



## ANNOTATED AGENDA

### Day 1: Wednesday, 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2015

10:00      **Opening of the Meeting**  
**Approval of the Agenda**

The 21<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Regional Coordination Mechanism (RCM) begins at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015, at the LAS Headquarters, Cairo, Egypt. The meeting will open with statements from representatives of international and regional organizations, as follows:

**Ms. Rima Khalaf**, USG / Executive Secretary, ESCWA

**Ms. Sima Bahous**, ASG / Chair of Regional UNDG

**Mr. Nabil Elaraby**, Secretary-General, LAS

11.00      **Session I: Regional UN Support for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development-Policy Issues**

**Moderator: Mr. Abdallah Al Dardari**, Deputy Executive Secretary of ESCWA

The adoption of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, which includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals, comes at a watershed moment in the Arab region. 2015 has seen unprecedented levels of crisis, conflict and instability that have threatened to compromise development gains in several countries.

*Session Objectives:*

- Setting the Scene: review the needs and challenges of the Arab Region in adopting and adapting the SDGs in the current political and security environment;
- A Nexus Approach: identify key policy areas in the Arab region that require an integrated approach at the national and regional level.

The session will include a keynote address and a panel that will address the following questions:

- What are the key findings of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and how do these relate to regional priorities identified for the post-2015/SDG transition?
- What are regional trends and gaps in the implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda? What are the cross-cutting issues that could be spearheaded into a policy agenda?
- How does the current political and security environment affect these needs and challenges?
- How can the UN play a more effective role in preventing or ameliorating the impact of crisis and conflict? In supporting reconstruction efforts?

Presenters:

**Mr. Ziad Bahaa-Eldin**, Egyptian Politician, Lawyer and Economist: Founder of Thebes Consult and Trustee at AUC

**Mr. Ghaith Fariz**, Director of UNESCO Regional Bureau for Sciences in the Arab State

*Session Outcomes:*

- Providing a vital bridge between global frameworks and national development agendas in relation to the integration, implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda;
- Informing global and national policymaking and normative agenda-setting through regional experiences and perspectives;
- Fostering a progressive agenda and guiding transformational change, adding new substance and innovative ideas to the new development paradigm;
- Clarity on the regional process and agreement on moving forward in a coordinated manner to support regional priorities in context of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, channeling the combined expertise and capacities of all UN entities working in the region;
- Improved understanding of possible directions for development programming and cooperation;
- Identifying the needs and challenges specific to the region in adopting and adapting the SDGs in the current political and security environment;
- Agreeing on the key policy areas that require and integrated approach.

13.00 **Lunch Break**

14.30 **Session II : Regional UN Support for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development-The Way Forward**

**Moderator: Abdelsalam OuldAhmed, FAO**

In order to ensure the successful implementation of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, it will be necessary to consider what modalities of cooperation would enable RCM members to provide coherent and consistent support to adapting and adopting the SDGs in the Arab region. The RCM has an important role to play vis-à-vis the post-2015 development agenda, in ensuring that regional perspectives are incorporated into the ongoing discussions and consultations, arrangements for monitoring and accountability and preparations for implementation.

*Session Objectives:*

To discuss the modalities of cooperation, including RCM Working Groups, that would allow RCM members to provide coherent and consistent support to adapting and adopting the SDGs. Discussion will focus on cooperation in the following areas:

- (a) Regional Consultations: the potential role of the Arab Forum for Sustainable Development (AFSD) and other regional fora;
- (b) Technical Assistance: coordination of regional capacity building and policy efforts by RCM members;
- (c) Knowledge Production: development of joint publications and papers on the SDGs and means of implementation;
- (d) Monitoring and Follow-Up: identifying regional monitoring and follow-up tools and mechanisms as

well as gaps in data relevant to implementing and monitoring the SDGs.

The session will include a keynote address and a panel that will address the following questions:

*Regional consultations:*

- What regularly scheduled fora does the RCM have available for regional policy level consultations, in addition to the Arab Regional Forum for Sustainable Development (RFSD), which was mandated to the Regional Commissions in the Rio+20 consultations and the 2030 Agenda as an annual multi-stakeholder gathering?
- Would RCM members be interested in developing the RFSD into the main annual regional forum for multi-stakeholder consultation and regional follow-up and review? This would entail making the Forum a joint RCM output, integrating economic, social, environmental as well as human rights issues. Each annual Forum could also have one or more the thematic focus areas mirroring the themes of the HLPF to which it reports, and could provide a platform for presenting thematic reports, organizing side-events, etc.
- Should the RFSD have a standing item on emerging regional priorities and/or challenges identified in the implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda, in particular from the point of view of Means of Implementation?

*Technical Assistance:*

- Should the RCM provide a coordinated regional capacity building on issues such as understanding, advocating for and adapting the SDGs; designing relevant and localized indicators for measuring progress; developing an integrated/nexus approach to interdependent sectors; gathering and disseminating data on SDG indicators?
- How should such capacity building be coordinated? What role for the UNDG guidelines and the Monitoring, Acceleration and Policy Support (MAPS) approach?

*Knowledge Production:*

- Should the RCM continue to focus on producing joint thematic reports, such as the Arab MDG Report and the Arab Migration Report, or also produce joint *interdisciplinary* flagship reports or policy papers relevant to implementing the 2030 Development Agenda?
- How should the production of such knowledge products be coordinated? Through thematic WGs as was done in the past or WGs established specifically for joint outputs?
- ESCWA with input from RCM members is about to launch the First Arab Sustainable Development Report (ASDR). Would the RCM members be interested in developing the ASDR into a joint RCM output, to be produced every 2-4 years? Each issue could have a thematic focus, linked to the HLPF Summit.

*Monitoring and Follow-up:*

- Would RCM members be interested in contributing to a joint regional database of SDG indicators and other data collected in the region? This would ensure all regional agencies have access to harmonized data, although a challenge would be that different agencies have different geographical definitions of that region.

*Possible Additional Working Groups:*

- Should the RCM establish new Working Groups on: key nexus issues, such as the Climate-Land-Energy-Water nexus; Means of Implementation issues, such as Financing for Development, and; Science, Technology and Innovation?

Presenters:

**Ms. Roula Majdalani**, Director of Sustainable Development and Policies Division at ESCWA  
**UNDP**

**Mr. Frank Hagemann**, Deputy Regional Director of ILO  
**UN-Women**

*Session Outcomes:*

- Reflect on lessons learned from cooperation in supporting the implementation and monitoring of the MDGs;
- Promoting partnerships and policy coherence at the subregional level and in support of countries in special situations;
- Consider how existing modalities could be improved to meet the needs of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda;
- Suggest new modalities, mechanism or tools that the RCM should develop in order to ensure its ability to provide optimal support to the efforts of Member States and the UN System in the Arab region.

9.00

**Session III: Migration, Displacement and Development**

**Moderator: Ms. Karima El Korri, ESCWA**

This session will explore migration and forced displacement in the context of the Arab region and the new Sustainable Development Agenda, the challenges and opportunities that will have to be addressed going forward, as well as their implications for the future programmatic direction of UN agencies and partner organizations.

*Session Objectives:*

- Provide an overview of trends and patterns of international migration and displacement;
- Update on current work activities and programmes including the pre-launch of the 2015 Situation Report on International Migration;
- Explore clear means of future coordination and collaboration between different UN agencies and international organizations working on migration and forced displacement related issues;
- Review updates from Thematic Working Group on International Migration.

The Session will include a keynote address and a panel that will address the following questions:

- How can these priorities be translated into tangible programmatic work?
- How can the efforts of various entities be best coordinated to enhance capacity for concerted action and to maximize impact?
- What resources could be mobilized to address the challenges imposed by migration and forced displacement?
- What regional mechanisms and systems are needed to ensure organizational alignment and cooperation on these migration related issues?

**Part I: Pre-Launch of the Arab Migration Report**

Presenter:

**Ms. Karima El Korri, ESCWA**

**Part II: Update from organizations spearheading efforts in the field**

Presenters:

**IOM, UN Agencies**

**Part III: Discussion of Future Programmatic Priorities relating to migration and forced displacement in the context of the Arab region and the new SDG Framework:**

Presenters:

**IOM, UN Agencies**

*Session Outcomes:*

- Establish clear means of future coordination and collaboration between different UN agencies and other international organizations addressing issues relating to migration and forced displacement;
- Suggest new mechanisms and systems that ensure such organizational cooperation and

responsibility.

11.30 **Break**

12.00 **Session IV: UN-LAS Cooperation**

**Moderator: Badr El-Din El Alayli, LAS**

The League of Arab States (LAS) and the United Nations organizations in the Arab Region have a privileged relationship in coordination of development support to Member Countries. This session would offer an opportunity to reorganize this cooperation along lines that are clear, strategic, focused and responsive to the current challenges.

*Session Objectives:*

- Review with the League of Arab States strategic priorities defined by LAS for collaboration with UN;
- Review progress in implementing the UN-LAS Matrix of Activities;
- Review preparations for the Arab Economic and Social Development Summit and agree on required UN Contributions.

*Session Outcomes:*

- Ensure regional policy coherence on issues of strategic relevance to the region; and
- Agreement on coordinated technical support for concrete proposals that could be taken up by LAS in preparation for the Summit in the areas above.

12.45 **Session V: Upcoming Global & Regional Events & WG Updates**

**Moderator: Mr. Iyad AbuMoghli, UNEP**

*Session Objectives:*

- a) Take stock of major upcoming global and regional events and identify possible RCM contributions:
  - The World Humanitarian Summit
  - The Habitat 3 Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development
  - Paris Climate Change Conference
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> UN Environment Assembly

Presenters:

**Ms. Rema Jamous**, Head of Regional Office of UN-OCHA Middle East and North Africa

**Ms. Katja Schaefer**, Officer in Charge of UN-Habitat Regional Office for Arab States

**Abdul-Mejeid Haddad**, Regional Climate Change Coordinator of UNEP Regional Office for West Asia

- b) Review updates from RCM Working Groups and review the status of the Climate Change Working Group:
  - Food Security, **Mohamed Aw Daher**, Regional Food Security Officer at FAO Regional Office

for the Near East and North Africa

- MDGs/SDGs, **Roula Majdalani**, Director of Sustainable Development and Policies Division at ESCWA
- Task Force on Statistics, **Juraj Riecan**, Director of Statistics Division at ESCWA

This session allows chairs of RCM Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) to bring issues to the attention of RCM members. Where applicable, Chairs have provided progress reports ahead of the meeting (uploaded on the RCM Website) and interventions will focus on matters that must be discussed by RCM members.

The session will include a keynote address and a panel that will address the following questions:

- What were the key achievements of the WG during 2015?
- What are the main activities and outputs planned for 2016?
- Has the Working Group already integrated the 2030 Development Agenda into its work? How is the Agenda expected to impact the work of the Working Group? How can the Working Group play a role in supporting the adaptation, implementation and monitoring of the SDGs/GGs in the Arab Region?

*Session Outcome:*

- Opportunity for Regional Directors to review the key achievements of the Mechanism's four Working Groups, with a particular emphasis on ensuring that these working groups are in the process of mainstreaming the SDGs into their work; and
- RCM endorsement of any proposed activities and agreement on additional modalities of cooperation.

13.30

**Recommendations and Wrap-up**  
**Moderator: ESCWA**

The final session will be an opportunity to:

- a) Review the recommendations of the 21<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the RCM; and
- b) Review plans for the 22<sup>nd</sup> RCM Meeting.