



Chief Executives Board for Coordination

14 November 2022

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

(UNESCO Headquarters, Paris, 29 and 30 September)

I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its forty-fourth session at the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in Paris, on 29 and 30 September 2022. The agenda of the meeting and the list of participants are contained in annexes I and II.
2. In welcoming the Committee to the session, her first since the Secretary-General had appointed her as HLCP Chair, Inger Andersen, Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), expressed regret for not being able to chair the meeting in-person due to prior commitments. She thanked Gabriela Ramos, Assistant Director-General for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO, for acting as Chair for the session and UNESCO for hosting the meeting. She was honoured to assume the role of Chair and appreciated the opportunity to serve at a critical juncture for the United Nations system.
3. The Chair acknowledged the challenging context in which the United Nations system was operating, drawing attention to the impacts of the triple planetary crisis, the war in Ukraine, increasing inflation and costs of living, shrinking fiscal space, exacerbated inequalities, environmental degradation, the loss of human rights, rapid developments in technology, and the risk of a global recession. The Chair remarked that in the face of those cascading challenges, the United Nations system was needed more than ever, and that its work on climate change, delivery of humanitarian aid, peacekeeping operations, and support for developing countries was indispensable.
4. The Chair reiterated that a key function of HLCP was to serve as a forward-looking think tank for the United Nations system and to anticipate upcoming issues that would impact its policies and programmes. Appreciating the commitment and contributions from every HLCP member entity in advancing the work of the Committee, the Chair recognized the value of the strategic narrative adopted at HLCP's forty-second session. She applauded recent outputs, including the United Nations system-wide contribution on Beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP) entitled "Valuing What Counts" and the recently adopted "Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the United Nations System", which reflected the best that the system had to offer in terms of intellectual heft and promoting policy and programmatic coherence. In this context, the Chair also acknowledged the thought leadership of HLCP's ad hoc mechanisms: the Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence, the Inequalities Task Team and the Foresight Network.

5. She noted that the forty-fourth session came at an opportune moment to reflect on where the United Nations system could best come together to contribute to aspects of *Our Common Agenda*, the preparations for the 2023 SDG Summit and the 2024 Summit of the Future, and the work of the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, bearing in mind recent developments in the world and deliberations by Member States. The Chair also underlined that the work of the Committee across the three pillars of its strategic narrative – on promoting duties to the future, protecting new global public goods, or facilitating networked and inclusive governance – shared important throughlines with the 2030 Agenda and *Our Common Agenda*.
6. Observing the widening and compounding inequalities around the world, the Chair felt there was no other choice than to bring the full spectrum of entities together around a common and coherent commitment to tackle all types of inequalities in their spheres of work. She indicated that the Committee would remain seized of the issue of addressing inequalities today and for future generations and encouraged members to continue to deepen the conversation, in particular in the context of international finance, and including through HLCP’s different workstreams and ad-hoc mechanisms.
7. The Chair underlined that beyond the impactful substance of the Committee’s work, the way in which members came together in HLCP as a trusted space for policy discussions and strategic thinking was to be valued, harnessed, and preserved. The Chair supported reinforcing the two-way connection between HLCP and CEB, as well as strengthening coordination and synergies between HLCP and the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) and other mechanisms. In a context of constrained resources and proliferating challenges, connecting the policy coherence and think-tank work of the HLCP with other mechanisms was essential to fulfilling the mandates of the respective organizations and meeting people’s expectations of the United Nations system.
8. In presenting the agenda for the session for adoption by the Committee, the Chair noted that HLCP had an opportunity to consider where it could best contribute on the follow-up to the Our Common Agenda report and to engage in a dialogue with the co-chairs of the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. The Committee would also discuss progress under the three pillars of HLCP’s strategic narrative. Furthermore, the Committee would revisit the Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System to identify priority areas of action to implement them. Finally, members would discuss the progress of the United Nations system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development and examine how the system could come together to better support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.
9. Representatives from the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs attended the session, augmenting the peace and security representation and strengthening the Committee’s ability to coordinate and generate synergies across pillars.

II. Reflection on HLCP’s contribution to the implementation of processes under Our Common Agenda in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

10. Opening the first item, Ms. Ramos, as the Acting Chair, invited members to reflect on the Committee’s contribution to the implementation of processes under Our Common Agenda, in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The item was composed of two parts, the first a presentation and discussion on the follow-up to Our Common Agenda, and the second a dialogue with the co-Chairs of the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. The objective was to consider the Committee’s current work against the backdrop of the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and Our Common Agenda and confirm where the weight of the full United Nations system could be most usefully mobilized through HLCP.
11. The Acting Chair recalled that at its forty-second session in October 2021, HLCP had approved a strategic narrative addressing duties to the future, new global public goods, and networked and

inclusive governance, that was intended to guide the Committee's work over two to three years. It aimed to position HLCP to better support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, while also serving as an enabling force for some of the transformative ideas in the Our Common Agenda report that had been delivered to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General in September 2021. The three-pillar framework had been conceived to be broad enough to build upon the Committee's ongoing efforts and flexible enough to respond to new challenges and needs, such as the cascading crises to which the HLCP Chair had alluded in her opening remarks. The Acting Chair observed that the discussion under this agenda item provided an opportunity to determine where the work that the Committee had embarked upon a year ago could best plug in to broader processes and whether new needs or priorities had emerged to which the Committee's attention should be directed.

12. She recalled the achievement by HLCP in having delivered on the request of the Secretary-General and CEB to produce a United Nations system-wide contribution on progress beyond GDP that had been approved in July 2022. The contribution had been delivered to the Secretary-General to support him as he moved forward with political outreach and advocacy among Member States. In addition, there were a number of touchpoints between the work of HLCP and other elements from Our Common Agenda that were taking clearer shape, notably the Summit of the Future and its supporting tracks, as well as the anticipated recommendations of the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. Members would be updated on the various processes and engage in interactive discussion.

Follow-up to Our Common Agenda

13. Turning first to the follow-up on Our Common Agenda, the Acting Chair introduced the three presenters: Michèle Griffin, Director of the Common Agenda Team, Executive Office of the Secretary-General, who would update the Committee on Our Common Agenda consultations and implementation broadly; and Lily Neyestani-Hailu, Chief of SDG4 Leadership Section, UNESCO, and Sanjay Wijesekera, Director, Programme Group, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), who would make a joint presentation on the Transforming Education Summit.
14. Ms. Griffin presented an overview of the Our Common Agenda process to date. Recalling the mandate to the Secretary-General from the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (A/RES/75/1), Ms. Griffin summarized the contents of the resulting report (A/75/982). About 80 per cent of its proposals had been derived from and were designed to boost implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); the remainder were new ideas for consideration by Member States, which could be addressed in the context of the Summit of the Future. She underscored that Our Common Agenda had become even more relevant since its launch in September 2021, as the world had changed in significant ways.
15. Ms. Griffin recounted the subsequent intergovernmental process that considered the Secretary-General's recommendations and called attention to some agreed actions that had already flowed from the report, such as convening the September 2022 Transforming Education Summit, creating the United Nations Youth Office, and producing an elements paper on Future Generations under the oversight of co-facilitators appointed by the President of the General Assembly. Additionally, the General Assembly had recently passed a resolution on the modalities of the Summit of the Future (A/RES/76/307), among other things deciding that it would be held in September 2024 with a ministerial meeting in September 2023, and that it would be well coordinated with, and complementary to, the 2023 SDG Summit. Ms. Griffin explained that the Secretary-General would seek to provide inputs to the Summit of the Future in the form of policy briefs or vision statements to be issued in the first half of 2023, to which HLCP members could be invited to contribute as relevant.
16. While the tracks of the Summit were yet to be decided by Member States, she outlined several possibilities proposed by the Secretary-General, including a New Agenda for Peace, a Global Digital Compact, a Declaration for Future Generations, principles on outer space, and an

- emergency platform. Alluding to the United Nations system-wide contribution on progress beyond Gross Domestic Product (GDP), Valuing What Counts, she also expressed hope that Member States would agree in principle to engage on moving beyond GDP as a metric, to be pursued through both technical and political tracks. The High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism was expected to make recommendations on areas of weaknesses and gaps to be filled across the broad architecture of international cooperation, which could lead to additional recommendations to be considered by Member States, for example on the global financial architecture. Meanwhile, she indicated that work on the many other proposals in Our Common Agenda should continue through existing processes and mandates, avoiding duplication, and the United Nations system should take every advantage of the momentum that had been provided by the report and the ensuing intergovernmental discussions.
17. Next, Lily Neyestani-Hailu and Sanjay Wijesekera, reflected on the just-concluded Transforming Education Summit – the first big deliverable of Our Common Agenda – with a view to share lessons that could be useful to the United Nations system in supporting other tracks. Convened by the Secretary-General in response to the global crisis in education, the Transforming Education Summit aimed to place education at the top of the political agenda and mobilize action, ambition, cooperation, solutions and interventions to transform education systems. Three streams of work were pursued in the six months leading up to the Summit: national multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral consultations, public engagement (with a particular focus on youth participation), and thematic action tracks to mobilize the international community in support of the Summit. A pre-Summit meeting was held in June 2022 to create momentum towards the September Summit, which itself attracted over 2000 participants across three days: Mobilization Day, Solutions Day and Leaders Day.
 18. Seven global initiatives emerged from the Summit on: greening education; digital transformation; advancing gender equality, and girls and women's empowerment; education in crisis situations; foundational learning; transforming the financing of education; and youth empowerment. Other outcomes included the Secretary-General's vision statement, the International Finance Facility for Education, a youth declaration, and commitments by Heads of State and Government and principals from United Nations system organizations to support countries to achieve their transformational education agendas.
 19. Ms. Neyestani-Hailu and Mr. Wijesekera stressed the vital role of the SDG4 High-Level Steering Committee, as the global apex body for education, in supporting and monitoring the effective implementation of the global initiatives and national commitments that emerged from the Transforming Education Summit. The Steering Committee would put in place an accountability framework with a set of indicators to capture progress, reported annually at the global education meetings, to ensure that that the commitments would be followed up by concrete actions and that countries were supported. Another challenge would be maintaining the momentum that was ignited through the Transforming Education Summit process in the lead-up to the 2024 Summit of the Future, where education must be prominent and appropriately linked to the broader agenda. The presenters also stressed the need to continue to prioritize meaningful substantive engagement of youth.
 20. Much of the ensuing discussion among the members centred on the relationship between the Summit of the Future and the upcoming SDG Summit, which the Secretary-General had called “twin summits”. The SDG Summit, to be held 19-20 September 2023 – just after the ministerial meeting on the Summit of the Future – would review the state of the implementation of the SDGs, provide policy guidance, mobilize action and consider challenges that had arisen since 2015. It presented the opportunity to reignite hope, start to reverse the negative trends in SDG progress, and give new momentum to efforts to realize the 2030 Agenda. It was expected to conclude with the adoption of a concise and action-oriented declaration with innovative recommendations that HLCP members stressed should build on the follow-up to other processes – *inter alia* the Food Systems Summit, the Transforming Education Summit, the 2023 High-level Political Forum, the Initiative on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and

Beyond, the Generation Equality Forum, and the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction – in order to ensure alignment with and reinforce existing initiatives. The SDG Summit outcome would need to respond to the multiple crises that the world was facing, with a focus on implementation, action and transformation.

21. Members recognized that the Summit of the Future would complement the SDG Summit by addressing elements of the enabling environment for realizing the SDGs, as detailed in Ms. Griffin’s presentation. Taking up peace, multilateralism and the interests of future generations, among other topics, the Summit would contribute to accelerating progress on the SDGs. While both Summits were understood to help “turbocharge” the SDGs, it was suggested that HLCP could make a contribution towards identifying the distinctions between the two and how to project them more clearly in terms of public communications, as well as from a policy perspective. Tightening and aligning terminology to ensure that it was used and understood consistently across different contexts would also be helpful in this regard.
22. Members felt that the whole of the United Nations system should be engaged in the SDG Summit and that HLCP had an important collective contribution to make. It was observed that supporting the achievement of the SDGs was in the interest of all HLCP member organizations, and it would be useful to think together about how to frame it. With respect to the preparation of the SDG progress report, an appeal was directed to members to find an appropriate way to use both official data and other data sources to paint a picture to which leaders could relate and use as a basis to move forward.
23. Given its function as a forward-looking think tank for the United Nations system, HLCP was also seen to have an important role to play in meaningfully feeding into the Summit of the Future over the next two years, including by bringing content and direction to emerging, future-oriented topics. Collectively, the United Nations system could help lift the vision for the future with a view to informing and inspiring the negotiations. Members welcomed the opportunity for HLCP to contribute to the policy briefs to be provided to the intergovernmental process by the Secretary-General, in line with its past work as well as its current focus on duties to the future, new global public goods, and inclusive and networked governance. A specific opportunity for United Nations system organizations to collaborate with outside partners to support the increased use of green technologies in the implementation of Our Common Agenda was highlighted. Potentially complementing HLCP’s contributions, a working group on Our Common Agenda had been established by UNSDG at its 28 September 2022 principals’ meeting; HLCP members were informed that the terms of reference and deliverables were to be elaborated.
24. Exploring expectations for the Summit of the Future, members inquired about stakeholder engagement, plans for a multi-sectoral approach, where there were gaps in the follow-up, what more United Nations system organizations could do to support the implementation beyond contributing to the policy briefs, how ambitious the outcome might be, whether any benchmarking and monitoring mechanisms were foreseen for the Pact for the Future, and if it was possible to begin mobilizing communities in support of Our Common Agenda. The focus on concrete solutions was welcomed, as well as the vision for broad multi-stakeholder participation. The importance of inclusive consultations involving all capitals in all regions and of engaging government representatives from all sectors, not only foreign affairs, was emphasized.
25. Given the dire situation of increasing inequalities and discrimination – a priority highlighted in Our Common Agenda – the possibility of adding a visible track on that issue as an outcome of the Summit was raised. It was suggested that HLCP could bring together the United Nations system to help create the political space for such a track, which, alongside human rights and gender equality, was cross-cutting. To that point, concern was expressed the inequalities were built into the current systems and, therefore, it would be crucial for the Summit of the Future to address the issue. It was further stressed that inequalities and human rights lenses should be applied to the planned policy briefs due to their universality and applicability across all contexts.

26. With reference to progress beyond GDP specifically, the importance of moving beyond words to concrete action was stressed, and the political space that the Summit of the Future would provide for such discussions would be important. The view was shared that developing broader measures of progress and well-being should be an expert- and country-driven process that must build organically on the work already underway by experts from Member States in the Statistical Commission. The United Nations system would have to stand together to support national information systems to produce and compile any metrics that would be agreed upon.
27. Members congratulated UNESCO and UNICEF on the Transforming Education Summit, stressing the value of taking a multisectoral approach, which was also relevant for the Summit of the Future. In terms of lessons learned, early and strong planning would be vital to the success of the Summit of the Future and the 2023 ministerial meeting. It would be important in the context of the Summit of the Future to, similarly, showcase the collective action of United Nations organizations bringing their strengths and mandates together. In the same vein, the need to “connect the dots” so the whole was greater than the sum of its parts was stressed. Other features of the Transforming Education Summit and the Food Systems Summit to be applied to the planning of the Summit of the Future included building in accountability and follow-up from the conception to ensure that commitments were delivered upon, bringing together a diverse range of actors in an effective way, and giving youth an active role in shaping solutions. The Generation Equality Forum was highlighted as another recent exemplar of networked and inclusive multilateralism and a vehicle to turbocharge the SDGs – particularly SDG 5 – and to bring in the voices and activism of youth.
28. Indeed, the importance of meaningful youth engagement in the implementation of Our Common Agenda and other United Nations processes surfaced repeatedly in the Committee’s deliberations. The need for the United Nations system to link issues together in a way that recognized the aspirations of young people was specifically highlighted. It was suggested that meaningful youth engagement could be an interesting topic for HLCP to take up, with the aim to bring together ideas and activities from across the United Nations system.
29. The wide-ranging discussion brought to light a variety of additional points in relation to the SDG Summit and implementation of Our Common Agenda. It was reported that progress was being made on the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions through three tracks: technical assistance, multilateralism and financing – the last remaining the biggest challenge. More generally, it was stressed that financing and reform efforts were critical to collect resources for the social sectors. More focus could be placed on costing the gap in SDG achievement and examining development trends with a view to prevent funding cuts in areas that were critical to the long-term delivery of the SDGs. In this vein, concern was voiced that core funding to United Nations system organizations had fallen during the COVID-19 pandemic.
30. Additionally, it was observed that the United Nations system ought to be more future-oriented and future-literate. Specifically, a more forward-leaning, prevention-focused New Agenda for Peace, that was ambitious but realistic, was seen as important to advance the 2030 Agenda and vice versa. Peace and peacebuilding were vital foundations for development in that they strengthened trust and social cohesion. Through meeting the SDGs, many of the drivers of the root causes of conflict could be addressed, making them good entry points for structural prevention. It was noted that the New Agenda for Peace would be the subject of a dedicated discussion at the forthcoming CEB session in October, which would provide an opportunity to examine the subject further. Moreover, it was suggested that the outcomes of the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction could complement and provide policy guidance to support the integration of risk reduction into the implementation of Our Common Agenda recommendations and other intergovernmental processes through HLCP’s workstreams on duties of the future, foresight, inequalities and artificial intelligence.
31. Furthermore, while acknowledging that certain aspects related to digital data were expected to be addressed in the context of the Global Digital Compact, it was stressed that data issues went beyond technology and therefore merited being addressed more broadly in the context of the

Summit of the Future. The point was made that the United Nations could do more to support Member States in developing productive sectors, and it was suggested that trade could be used as a mechanism to achieve a variety of innovative outcomes. The issue of population dynamics and trends in human mobility, with their impacts on the transfer of social, cultural and human capital worldwide and their implications for deepening and widening inequalities, in particular in the field of healthcare, was also highlighted. It was proposed that the notion of providing asylum could be considered a global public good.

32. In her closing remarks, Ms. Griffin expressed appreciation to members for the rich discussion and offered clarifications and comments. She stressed that the Secretary-General considered the range of existing commitments the “what” was needed to be done, and Our Common Agenda as the “how” to cooperate to solve the problems that prevented achieving the commitments. The level of ambition was expected to vary by track; some might be able to achieve agreement on principles by 2024, but others might achieve more. She emphasized that existing committees, processes and institutions would be used as much as possible to follow up on Our Common Agenda, as outlined in the implementation matrix maintained by the Executive Office of the Secretary-General. If any organizations wanted to contribute, they were welcome to do so; the aim was to pull the whole system together. There was still the opportunity to shape the tracks, including through the new UNSDG working group. Ms. Griffin confirmed that it was not premature to mobilize people around Our Common Agenda to create pressure for change. She assured members that financing, including in relation to trade and taxation, was the crux of the envisioned change and that the Secretary-General was focused on that issue. The High-Level Advisory Board was also looking at the international financial architecture and would benefit from hearing the United Nations system’s views on the subject.
33. In concluding the item, the Acting Chair reiterated the intent of the United Nations system-wide contribution on progress beyond GDP, Valuing What Counts, to provide an input to the follow-up to Our Common Agenda. Noting that the contribution needed to be socialized with Member States by the Secretary-General, she highlighted its multidimensional approach to well-being, which touched on questions of inequalities and sustainability. More broadly, she reiterated that all United Nations system entities had a role in supporting the implementation of Our Common Agenda under the leadership of the Secretary-General. She confirmed that HLCP stood ready to support the process as appropriate, including to promote policy coherence. She reiterated that key elements of the follow-up were Member State-led and that the United Nations system should not get ahead of the intergovernmental processes, but at the same time that organizations could act strategically within their mandates and areas of expertise to support ambitious outcomes.

Conclusion

34. **The Committee affirmed its readiness to offer its analytical capacity, reach across the full United Nations system, subject matter expertise and networks to support and contribute to the follow-up activities of Our Common Agenda where there was a value-add, in line with its strategic narrative.**
35. **The Committee also agreed to contribute, as appropriate for each United Nations system organization, to the technical and analytical support for advancing Beyond GDP, following the socialization of the proposal by the Secretary-General with Member States.**

Dialogue with the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism

36. The Acting Chair opened the item by inviting the Committee to continue its reflection on the contribution by HLCP to the implementation of processes under Our Common Agenda, in support of the 2030 Agenda, in a dialogue with the Co-Chairs of the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (HLAB). She welcomed the Co-Chairs, H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia and H.E. Stefan Löfven of Sweden and recalled that the Advisory Board had been asked by the Secretary-General to build on the ideas in Our Common Agenda, and to make concrete suggestions for more effective multilateral arrangements across a range of key global

- issues. The Acting Chair noted that the aim of the dialogue was to provide the HLAB Co-Chairs with reflections and feedback, focusing in particular on recommendations or recommendation areas the HLAB could adopt in its report, as well as to identify additional opportunities for the United Nations system to complement or contribute to the implementation of Our Common Agenda, in support of the 2030 Agenda.
37. Providing background on the mandate of the HLAB, David Passarelli, Executive Director, United Nations University Centre for Policy Research (UNU-CPR), which served as Secretariat for the HLAB, recalled that the Board had been appointed in March 2022 and was composed of 12 members, with representatives from youth, faith communities, academia, and civil society. He noted that the diversity had brought a richness to the Board's work and the discussions over the past months, which had been devoted to investigating issues that could ultimately contribute to delivering more effective multilateral cooperation, with a view to delivering a report to the Secretary-General by April 2023. It was hoped that the report would serve as one of the building blocks for the preparation of the Summit of the Future in September 2024. He remarked that the Board was looking into existing institutional and legal arrangements, gaps and emerging priorities across a range of different topics, with a particular focus on greater equity and fairness in global decision-making. Mr. Passarelli indicated that the Co-Chairs had welcomed the opportunity to engage with the United Nations community through HLCP in light of its think tank function.
 38. In her statement, H.E. Ms. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf welcomed the opportunity to have a dialogue with the Committee and reiterated that the two commanding messages emerging from the consultation process with different stakeholders were calls for greater equity and inclusiveness. The Board was focusing its attention on how to strengthen peace and security, including what reforms were necessary in organizations that had relevant mandates; and how to ensure financial inclusiveness to enable all nations to access resources available in both the private and public sectors, finding the right reforms to include institutions that had not been the primary conveyors of financial flows, and scaling up resources to enable all countries to make the necessary transformation. Other key areas under discussion by the Board were climate change, digitalization, and gender equity.
 39. In his remarks, Prime Minister Löfven expressed appreciation for organizations which had submitted proposals to HLAB through the open consultation process in July and August. He observed that there was a shared diagnosis about the shortcomings of the multilateral system and the need for a shift towards more networked, inclusive and effective multilateralism. The HLAB Co-Chair noted that the Board was developing recommendations at a moment of deep geopolitical tensions and great disruptions that were affecting all societies and economies. Against the backdrop of the climate and planetary crisis, and at a point in time when global cooperation was needed the most, mistrust between the global North and South and in multilateral solutions was growing. Prime Minister Löfven recalled that the goal for the Board was to strengthen the multilateral system with the United Nations at the core and to produce bold recommendations on global governance reform, addressing threats to global peace and security, the climate and planetary crisis, growing poverty, and inequalities, including in the digital domain. The Board firmly believed that greater equity and fairness in global decision making had to be at the heart of their recommendations, which would also stress gender equality, the systematic involvement of youth in decision-making, the interests of future generations and the importance of leaving no one behind. The HLAB Co-Chair also emphasized that, in addition to public sector finance, a massive mobilization of private sector investment was required to finance the sustainable development agenda, the climate agenda, peace and peacebuilding activities; close the digital divide; achieve gender equality; and respond to growing humanitarian needs. In that context, he underlined the central role of international financial institutions, but also recognized the need for a reorientation of their mandates to help steer private and public investment towards shared objectives and globally valued public goods. Consequently, the HLAB was considering recommendations on how to improve voice and representation in the international financial institutions and a reform of the global financial architecture.

40. In the discussion, members shared their views and observations on the current state of multilateralism. It was suggested to clearly define the term effective multilateralism, as it could have different meanings for different audiences. While members agreed that multilateralism was a key tool to prevent crises and to resolve them, they also noted that faith in the multilateral system was dwindling. Multilateralism was based on trust and trust suffered when commitments were not honoured, for example, developed countries' failure to mobilize the pledged \$100 billion for climate action. An effective multilateral system needed to be fit for dealing with intersecting crises in the future, strengthening countries' resilience in the face of issues such as extreme weather, desertification, climate change, biodiversity loss, increasing costs of living, and a potential global economic recession, and with a focus on the excluded and most vulnerable populations.
41. To build back trust in the United Nations, members felt it was important to better highlight its successes and comparative advantages. Members also stressed that organizations and institutions in the service of multilateralism required adequate funds and resources to carry out their mandates. Against the backdrop of budget reductions over many years, it was noted that Member States had a responsibility to adequately resource structures of multilateralism
42. Reflecting on how to strengthen multilateralism, members identified some key elements for consideration by the Advisory Board. Building on experiences from the past, such as the negotiations on the SDGs, it was recalled that political impetus from the outset, enthusiasm, hope, and trust among countries were vital for a successful outcome. Multilateralism needed to be based on reflection, science and evidence, and required listening and consulting with people, for example through experts, scientists, or think tanks, to demonstrate how intergovernmental processes were relevant and responding to the aspirations of people. Members also underscored the importance of enhancing transparency measures as a precondition to building trust and confidence. Cognizant that negotiating multilateral agreements was complex, it might be necessary to advance at different speeds, in particular in areas of high polarization such as decarbonization, carbon pricing and climate finance.
43. Inclusiveness and engagement were also mentioned as key ingredients to strengthening effective multilateralism. Engaging with a broader ideological spectrum of audiences, which included civil society and the private sector, was seen as important. The science-policy interface was considered crucial to enhance the use of science in decision-making, create trust based on facts and produce science-based evidence and advice for good governance. The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic had illustrated the value created by different parts of governments joining forces, engaging in new partnerships and establishing new forms of collaboration.
44. In terms of recommendations or recommendation areas for its work, it was proposed that international cooperation to address issues such as transnational organized crime, which was an important barrier to progress and negatively impacted peace and security, should be enhanced. The question of nuclear governance, including the importance of non-proliferation, strategic risk and the potential of cyber-attacks against critical infrastructure was also raised. Interlinkages between different categories of weapons, common security concerns such as terrorism, transnational crime networks and multisectoral conflicts, were further offered as areas for consideration by the HLAB. In all these areas, it was necessary to address silos in the multilateral system, in particular between the peace and security and development architecture. Other topics suggested to be addressed in the recommendations of the HLAB included refugees and internally displaced persons (IDP), the role of data in the peace and security space including in support of early warning and conflict analysis, the digital economy, and tensions between food security and green energy.
45. Members expressed support for adopting an inclusive approach to strengthen multilateralism, for example, engaging with cities and local governments, which played an increasingly prominent role in responding to crises or complementing national frameworks with their policies. Youth was considered another important target group, and members recommended reflecting on how the education system could contribute to fostering the ability for youth and

- children to participate in discussions. Members also saw value in using data as a tool to achieve equity, inclusiveness, and trust for effective multilateralism. A recurring observation was the need for strengthening networked collaboration between the international financial institutions and the United Nations system.
46. Furthermore, members recalled the normative dimension of multilateralism that had enabled great progress over the last decades, building on a strong set of norms in areas such as disability and racial discrimination and thus contributed to the credibility of multilateralism. Examples and success stories illustrating how effective multilateralism had been achieved or reinvigorated in the past included: the negotiations for the SDGs, the United Nations Convention to Address International Organized Crime, the nuclear safeguards activities carried out by the International Atomic Energy Agency, UN Women's Generation Equality initiative, the Global Compact on Refugees, and the World Trade Organization's (WTO) Trade Facilitation Agreement.
 47. In her closing statement, President Sirleaf thanked members for their ideas to advance towards a better world. She remarked that since the end of World War II, the World Bank Group and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had not been able to link with regional institutions that were closer to the problems. She noted that a denial of evidence by scientists was one of the reasons why the COVID-19 pandemic had lingered for so long. Observing that African nations were experiencing *coups d'états* after decades of democracy, President Sirleaf reiterated the need for a reform of the Security Council. She noted that those conflicts were not represented, and that political will was lacking to have a full representation and a shift from peacekeeping to conflict prevention. To be bold, as the Secretary-General had requested, required acknowledging that the structures of all international institutions had to change, to bring equity through representation, fairness and collective action to meet the SDGs.
 48. Expressing appreciation for the input provided by the Committee, Prime Minister Löfven recognized that there had been progress on some issues in the multilateral system, but that it had underperformed in areas such as the climate transition and in preventing the escalation of conflict. To deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and on topics such as climate, health and digital, greater investments were needed from regional development banks, the IMF, the World Bank Group, and the private sector. A first step towards bridging the gap between the global North and South consisted of delivering on the finance pledge of \$100 billion for climate action with regards to the Conference of the Parties (COP27) to be held in Egypt at the end of 2022. Prime Minister Löfven closed by stressing that improving the lives of peoples was a joint task and required an inclusive approach, among governments, the private sector and civil society, as a means to building a stronger multilateral system.
 49. Summarizing the discussion, Mr. Passarelli noted that the views expressed by HLCP members aligned with that of the Advisory Board. There was a common sense that multilateralism needed collective investment to survive, as illustrated by the many examples that were shared during the discussion. He expressed hope to continue the engagement between HLCP and HLAB to capture best practices in its report and invited interested entities to reach out to help further develop the ideas raised during the discussion with the High-Level Advisory Board and its Secretariat.

III. Progress under HLCP's strategic narrative

Duties to the future: Intergenerational equity

50. In opening the agenda item, the Acting Chair recalled that, at its forty-third session, HLCP had approved recommendations set out in a discussion paper on duties to the future through an intergenerational equity lens and requested the core group to work with the volunteering entities to elaborate a plan to pursue the activities outlined for HLCP's subsequent consideration. The Acting Chair noted that, as part of the implementation of Our Common Agenda, the topic of intergenerational equity was being taken up by Member States in the context of inter-governmental negotiations toward a proposed Declaration on Future Generations, and invited

members to share their views on linkages to this process, as well as broader guidance with respect to prioritizing the core group activities. Expressing appreciation for the work to date of the core group on duties to the future, the Acting Chair acknowledged the three co-leads: Jasmina Byrne, Chief of Policy, Office of Global Insight and Policy, UNICEF; Adam Day, Director of Programmes, UNU-Centre for Policy Research; and Soo-Young Hwang, Legal Officer, UNEP; and the support of Tamara Rusinow, Policy Specialist, Society and Young People, UNICEF.

51. On behalf of the co-leads, Ms. Byrne presented an update on the activities conducted by the core group, noting that they had been grouped around two main outcomes, namely: (i) fostering a scientifically backed understanding of the impact of today's actions across multiple generations; and (ii) supporting normative efforts to enshrine a global responsibility towards future generations across the United Nations system. Since the forty-third session of HLCP, the core group had engaged with and provided input to other processes, including to the Informal Working Group of Leadership Dialogue 1 for the Stockholm+50 meeting, the HLCP Beyond GDP core group, and the intergovernmental process on a Declaration for Future Generations, through inputs to the elements paper to which Ms. Griffin had referred in her earlier presentation.
52. Ms. Byrne also provided an overview of the planned analytical papers, namely: a Manual on National Time Transfer Accounts: Measuring and Analyzing the Gendered Economy led by the United Nations Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA); an analytical piece on age-specific inequalities, looking also at the intergenerational benefits of elements of universal social protection, led by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); and a survey tool developed by UNEP, with inputs from UNICEF and the United Nations Development Coordination Office to assist in identifying key examples of programmes, projects and other frameworks that advanced the consideration of intergenerational equity in the United Nations system. She reiterated that the core group consisted of dedicated experts who were committed to supporting efforts in this regard.
53. Subsequent to the opening presentation, Christin Pfeiffer, Programme Specialist, Futures Literacy, UNESCO, in her capacity as coordinator of the HLCP Foresight Network, provided an update on the Network's contribution to the work of the duties to the future workstream. She underscored that addressing issues related to intergenerational equity presented an important opportunity to demonstrate the power of different reasons and methods for imagining the future, which would help individuals, communities, and organizations to critically engage with futures to escape short-termism and draw inspiration for sustainable, inclusive social actions for better futures. In this regard, UNESCO and the HLCP Foresight Network had identified two complementary activities, which would be implemented with engagement of the core group on duties to the future: a futures masterclass on intergenerational equity, to be co-led by UNESCO and UNEP, and a project entitled "Futures for Intergenerational Equity", to be led by UNESCO and United Nations Global Pulse.
54. In the ensuing discussion, members agreed to the idea of developing shared principles or parameters for addressing the work around intergenerational equity and future generations. Furthermore, HLCP supported exploring opportunities on how contributions under this workstream could help create synergies and feed into preparations for the Summit of the Future, including the Declaration for Future Generations. Bearing in mind the challenges associated with the development of the elements paper produced through a consultative process under the co-facilitators, Fiji and the Netherlands, as part of the intergovernmental process to date, and also noting that there was no request from Member States for the United Nations system to engage on the subject, it was recommended that HLCP wait for the negotiating process to mature further before seeking to contribute from a system-wide perspective. That notwithstanding, HLCP was informed that the Secretary-General intended to issue a policy brief on future generations in the spring of 2023 that would draw on the work undertaken by the HLCP core group. In the meantime, individual entities should consider how to take future generations into account more systematically in their work, including at the country level. Recalling the preceding dialogue, it was reiterated that the High-Level Advisory Board on Effective

Multilateralism was interested in incorporating a future generations orientation in its recommendations, and entities were encouraged to share their ideas on the topic for the Board's consideration.

55. With respect to the analytical products being pursued by the core group, members acknowledged the need for the core group to prioritize the activities agreed at the forty-third session. In terms of the analytical papers, entities expressed interest or reaffirmed their commitment to contribute. The International Labour Organization (ILO) and UN-DESA signaled interest in being involved in the work on age-specific inequalities and universal social protection. UN-DESA also noted that work on the Manual of National Time Transfer Accounts was advancing well and was expected to be completed by the end of 2022. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reiterated its interest to lead on the proposal in the workplan to explore how intergenerational equity could be included as an indicator in the Human Development Index. The Committee also took note of the ongoing work of individual entities related to intergenerational equity, including on intergenerational aspects of fiscal policies, climate change issues and risks, sustainability analysis, and climate and pandemic preparedness.
56. Focusing on how to enrich and complement the work of the core group, members underscored the necessity to also take human rights, gender equality, labour rights, skill anticipation and jobs for the future into account. It was observed that intergenerational equity could only be created through a comprehensive approach that also had to include peace. Many of the risks affecting future generations were perceived as being interacting and multidimensional, including climate risks, different kinds of exclusion, systematic discrimination, and marginalization, and could last into succeeding generations, with the risk of further entrenching inequalities.
57. With a view to further refining the work of the core group, the importance of disaggregated data was emphasized. It was recommended that entities explore how to best use existing data sources such as population censuses or household surveys to make intergenerational comparisons in the research and analysis that they produced. Further, it was proposed that intergenerational equity should also include the concept of intersectionality, looking at multiple dimensions and their interaction. It was underscored that there was no future for future generations without a healthy planet and that intergenerational equity required a comprehensive approach, taking into consideration issues such as climate change and biodiversity. In this context, in order to support the principles of intergenerational equity, it was necessary to strengthen the abilities of rural populations to conserve biodiversity, the quality of biological resources and renewable resources. Looking ahead, the importance of implementation and monitoring mechanisms and accountability systems, such as an intergenerational sustainability index, was stressed.
58. Offering suggestions on how to enrich the work of the core group, members underlined the importance of intergenerational forms of labour and the gender dimension. It was observed that in preparing the analytical piece on social protection, the drafting group could focus on the question of how to reflect and value care work for children and elderly persons. Intergenerational equity had a strong gender dimension: important investments in the capabilities of future generations took place outside of markets and public services in the form of unpaid care work for children and families and were predominantly carried out by women and girls. Members also recognized the vital role of youth in intergenerational forms of labour, for example in the context of ageing smallholder farming populations and expressed support for engaging youth in future thinking. As the ones projected to be in the workforce for the longest time in the future, the Committee agreed that the views of youth needed to be front and centre in the discussion on intergenerational equity and at the Summit of the Future.
59. In her reaction to the feedback provided by the Committee, Ms. Byrne appreciated that many United Nations system entities were already focusing on the topic of future generations and intergenerational equity in their work and expressed hope that this would be captured comprehensively during the stocktaking exercise to be undertaken by the core group. She took note of the Committee's agreement to prioritize the activities outlined in the discussion paper, welcomed entities' recommitment to develop the planned analytical papers, and observed strong

interest to contribute to the work on intergenerational benefits of elements of universal social protection and on national time transfer accounts in particular. Ms. Byrne noted that members advised to defer the work on contributions to ongoing intergovernmental processes to a later stage. In the meantime, the core group would proceed to develop a common, shared understanding of the concept of intergenerational equity, of normative frameworks and of principles that could guide the United Nations system's work. As a final thought, she underscored the need to pay more attention to the role of youth in these processes, in particular of women and girls, and to make best use of and leverage youth networks.

60. In closing the item, the Acting Chair acknowledged the feedback and guidance provided by the Committee and expressed appreciation for the work of the core group.

Conclusion

61. **The Committee requested the core group on duties to the future to continue working with the volunteering entities to pursue a prioritized set of activities, absorbing the guidance received from members, and bearing in mind links to complementary initiatives through HLCP (such as under the Foresight Network) and elsewhere. The Committee also welcomed the core group's proposal to develop a set of common principles for the United Nations system to provide a basis for a shared understanding of the concept of future generations and intergenerational equity.**

New global public goods: International data governance

62. In her introductory remarks, the Acting Chair recalled the support of the Committee at its forty-second session to look specifically at international data governance under the theme of new global public goods, and that a concept note outlining the areas of focus for a paper was approved at its forty-third session. Discussions at the current session already demonstrated that data cut across many issues on the agenda of HLCP, including AI, and the digital commons. It was also acknowledged that this work was linked to the follow-up to Our Common Agenda, including the proposed Global Digital Compact and the Summit of the Future. The notion of data and statistics as a global public good was also reflected in the [System-wide Road Map for Innovating United Nations Data and Statistics](#), endorsed by CEB in May 2020. The Acting Chair expressed appreciation for the work of the HLCP working group on international data governance, co-led by Angela Me, Chief, Research and Trend Analysis Branch, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and Stephen MacFeely, Director, Data and Analytics, World Health Organization, for advancing the work and leading the preparation of the two papers entitled "Broad arguments supporting the inclusion of data in the United Nations Global Digital Compact" and "Broad arguments supporting the inclusion of data in the United Nations Summit of the Future", as well as the progress report on the implementation of the System-wide Road Map.
63. In her presentation Ms. Me thanked members of the working group for developing the paper based on the outline agreed at the Committee's forty-third session and preparing consultations with stakeholders on different aspects of international data governance, including data as a global public good and principles for data governance. Follow-up virtual meetings of the paper's drafters were being planned, as well as a hybrid meeting in Vienna in December 2022. The discussions had drilled deeper into the concept of data as a public good and what that meant for governments and stakeholders, including the concept of open data or data commons. Ms. Me noted that this work could also inform the development of the Global Digital Compact, especially in terms of concrete recommendations of what the United Nations system and Member States could take up. It was noted that the transnational aspects of data were linked to the transnational aspects of technology, and therefore inequalities in access to technologies were also reflected in inequalities in terms of data use and access.
64. Building on Ms. Me's introduction, Mr. MacFeely further shared that this work could also inform the Summit of the Future. The dramatic changes in the data universe over the past 20 years, was considered as the opening act for the future, and that data would be foundational and ubiquitous

- in the future and therefore was an important issue to be considered for the Summit of the Future. Various approaches were suggested, including multistakeholder mechanisms to protect data, having some data as public goods beyond the traditional economic definitions of public goods, and strengthening human rights related to data. It was also suggested that the United Nations system can taking advantage of various new and up to date data sources.
65. On the progress of the System-wide Road Map, Mr. MacFeely provided an update on a number of priorities, including on the United Nations data portal, promoting data literacy, nowcasting and forecasting, working with United Nations country teams, and the integration of geospatial information. He highlighted challenges, for example on different legal interpretations of Creative Commons licenses, and the need to expand the data literacy training that has been developed with the United Nations System Staff College so that it could be used freely and/or as mandatory training for staff.
 66. In the ensuing discussion, members strongly supported contributing to the Global Digital Compact and the Summit of the Future on the issue of international data governance. Members felt that it was important to discuss data as part of the Summit of the Future and to take a longer time horizon to shape the Summit of the Future when it came to data. It was also suggested that data could be addressed at the SDG Summit in 2023, as a lead-up to the Summit of the Future in 2024.
 67. Members acknowledged the interlinkages between data and technology, and supported it being addressed in the proposed Global Digital Compact. It was suggested that engagement with Member States would be key for the inclusion of data issues, as the Global Digital Compact would be an inter-governmentally negotiated document. The immense opportunities of technology were acknowledged, as well as the pitfalls – such as inequalities, threats to privacy, market concentration, security, AI discrimination, and tech-enabled violence – which were seen as interconnected with data and its governance. It was also noted that data had social and economic dimensions. Interlinkages between data and the Global Digital Compact and other tracks of the Summit of the Future, were suggested as areas for exploration, understanding that data went beyond digital technologies.
 68. Normative dimensions were stressed by members as a key element to be addressed. Calls were made for the work to be guided by existing human rights ethical frameworks, including building on [A Human Rights-based Approach to Data](#) and the [Recommendation on the Ethics of AI](#). Multiple matters were raised regarding the normative dimension, including rights to data and information, as well as issues that need to be carefully considered in developing principles for international data governance. It was also suggested that efforts to develop principles should be inclusive or multistakeholder in nature. Equal representation in data, for example on the basis of gender, was also raised as important as data should reflect the populations it served. The collection of accurate data for persons or activities that were criminalized further raised complications on inclusive and representative data.
 69. Members raised the potential misuses of data, especially data that was collected about persons in a security context and for surveillance purposes, including the use of biometric data and big data. There were also concerns around data and misinformation or disinformation, and the undermining of facts and science. It was emphasized that a focus on establishing trust and inclusion in data systems was important to further reinforce trust and integrity in data. The management and control of digital identities was also raised as an issue, with a debate on the extent to which individuals should be able to access and control their digital data.
 70. The opportunities for data to positively support sustainable development had been acknowledged by Member States, including in the [Ministerial Declaration of the High-level Political Forum](#) in 2022. There was a need for up-to-date data that provided a useful picture to Member States on current progress on sustainable development, leveraging more open data sources that contained more up-to-date data. The link between data and peace and security was also seen as crucial, especially in driving complex analysis, predictive analytics, early warning,

and strategic foresight capabilities. Data in humanitarian situations, including data on refugees and migrants was also raised as an important dimension, e.g. to improve and better target support.

71. However, it was acknowledged that not all countries had the capacity to produce or access the data that was needed. Members supported the further implementation of the System-wide Road Map, including further capacity development support to Member States. Inequalities in access to data was increasingly impacting on sustainable development, which was also linked to the digital divide. Open data, open science, data commons and data as a public good were ideas suggested to bridge the data divide and facilitate equitable access to data for sustainable development and public goods. Data sharing among United Nations system organizations was also promoted. It was suggested that the United Nations system could be a non-competitive platform to access, process, collect, aggregate data and support the dissemination and interpretation of data. The issue of incentives for sharing data was also raised to overcome hesitancy.
72. The United Nations also had an important role in standards and classification of data, to provide a data source that can be truly trusted. Data quality was seen as crucial. High quality and trustworthy data were seen as especially valuable in the current environment. Many issues affecting data governance in government contexts had already been deliberated upon at the Statistical Commission, in line with its expanded mandate to cover statistics and data issues more broadly.
73. Partnerships, especially with the private sector, should be pursued to advance the work on data. While the volume of data held by the private sector was very large, only a limited amount was shared. It would be important to address questions of confidential treatment of data and to consider providing relevant incentives to data sharing. Of the published data, there was concern that much were not complying with international data standards. There were also suggestions to find an appropriate policy to engage with the private sector on data, including issues around norms, use of data, and financing.
74. The co-leads, Ms. Me and Mr. MacFeely, thanked members for their contributions and indicated that they would continue to work on providing inputs to the Global Digital Compact and the Summit of the Future. If the future of data was not governed, especially at the speed in which data and technology was developing, it would impose a significant price on sustainable development and human rights. Consultations with the private sector and civil society were acknowledged as important. Data was seen as fundamentally linked to the HLCP work on AI and collaborations were under way.
75. In closing, the Chair expressed appreciation to members for their inputs on many different elements related to data, which could be taken on board by the working group in feeding into the Global Digital Compact and the Summit of the Future.

Conclusion

76. **The Committee took note of the two papers Broad arguments supporting the inclusion of data in the United Nations Global Digital Compact and Broad arguments supporting the inclusion of data in the United Nations Summit of the Future, and requested the working group on international data governance to incorporate guidance from the Committee in their inputs to the Global Digital Compact and the Summit of the Future.**
77. **The Committee also took note of progress report on the implementation of the System-wide Road Map for Innovating United Nations Data and Statistics.**

Networked and inclusive governance: stakeholder engagement

78. In her opening remarks, the Acting Chair recalled that at the forty-second session of HLCP the decision had been made to analyze and learn from the variety of community stakeholder engagement and participatory approaches used in different United Nations system entities. She observed that the report *Our Common Agenda* contained multiple proposals to strengthen networked and inclusive governance and that the question about proposals to strengthen the participation and inclusion of civil society, the private sector, marginalized groups, and other agents of change had also been raised in the dialogue with the High-Level Advisory Board.
79. The Secretary of HLCP, Maaike Jansen, provided a brief overview of the status of the workstream on networked and inclusive governance. She reminded members that at the forty-second session the Committee had emphasized that the inclusion of a range of stakeholders in intergovernmental bodies was important and that networked and inclusive governance was a means to advance global development objectives by utilizing the advantage of allied actors in an effort to meet the SDGs. The Secretary noted that HLCP workstreams operated on a demand-driven basis and that activities under this workstream aimed to create synergies with existing discussions and initiatives to create value-add for the United Nations system. In this context, the workstream aimed to benefit from complementary efforts being undertaken by UN-DESA to analyze civil society engagement in the work of the United Nations. Ms. Jansen highlighted the importance of meaningful stakeholder engagement, which had been a recurring theme in the Committee's discussions at the current session, as a key element for building trust and invited the Committee to reflect on how the workstream could best provide support to ongoing system-wide efforts and enhance deliberations under other topics on the agenda of HLCP.
80. Presenting the work carried out by UN-DESA, Marion Barthélemy, Director, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, recalled that the report of the Secretary-General "Our Common Agenda" had called for the meaningful and effective inclusion of civil society in the work of the Organization, based on: (a) trust; (b) inclusion, protection, and participation; and (c) measuring what matters most to people and planet (para. 19). She also noted that in paragraphs 121 and 122 of the report, the Secretary-General had asked all United Nations entities to establish a dedicated focal point for civil society and committed to regularly mapping and monitoring the United Nations' relationship with civil society across the system to ensure that better engagement would be achieved and sustained. The report also contained a set of recommendations related to ensuring that the United Nations would build on recent innovations in listening to, consulting and engaging with people around the world, encouraging all parts of the United Nations system to make consultations with people, including women and young people, regular and systematic going forward.
81. Ms. Barthélemy remarked that UN-DESA had prepared and circulated a system-wide survey to all United Nations system entities seeking to map the current state of civil society engagement and wider consultations with people across the system, to solicit good practices, lessons learned and to identify gaps with a focus on existing mechanisms. She noted that civil society participation elicited different levels of sensitivities with Member States depending on whether it involved engagement in intergovernmental bodies or participation in the United Nations system entities' programming, analysis and country-level work. It could also take different modalities. Ms. Barthélemy underscored that the survey looked at both types of engagement and aimed to gather information from United Nations system entities on best practices and challenges encountered, types of engagement, types of civil society stakeholders and the impact of civil society engagement. The results of the survey, on which the Committee received a preliminary update, would be documented together with an inventory of good practices, select case studies and a set of recommendations in a report to the Secretary-General. Ms. Barthélemy suggested to find a way for HLCP to comment on the recommendations and indicated that it was planned to have a conversation with the HLCP core group on networked and inclusive governance.
82. In the discussion that followed, Committee members showed their overall support for meaningful and effective engagement of civil society, in particular with youth. The discussion

- focused on how to stimulate and support meaningful civil society engagement. In this context, it was stressed that the term civil society could have different meanings and was often used as umbrella term capturing many different actors, including local governments and parliamentarians that did not benefit from a dedicated forum at the United Nations. Members observed the need to be more disciplined and aware of the breadth of stakeholders to distinguish between the different kinds of constituencies and different types of engagement. A distinction was drawn between civil society engagement and the work of the United Nations on the one hand and civil society engagement in intergovernmental processes on the other hand.
83. In their interventions, members provided information about the various degrees of civil society engagement that existed within their organizations. Some described civil society engagement as their *raison d'être* and a key element in their organization's history and identity and, in some cases, mandate. In tripartite organizations, specific civil society actors constituted an integral part of the organization. For others, civil society stakeholders were essential to the functioning of the organization and part of steering groups, committees, the governance or board structure, although without decision-making powers or voting rights.
 84. The Committee recognized the value of open and frank discussions with civil society, which was considered a fundamental asset in effective programming and policy development, and crucial for identifying needs on the ground and building resilience, for example in the developing and peacebuilding context. It was noted that civil society actors represented key implementation partners and, in some areas, were the only implementation partners on the ground, in particular in conflict-affected areas. Meaningful engagement with civil society was also seen as a vital tool to strengthen credibility and to build trust at a time characterized by rising inequalities, polarization and economic and environmental crises.
 85. Reflecting on the engagement with civil society organizations, members stressed the need for special protection of civil society representatives such as human rights defenders and environmental defenders. At the local level, increasing pressure on fundamental freedoms and the civic space was observed. The need for protection was also raised in the context of non-governmental organizations working with the United Nations in the fight against sexual exploitation and harassment. The Committee underscored the importance of including marginalized groups, indigenous peoples and local communities. It was proposed to set up a voluntary fund to which Member States and the private sector could contribute to assist the participation of these groups in meetings with Member States.
 86. Looking ahead, members felt the necessity to consider working differently from a strategic perspective and to critically assess how the United Nations system would be able to engage civil society as an institution that listened and engaged with different perspectives. The Committee observed a reservation from Member States to include these stakeholders in certain deliberations and decision-making processes. Another recurring issue in the discussion was the risk of the inclusion and engagement of civil society being perceived as tokenism. Civil society had made clear demands for deeper respect for their leadership voice, agency and expertise to be recognized and incorporated. Members acknowledged that the interaction with civil society had to move from consultation to participation for the engagement to become meaningful and impactful in shaping outcomes. Noting the presence of "professional" civil society representatives, the Committee discussed how to enhance the organization's civil society engagement to reach groups that it had not worked with before. The question of how to engage with non-traditional stakeholders and social movements as opposed to formal non-governmental structures was also raised.
 87. In an effort to enrich and contribute to the work undertaken by UN-DESA in identifying best practices of civil society engagement in the work of the United Nations, members also used the occasion to share examples from their entities that involved various stakeholders, including the Spotlight Initiative, the Stockholm+50 process, the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production (10YFP), the One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, the SparkBlue community engagement platform, the Secretary-General's

Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) and the High-Level Meeting on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

88. Responding to the various points raised, Ms. Barthélemy highlighted the broad agreement on the importance of civil society engagement and participation and summarized the different degrees and types of engagement in the system, ranging from consultation to participation in defining strategic plans for implementation. She noted that challenges remained in engaging civil society organizations in decision-making processes. Ms. Barthélemy recognized that the term civil society could cover a broad range of actors, including parliamentarians and local governments, as well as other representatives from women groups, youth, and trade unions. She acknowledged that some entities felt that it was necessary to review the working methods of some organizations and intergovernmental bodies. In closing, Ms. Barthélemy said that the discussions suggested that there could be a People's Summit ahead of the SDG Summit to ensure a high level of stakeholder engagement.
89. In concluding the item, the Acting Chair thanked members for their guidance on the subject of networked and inclusive governance and emphasized that tackling these issues was both an individual and collective effort.

Conclusion

90. **The Committee expressed appreciation for UN-DESA's project to map existing civil society engagement mechanisms in the United Nations system, which constituted a valuable input to this HLCP workstream. The Committee agreed that once the full survey results were available, UN-DESA should engage with the HLCP core group to build on and enrich their work to deliver an analysis to HLCP of the variety of community stakeholder engagement and participatory approaches used in different United Nations system entities across the full United Nations system.**

IV. Ethics of artificial intelligence

91. The Acting Chair opened the discussion recalling the contribution HLCP made to UNESCO's Ad Hoc Expert Group preparing the [Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence](#) in 2020. The Acting Chair expressed appreciation for the substantive contributions from members on the issues that were important for inclusion which strengthened the instrument so that it addressed the difficult issues. She noted that the Recommendation was adopted by the UNESCO General Conference in November 2021. The Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence (IAWG-AI) had worked to translate the Recommendation into [Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System](#), which provided a robust foundation for entities to govern the use of AI across the life cycle in a way that was ethical and grounded in human rights. The Principles had been approved by HLCP at its July intersessional meeting and subsequently endorsed by CEB in September 2022. The acting Chair emphasized the importance of implementing the Principles within the United Nations system, while advocating for Member States to implement the Recommendation. The work in HLCP on the ethics of AI also fed into the upcoming discussion at the second regular session of CEB of 2022 on Reclaiming the Digital Commons. The next steps were to use and implement the Principles to deliver impact.
92. Clare Stark, Coordination Officer, UNESCO, in her presentation introduced the Principles as a framework on the ethical use of AI for the United Nations system to guide decisions on the development, design, deployment and use of AI systems. It was a tool to build trust, mitigate risks, and work towards human-centered ethical AI based on human rights. In moving forward, it was important to implement the Principles within respective entities and communicate them as needed. This work was also linked to the data governance discussions held in HLCP, as well as in the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM), including the [Personal Data Protection and Privacy Principles](#). IAWG-AI was a collaborative platform to share experience on developing policies and tools to implement the Principles. Assessing AI risks and auditing AI

- were also raised as ways entities could implement the Principles. UNESCO had been developing an ethical assessment framework for the Recommendation, which could also be translated for the United Nations system. She also noted that there had been progress on developing algorithms to detect bias and discrimination by the research community which should also be taken into account. Exploring use cases, raising awareness and building capacity are further areas that may be needed to take forward the Principles. The forthcoming Human Rights Due Diligence Policy on Technology was also linked to the current work.
93. Ursula Wynhoven, Representative to the UN, NY, International Telecommunication Union, delivering remarks on behalf of the co-lead of the working group, Preetam Maloor, updated members on the work progressing in the IAWG-AI on developing procurement guidelines for AI based on guidance from HLCP at its fortieth session. The Principles were seen as a critical compass informing the work on procurement guidelines. The IAWG-AI had worked with experts from the World Economic Forum and continued to engage with the Procurement Network under HLCM to further the development of the guidelines.
 94. In the ensuing discussion, members reiterated their strong support for the Recommendation on the Ethics of AI and the Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System. It was acknowledged that some of the objectives were ambitious, and the prioritization of some key actions for implementation was advised. Members supported the development of policies to implement the Principles and to exchange experiences to facilitate policy coherence through the IAWG-AI. Members also suggested a monitoring and evaluation mechanism would be beneficial in the implementation of the Principles.
 95. Members acknowledged that AI was used in a wide range of fields already, including education, business, health, migration, procurement, recruitment, as well as in conflict and security contexts. The impacts of AI on labour markets, including of the platform economy, were also raised. It was emphasized that these different use contexts were important to consider. The development of specific use cases of AI in the context of its ethical use was also supported. Additional use cases were suggested such as the potential use of AI in nuclear verification. Concerning the use of AI, members reiterated the importance of an ethical approach, including the importance of gender equality, avoiding biases in AI, and protecting the human rights of the most vulnerable.
 96. Beyond the development of a policy, integrating the Principles into the programmatic work of entities was recommended by members. They also stressed the importance of integrating ethics into the policy advisory services and support provided to Member States. Questions around the type of policies to facilitate fair, transparent, accountable, and trustworthy AI were raised as important for consideration, as were approaches or governance models at the country and regional levels that could effectively mitigate risks. It was shared that Member States were in the process of negotiating a convention on cybercrimes.
 97. Members also raised the risk of the widening AI divide, where countries of the global South had limited access to AI, as well as limited capacities to govern AI quality and promote its ethical use while at the same time harnessing AI for innovation and growth. Strengthening institutions at the national level to be able to create the right governance framework for AI and to leverage AI solutions, including in government operations, while ensuring it was used ethically, that it was unbiased and that human rights were protected, were suggested as areas to which the United Nations system could further contribute.
 98. In order for the United Nations system to be able to effectively support Member States, members supported expanding the capacity of the system on using AI and on AI ethics, in line with [A United Nations system-wide strategic approach and road map for supporting capacity development on artificial intelligence](#). It was also stressed that the capacity of the United Nations system in data should also be linked to this effort. Member also supported building the capacity of United Nations system entities, especially that of smaller entities, to be able to implement the

Principles and mitigate the risks associated with AI. One suggestion was to improve the awareness of the Principles and to provide training to staff members on the ethics of AI.

99. Managing risks of AI was seen as important but not easy. The development of assessments of upstream and downstream risks were suggested. UNESCO had received a mandate to develop an Ethics of AI impact assessment from Member States. Members also shared other efforts under way to provide guidance on assessing risks. A draft of the Human Rights Due Diligence on Technology guidance was expected to be finalized in the coming months and subsequently brought to the Committee.
100. Many members emphasized the strong linkages between the work on the Ethics of AI with data governance, including the issues of privacy and data protection that were included in the Principles. It was noted that the United Nations Statistical Commission had a committee of experts on big data that was developing guidance on privacy-enhancing technologies for access to and sharing of data. Furthermore, it was suggested that the work on AI ethics could be linked to the Global Digital Compact as well as to the [United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy](#) and the [Strategy for Sustainability Management in the United Nations System 2020-2030](#) to further enhance policy coherence across issues. Partnerships across entities within the United Nations system were encouraged, as well as partnerships with external stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society and academia, including through the Rome Call for AI Ethics.
101. Responding on behalf of the co-leads, Ms. Stark acknowledged the many issues connected to the topic and the importance of prioritization. The first step was for entities to translate the Principles into internal policies. The United Nations Secretariat had already started this process; however, it would take some time. Monitoring and accountability were also important, as well as impact assessments, so that decision makers had tools to assess the use of AI across the whole spectrum of issues. Education for staff and for policymakers was also important, leveraging existing platforms where possible. Given the convergence of data, AI and other technologies, it was suggested that there be stronger collaboration between the working groups on AI and international data governance, including in providing inputs to the Global Digital Compact. Continued collaboration to address human rights was also proposed, as well pursuing linkages to issues around environmental sustainability. On partnerships with stakeholders, the IAWG-AI had already made progress in its work and would continue.
102. In summarizing the discussion, the Acting Chair thanked all members for their inputs and their commitment to implementing the Principles in the United Nations system. The IAWG-AI was seen as a space to facilitate the exchange of information and collaboration on policies, standards, assessments, training and building awareness. It was also important to have policy coherence in the implementation of the Principles across the system, particularly the priority areas identified in the discussion. On broader issues of AI and other technologies, the Acting Chair acknowledged the importance of ensuring they were inclusive, diverse, did not contribute to inequalities, and protected human rights, human dignity and the environment. There was concern that these technologies were transforming the world in different ways and reproducing inequalities, including gender inequality, which warranted a larger discussion.

Conclusion

103. **The Committee encouraged United Nations system entities to implement the Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System in their respective organizations.**
104. **The Committee requested the Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence to continue to provide a platform for entities to exchange information and facilitate collaboration on policies, standards, assessments, training, awareness raising and other activities to facilitate policy coherence in the implementation of the Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System, in particular the priority areas identified in the discussion.**

V. Sustainable urban development

105. The Acting Chair introduced the item by noting that HLCP had a long history of bringing the United Nations system together around sustainable urban development, including to provide joint input to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development, Habitat III, in Quito, in 2016. Subsequently, the General Assembly requested UN-Habitat to lead a collaborative process to develop a system-wide strategy in support of the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the related dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, which was actioned through HLCP and endorsed by CEB in May 2019. In April 2022 the Secretary-General's Executive Committee took stock of efforts of the United Nations to support countries in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and called upon UN-Habitat to engage with the United Nations system, through HLCP, to lead an in-depth analysis on how the joint work of the United Nations system could better support countries accelerate progress.
106. Accordingly, Christopher Williams, Director, New York Office, UN-Habitat, presented the progress report on the status of the United Nations system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development that had been prepared to inform the Committee's deliberations on the subject. A series of intergovernmental meetings on the New Urban Agenda had taken place earlier in 2022, first by the Economic and Social Council and then by the General Assembly, prompting the Executive Committee to suggest a review of the system-wide strategy in view of the need for a whole-of-system approach, given that 70 per cent of the world's population was projected to live in cities within 25 years. Mr. Williams emphasized that organizations would not be able to achieve their respective mandates without incorporating urban dimensions in their work. In this respect, he observed that over the last three years United Nations system entities had brought an urban dimension to their work, albeit on different levels, from entire urban strategies to appointing focal points on urban development.
107. A lot of work has happened at the global level, including through mechanisms such as the United Nations Task Force on the Future of Cities and the Local 2030 Coalition for the Decade of Action, as well as the recommendation in the report on Our Common Agenda to establish the Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments. Although progress has been made through the regional collaborative platforms and the regional sustainable development forums, more could be done to strengthen the architecture at that level. At the country level, Mr. Williams reported that common country analyses and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks had urban dimensions, but they were not approached systematically, utilizing the various urban tools, policies, and strategies. To address this, work was underway with the support of 29 Resident Coordinators, the Development Coordination Office, and UN-Habitat to anchor sustainable urban development as an implementation vehicle for United Nations country teams to achieve outcomes of the Cooperation Frameworks to reduce poverty and inequality, transform economies, advance climate action, and/or enhance crisis reduction and recovery.
108. Calling attention to the challenges identified in the report, Mr. Williams alluded to some gaps in understanding and communication issues with respect to urban development issues. He highlighted areas where broad conceptual issues could warrant policy work, including on the importance of sustainable urbanization to agriculture and to the environment, as well as to the human right to adequate housing, to public health, and to digital access. He also described challenges relating to the functional organization of work on sustainable urban development.
109. In response, the report offered the following recommendations for consideration by HLCP: continued active contribution by the United Nations system to the Secretary-General's Advisory Group on Local and Regional Governments; increased engagement by the United Nations system in the 2023 roll-out of the Local2030 Coalition for the Decade of Action; concerted effort by the United Nations system to contribute to Regional Forums for Sustainable Development as inputs to the 2023 High-Level Political Forum; active participation by the United Nations system in

- efforts to implement the system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development at country level, with the support of the DCO and UN-Habitat initiative on joint urban programming; and the development of a policy paper (or addendum to the system-wide strategy), under the auspices of HLCP and led by UN-Habitat with interested HLCP member organizations, to deepen the understanding of the importance of sustainable urbanization to rural livelihoods and agricultural development and to the future of the planetary ecosystem, as well as to the human right to adequate housing, to public health, and to digital access.
110. In the subsequent discussion, members welcomed the progress report and its concrete recommendations, and expressed their interest to contribute to the development of the proposed policy paper on rural livelihoods and agricultural development and on the future of the planetary ecosystem. Members emphasized the importance of sustainable and inclusive urban food systems, and that transformations of urban food systems were key to implement the New Urban Agenda. With respect to the perception that urbanization was a threat to the environment, it was stressed that properly planned cities significantly contributed to climate mitigation and the reduction of resource usage. Given that urbanization is one of the most important megatrends shaping the world, it was felt that the topic deserved attention at the Summit of the Future.
 111. Members underscored the importance of dialogue and cooperation between the global, regional, and local levels to assure a comprehensive and coherent approach on urbanization. The importance of integrating the urban perspective was reiterated, including in the Cooperation Frameworks, but also in the SDG acceleration strategies. Local action was fundamental to deliver on the SDGs and, in this respect, Resident Coordinators and country teams were seen as crucial actors to deliver at the country level.
 112. Members highlighted their organizations' efforts to develop and update mandate-specific urban policies, as well as relevant initiatives that were advancing towards the targets of the New Urban Agenda, including the United for Smart Sustainable Cities Initiative and the Fast-Track Cities Initiative. Examples of country-level programming were also shared, along with expressions of interest to collaborate more on joint programming.
 113. The connection between migration and sustainable urbanization was raised repeatedly throughout the discussion. The observation that half of the urban growth was expected to be due to migration was raised, entailing both risks and opportunities. The linkages between urbanization and hosting large groups of displaced people were highlighted, citing recent efforts to transform refugee camps into settlements or establish settlements that were more sustainable than in the past. With more refugees living in urban settlements, it was important to include them in urban planning. Also, the aspirations of youth were linked with growing migration to urban areas. A query was raised about the availability of lessons on designing urban policies that took into account the experience and realities of disadvantaged groups, including with regard to participation, protection of their rights and informal settlements.
 114. Reacting to the discussion, Mr. Williams expressed appreciation for the support for the report and recommendations, confirmed that UN-Habitat would pursue them accordingly and welcomed any further written updates on ongoing initiatives to support sustainable urbanization in order to document the progress being made. He stressed the importance of promoting collaboration at country level and finding creative, flexible ways to integrate urban issues that would help United Nations country teams to achieve planned outcomes.
 115. Concluding the item, the Acting Chair noted the broad support voiced by the members for the analysis and proposed actions to help strengthen the implementation of the United Nations system-wide strategy to support the New Urban Agenda, as well as the insights on what the various organizations could contribute on sustainable urbanization.

Conclusion

116. **The Committee took note of the progress report on the status of the United Nations system-wide strategy on sustainable urban development and approved the proposed recommendations on how the joint work of the United Nations system can better support the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.**

VI. Summary of Information Items

117. Further to the electronic review and endorsement of progress reports in advance of the session, the Committee took note of the first progress report to HLCP on the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, submitted by the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 76/25, which invited CEB and the High-level Committee on Programmes to support the coordination and follow-up of the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action on a system-wide basis.
118. The Committee also took note of the progress reports on the work carried out by UN-Water and UN-Energy, submitted by UN-DESA, which serves as their secretariat; and the progress report on the work carried out by UN-Oceans, submitted by the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea in the Office of the Legal Affairs.

Conclusion

119. **The Committee took note of the progress reports on the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, UN-Water, UN-Energy and UN-Oceans.**

VII. Dates and location of the forty-fifth session of the Committee

120. The Chair proposed the dates of 22-23 March 2023 for the forty-fifth session of the Committee, to be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Conclusion

121. **The Committee approved the dates of its forty-fifth session: 22-23 March 2023 at United Nations Headquarters in New York.**

Annex I

Agenda

- I.** Reflection on HLCP's contribution to the implementation of processes under Our Common Agenda in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- II.** Progress under HLCP's strategic narrative
- III.** Ethics of artificial intelligence
- IV.** Sustainable urban development
- V.** Summary of information items

Annex II

List of Participants

Chair: **Ms. Inger Andersen** (UNEP)
Acting Chair: **Ms. Gabriela Ramos** (UNESCO)
Secretary: **Ms. Maaike Jansen**

<u>Organizations</u>	<u>Name</u>
United Nations	
EOSG	Ms. Michèle Griffin
EOSG-SDU	Ms. Michelle Gyles-McDonnough
DESA	Ms. Marion Barthelemy
DPPA/PBSO	Ms. Awa Dabo
ODA	Ms. Gizem Sucuoglu
OHCHR	Ms. Marcella Favretto
OCT	Ms. Tamara Anderson
Office of the Secretary- General's Envoy on Technology	Ms. Yu Ping Chan
ILO	Ms. Sukti Dasgupta
FAO	Ms. Beth Crawford
UNESCO	Mr. Jean-Yves Le Saux Ms. Clare Stark (IAWG-AI co-lead) Ms. Christin Pfeiffer (Foresight Network co-lead) Ms. Lily Neyestani-Hailu (presenter)
WHO	Mr. Stephen MacFeely
World Bank Group	Mr. Farhad Peikar
IMF	Mr. Robert Powell
ITU	Ms. Ursula Wynhoven

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	Ms. Lisa Borgatti
	Ms. Anu Peltola (Beyond GDP co-lead)
UNDP	Ms. Francine Pickup
UNEP	Ms. Isabella Marras
UNHCR	Mr. Raouf Mazou
UNRWA	Mr. Gavin Roy
UNICEF	Mr. Sanjay Wijesekera
	Ms. Jasmina Byrne (Duties to the Future co-lead)
UNFPA	Ms. Diene Keita
WFP	Ms. Valerie Guarnieri
UNODC	Mr. Fedor Klimchuk
	Ms. Angela Me (Data co-lead)
UN-Habitat	Mr. Christopher Williams
UN-Women	Ms. Sarah Hendriks
UNOPS	Mr. Honore Dainhi
UNU	Mr. David Passarelli
	Mr. Adam Day (Duties to the Future co-lead)

UNAIDS

Mr. Eamonn Murphy

UNFCCC

Mr. Daniele Violetti

CTBTO

Ms. Melissa Buerbaumer

ITC

Mr. Matthew Wilson

CEB Secretariat

Mr. Remo Lalli

Ms. Cheryl Stafford

Mr. Li Zhou

Mr. Florian Wintermeyer

Mr. Simon Vandenbroucke

Ms. Marta Lorenzo Fernandez