development processes and indigenous knowledge and sustainable development, resident coordinators and country teams had shared good practices and experiences, leading to the creation of a resource portal on the UNSDG website for United Nations country teams. Third, the dialogue with resident coordinators had revealed that participation of indigenous peoples in programming and implementation activities of country teams had remained limited, thus underlining the need for the United Nations system to devote more efforts to the promotion of tools on indigenous issues. As a response to these three areas of action and to deepen implementation of the Call to Action, the inter-agency support group had developed a set of recommendations, which were before HLCP for its consideration.

93. Jean-Yves Le Saux, UNESCO, presented the four recommendations to ensure continued follow-up to the Call to Action. First, it was proposed that the Committee request the inter-agency support group to develop an accountability measure for the United Nations system to strengthen the implementation of the UN-SWAP Indigenous Peoples, as part of collective and coordinated action towards building an inclusive and sustainable future for indigenous peoples. Second, the report recommended that the Committee emphasize the need to promote disaggregation of data related to indigenous peoples as agreed in the CEB Call to Action (recommendation 15(d)) and request the inter-agency support group to engage with the Committee of Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System on a human rights-based approach to data and data disaggregation. Third, the progress report proposed that the Committee encourage UNSDG to place indigenous issues on its agenda to explore additional action that could be taken at country level to further the implementation of the UN-SWAP Indigenous Peoples and to live up to the commitment expressed in the CEB Call to Action. Fourth, it was recommended that the Committee encourage the continuing close collaboration between the inter-agency support group and UNSDG through DCO to support United Nations resident coordinators. Mr. Le Saux noted that HLCP played an important role in ensuring that the United Nations system continued work in what was considered a difficult area and should pursue follow-up on the Call to Action based on the engagement with resident coordinators.

94. In the subsequent discussion, members expressed their support for the recommendations. In particular, they appreciated the vision for a proactive, human rights-based approach and the emphasis on disaggregation of data related to indigenous peoples. Members also valued the organization of the roundtables and the engagement with resident coordinators and United Nations country teams. Linking the issue of indigenous peoples to the discussion on Beyond GDP, it was suggested that indigenous knowledge could help clarify what was valued by society – not only what was given a monetary price.

95. The representative of DCO acknowledged the good collaboration with the inter-agency support group to proactively support the implementation of the Call to Action. She reiterated that the UN-SWAP Indigenous Peoples was a core part of messaging to all resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, along with the other system-wide plans on gender, persons with disabilities and the United Nations Youth Strategy. DCO welcomed the recommendations presented by the support group and committed to help take them forward. In relation to the recommendation on accountability measures, she stressed that country teams were overburdened with separate scorecards, and saw the possibility to integrate issues relating to indigenous peoples in a consolidated version. The existing reporting platform included mandatory tags for joint work plans on “leave no one behind” groups, including indigenous peoples, to track and measure contributions that country teams were making to support the realization of indigenous peoples’ rights.

96. In their reflections, members offered a range of suggestions to enhance and complement the recommendations. Members observed that indigenous peoples continued to suffer from violence, territorial intrusion and land grabbing, and the impacts of carbon offsetting, carbon sequestration and private sector investments in tropical forests, with a bearing on their rights and negotiation power. In this context, it was noted that the role of indigenous women deserved particular attention, especially as their rights and lives had been detrimentally affected, and their habitats threatened. The opportunity to cooperate across the United Nations system to strengthen and harmonize safeguards attached to climate finance was highlighted, as was the potential for providing capacity-building for indigenous peoples to improve their livelihoods through trade. Members also recognized that the inclusion of indigenous peoples was instrumental in areas such as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, reducing disaster risk, protecting the environment, preventing conflict and building peace, building climate resilience, supporting economic empowerment, and improving livelihoods and food systems. The point was made that there was little awareness in the humanitarian community on the issue of indigenous peoples, and it was suggested to explore the possibility of engaging in advocacy with other actors in the humanitarian community in order to build linkages. With regard to accountability frameworks,

concern was expressed to take care not to overburden resident coordinators and country teams with another scorecard or to dilute or silo the reporting. At headquarters level, it was noted that some smaller entities struggled to meaningfully fulfill multiple reporting requirements for system-wide action plans on different themes and also that it was necessary to take into account different entities' mandates. The Committee was reminded to learn from past experience and be mindful of the need for an adequate architecture to support systematic reporting and analysis.

97. The deliberations also underlined the need for more disaggregated data; to add, complement and improve data; and to better understand the framing of data collection, looking beyond national borders, which many members of the Committee considered critical to enhance the work on this issue. The Committee of Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System, which the Committee identified as crucial in improving the collection, availability, and framing of disaggregated data, indicated its willingness to support this process through its co-chair. Members also stressed the importance of avoiding silos and capturing intersectionality, recognizing that indigenous peoples' issues cut across many others.

98. Members shared their experience on how their entities had interacted with indigenous peoples in the past and described ongoing activities to contribute to the implementation of the CEB Call to Action and the UN-SWAP Indigenous Peoples. For example, entities had facilitated the participation of indigenous women in the Commission on the Status of Women, and pursued specific indigenous peoples knowledge hubs, an indigenous peoples platform, a dedicated campaign on resilience and disaster risk reduction, indigenous engagement in climate action and the launch of food system coalitions. Building strong partnerships, creating linkages and promoting participation were identified as key measures to value indigenous knowledge outside of their communities. One entity indicated that indigenous issues featured in its new strategic plan and highlighted how it used a new leave-no-one-behind marker to track spending on different population groups, including indigenous peoples, in its country programmes. Attention was also drawn to collaborative work on rights literacy for indigenous migrants.

99. Members identified possible opportunities for future engagement with and about indigenous peoples, including roundtables with resident coordinators on the topic of women and youth, the organization of an annual public learning forum on indigenous peoples, and in the contexts of the Transforming Education Summit and the Stockholm+50 meeting.

100. Underscoring the need to continue and intensify this work, the co-chairs welcomed and summarized the feedback received from members. They thanked them for their support and their willingness to participate in the on-going efforts, and also recognized the important contribution the Committee of Chief Statisticians would make to the work on data.

101. In concluding the item, the Chair acknowledged the overwhelming support for the recommendations in the progress report and the high level of engagement and activity on indigenous peoples' issues across the United Nations system. He confirmed the Committee's approval of the four recommendations and asked that the comments and suggestions be taken back to the inter-agency support group so that its continuing work would be informed by the Committee's views.

Conclusion

102. **The Committee approved the recommendations to ensure continued follow-up to the CEB Call to Action on building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future with indigenous peoples.**

VIII. Other matters

A. Date of the HLCP intersessional meeting on Beyond GDP

103. In 2019, The Chair recalled the Committee's earlier decision under the agenda item on progress beyond GDP to convene a focused intersessional meeting in a virtual format on 28 July 2022 to conclude the work.

Conclusion

104. **The Committee approved the date of the virtual intersessional meeting on progress beyond GDP: 28 July 2022.**

B. Dates and location of the forty-third session of the Committee

105. The Chair proposed the tentative dates of 29 and 30 September 2022 for the Committee's forty-fourth session, to be confirmed with the incoming HLCP Chair. The host and venue would be announced closer to the meeting date.

Conclusion

106. **The Committee approved the tentative dates of its forty-fourth session: 29 and 30 September 2022, with the location and host to be confirmed.**

C. Any other business

107. The Chair recalled that in January 2022 the HLCP Secretary had circulated a report on the overview of activities of the HLCP Foresight Network showcasing what had been achieved since the Network last updated the Committee in September 2020, and what it potentially could deliver in 2022. The report had also included a number of recommendations addressed to HLCP for virtual consideration, documented below. These were approved by members on a no-objection basis.

Conclusion

108. **The Committee welcomed the Foresight Network's contributions and urged its members to continue pursue the Network's core objectives: promoting foresight capacities and futures literacy across the United Nations system; fostering cross-agency collaboration and mutual learning; and informing, enriching, and "futures-proofing" the HLCP's agenda-setting, deliberations and products.**

109. **The Committee encouraged HLCP member entities to allocate more staff time and resources in support of futures and foresight activities within their organizations and in support of the Foresight Network's objectives and activities, and recommended that United Nations system entities use the capacity within the Foresight Network for validation of futures-related exercises and/or to serve as a sounding board.**

IX. Closing

110. In closing the meeting, the Chair thanked the IMO and its Secretary-General for hosting the session and the CEB Secretariat team for its support. He observed that the momentum and strength of the Committee's work was remarkable and wished members good luck for the future, as this would be his last in-person HLCP session in the role of Chair.

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Annex I

Agenda

I. Progress beyond GDP

II. Duties to the future: intergenerational equity

III. New global public goods: international data governance

IV. Strengthening the United Nations system's impact and visibility on reducing inequalities and Sustainable Development Goals 10, in support of the decade of action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030

V. Ethics of artificial intelligence (AI)

VI. CEB Call to Action on Indigenous Peoples

Annex II

List of Participants

Chair**: Mr. Guy Ryder** (ILO)
Secretary**: Ms. Maaike Jansen**

Organizations	**Name**
United Nations	
EOSG-SDU	Ms. Lara Blanco Rothe
Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Technology	Ms. Yu Ping Chan
DCO	Ms. Helena Fraser
DESA	Ms. Marion Barthelemy
	Mr. Stefan Schweinfest (Beyond GDP co-lead)
PBSO	Ms. Awa Dabo
OHCHR	Mr. Craig Mokhiber
	Ms. Therese Bjork
Regional Commissions	Ms. Alicia Barcena (Beyond GDP co-lead)
UNDRR	Ms. Paola Albrito
ILO	Ms. Sukti Dasgupta
FAO	Ms. Beth Crawford
UNESCO	Ms. Gabriela Ramos (presenter)
	Mr. Jean-Yves Le Saux
	Ms. Clare Stark
ICAO	Mr. Erwin Lassooij
WHO	Ms. Ritu Sadana

	Mr. Stephen MacFeely
World Bank Group	Mr. Farhad Peikar
IMF	Mr. Robert Powell
ITU	Mr. Preetam Maloor
IMO	Ms. Azara Al-Hassan Prempeh
WIPO	Mr. Edward Kwakwa
IFAD	Mr. Ron Hartman
UNIDO	Ms. Natascha Weisert
UNWTO	Ms. Zoritsa Urosevic
IAEA	Mr. Nuno Luzio
WTO	Mr. Said El Hachimi
IOM	Ms. Ugochi Daniels
UNCTAD	Mr. Paul Akiwumi
	Ms. Anu Peltola (Beyond GDP co-lead)
	Mr. Mussie Delelegn (Beyond GDP co-lead)
UNDP	Mr. Haoliang Xu
	Mr. George Gray (Beyond GDP co-lead)
UNEP	Ms. Cornelia Pretorius
UNHCR	Mr. Raouf Mazou
UNICEF	Mr. Sanjay Wijesekera
	Ms. Jasmina Byrne (presenter)
UNFPA	Ms. Diene Keita
WFP	Mr. David Kaatrud
UNODC	Mr. Bo Mathiasen
	Ms. Angela Me

UN-Women	Ms. Aparna Mehrotra
UNU	Mr. David Passarelli
	Mr. Adam Day (presenter)
UNFCCC	Mr. Youssef Nassef
CTBTO	Ms. Melissa Buerbaumer
ITC	Mr. Matthew Wilson

CEB Secretariat

	Ms. Simona Petrova
	Mr. Remo Lalli
	Ms. Cheryl Stafford
	Mr. Li Zhou
	Mr. Florian Wintermeyer
	Mr. Simon Vandenbroucke
	Ms. Marta Lorenzo Fernandez