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**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

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**REGIONAL AND GLOBAL PRIORITIES****PROGRESS ACHIEVED IN THE PREPARATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA BEYOND 2015****Summary**

The United Nations Task Team was established to coordinate inclusive, system-wide efforts to draft a vision and road map for the post-2015 development agenda. In June 2012, the Task Team submitted its first report to the Secretary-General which was entitled “Realizing the Future We Want for All”. The regional commissions joint report on the post-2015 development agenda from a regional perspective will be presented to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in 2013. A list of the Task Team’s future activities is included at the end of the document.

## Introduction

1. In September 2011, the Secretary-General requested the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs and the Under-Secretary-General and Administrator of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) “to establish a core group of dedicated senior technical experts to coordinate system-wide preparations and propose a unified vision and road map for the definition of a United Nations development agenda post-2015, in consultation with all stakeholders”.<sup>1</sup>

### I. THE GLOBAL PROCESS

2. As a result of this request the United Nations Task Team was established and launched in January 2012. The Task Team is led by DESA and UNDP, and is composed of more than 50 entities of the United Nations system, including all the regional commissions. Its terms of reference include the formulation of a system-wide vision and road map as an input to the global debate on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda. In June 2012, the Task Team submitted its first report to the Secretary-General which was entitled “Realizing the Future We Want for All”.

3. The report to the Secretary-General stresses that the “central challenge of the post-2015 United Nations development agenda is to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for all the worlds’ peoples of present and future generations”.<sup>2</sup> It proposes a vision for the future based on the core values of human rights, equality and sustainability. The format of the future agenda should be based on goals and targets, a strength of the existing framework of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), but the goals should be reorganized along four central pillars, namely: (i) inclusive social development; (ii) inclusive economic development; (iii) environmental sustainability; and (iv) peace and security.

4. The report provides the initial basis for the work of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons, appointed by the Secretary-General in July 2012 to advise him on the post-2015 development agenda. The Panel is co-chaired by President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia and Prime Minister David Cameron of the United Kingdom. It is composed of 23 other members, including two eminent persons from Western Asia: Queen Rania of Jordan and Tawakel Karman (co-recipient of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize) of Yemen.

5. The Panel held its first meeting at the end of September 2012, on the sidelines of the sixty-seventh session of the General Assembly. The main findings of a joint report prepared by the regional commissions will be submitted to the Panel later in 2012, and the Panel is expected to submit a report to the Secretary-General during the first half of 2013.

### II. REGIONAL DIMENSIONS

6. The regional commissions joint report on the post-2015 development agenda is currently being drafted by the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), under the leadership of ESCWA. The report will be coordinated by four main focal points: substantive experts from each of the four regional commissions. They will be advised by a board composed of leading development authorities representing a broad range of key substantive areas and familiar with MDGs and development issues in each of the regions. The advisory board will meet in Beirut in November 2012 to discuss the first draft of the report.

7. The final report will be presented to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in 2013 and will include the main elements of a global development agenda from a regional perspective.

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<sup>1</sup> Interoffice Memorandum No. 11-08757, 19 September 2011, para. 4.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, 2012, *Realizing the Future We Want for All, Report to the Secretary-General*. (New York: United Nations) p. i.

8. It will begin with an assessment of the political and socioeconomic context in which the current MDG agenda was formulated and the challenges and opportunities it presented. To learn from this experience, the report will assess the progress that resulted from this agenda and the successes and failures that characterized the processes of setting goals and attempting to reach them. An analysis of ongoing or new global and regional development challenges will follow with particular emphasis on cross-cutting themes and ways forward.

9. The report will cover priority issues specific to Western Asia, including the following: (a) equitable and inclusive growth, with a focus on poverty and inequality; (b) social inclusion and social protection; (c) women and youth perspectives; (d) democratic governance and participation; and (e) peace and security. All of those issues were submitted to the Task Team and were covered in the report to the Secretary-General entitled “Realizing the Future we want for All”.

10. On a related note, which was endorsed by the General Assembly in July 2012, the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) called for sustainable development goals (SDGs) that are “coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015”.<sup>3</sup>

### III. THE WAY FORWARD

11. Ensuring coherence between SDGs and the United Nations development agenda is one of the main objectives of the Task Team. This reflects the need for a unified post-2015 development agenda that is based upon sustainable development principles. At the same time, the Task Team will continue to support the post-2015 intergovernmental process through the General Assembly and its subsidiaries. The timetable for future Task Team activities proposed by DESA is as follows:

<b>Deliverables</b>	<b>Completion date</b>
Initial inputs to the open working group on SDGs: (a) Consultations with Governments; (b) Report with initial inputs to the open working group; (c) Other inputs at the request of the open working group.	September 2012 October 2012 TBD
Analytical papers: (a) Global partnership; (b) Other themes as needed.	December 2012 TBD
Evaluation of the MDG monitoring framework and consideration of numerical and data issues in the post-2015 agenda	December 2012
Contribution to the annual report of the Secretary-General on Accelerating Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, 2013	June 2013
Informal briefings and support to Member State deliberations	Ongoing
Communications strategy	October 2012
Inventory of processes and proposals	Ongoing
Contribution to the annual report of the Secretary-General on Accelerating Progress towards the Millennium Development Goals, 2014	TBD

12. The regional commissions, including ESCWA, will be fully engaged in Task Team activities and will contribute to the global process both through the findings of the regional commission joint report and other processes of regional consultation.

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<sup>3</sup> General Assembly, Resolution 66/288, *The Future We Want*, 27 July 2012, para. 246.