

REGIONAL UN SYSTEM MEETING FOR EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

5-6 December 2016 – UNIDO and IAEA, Vienna

Note for Record and Conclusions

The participants were welcomed by Mr. Li Yong, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, and Mr. Martin Krause, Director, Division for Europe, IAEA, on behalf of Mr. Dazhu Yang, Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The meeting was opened by Mr. Christian Friis Bach, UNECE Executive Secretary/RCM Chair, and Ms. Cihan Sultanoglu, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Europe and the CIS/ R-UNDG Chair.

Item 1: SDGs DIALOGUE WITH MEMBER STATES

The R-UNDG Chair updated the Regional Directors on the [Dialogue with Member States](#), which took place on 11 November 2016 in New York:

- The Dialogue was a continuation of the engagement with Member States through the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in May 2016 and the High-level Political Forum Side Event in July 2016. It was attended by some 40 representatives of the Permanent Missions (out of 56 Member States invited).
- Member States are taking the 2030 Agenda forward at country level, and the UN support needs to be nuanced and tailored to countries' needs (for EU members; Member States on track for EU accession; UN programme countries).
- Specifically, intensified support is required on data and statistics, innovative financing, public-private partnerships, and advocacy on the critical importance of the new 2030 Agenda for national development.

The work of the UN Team in Brussels and possible entry points for the regional UN system to engage with the EU institutions (Commission and Council) were presented:

- UN Brussels Team consists of 22 agencies. Its work focuses on advocacy and cooperation with the EU institutions, including but not limited to linking the UN agendas with the EU policies.
- The EU has recently issued a number of important policy documents (Communications on [next steps for a sustainable European future](#), on a new [European Consensus on Development](#), on a [renewed partnership](#) with the ACP countries, and on [Strengthening European Investments for jobs and growth](#); [Global Strategy](#) for the EU's Foreign And Security Policy)
- The EU sees the SDGs as a platform to unite Europe around common goals, engage youth, etc.
- A number of outreach activities were undertaken by the UN Brussels Team, including with the participation of the UN SG Ban Ki-moon (presentation of the SG Report; opening of the European Development Days) and in cooperation with UNRIC.
- Annual UN Retreat included Directorate Generals from different departments of the EU (report will be shared).
- Climate change and energy, as well as sustainable consumption and production are among the topics, where the EU wishes to engage as part of the SDGs. In addition, the EU is engaging with big cities and local governments (DG NEAR is more involved in this work than DG DEVCO).

- First Vice-President Timmermans is leading the European Commission's work on SDGs. He is hosting a [High-level Policy Summit](#) in Brussels on 20 December on Europe's response to the 2030 Agenda.
- 10 EU member states will present National Voluntary Reviews at the [2017 HLPF](#) in New York.

Positioning of the UN as a partner, not as a sub-contractor for the implementation of EU funding and change of engagement from donor-implementer to partnership is crucial. UNECE provided a short overview of the UNOG SDG Lab. It will be led by a current Swiss diplomat with other Member States' representatives seconded to the SDG Lab. The SDG Lab is expected to be a single window for expertise on SDGs available in Geneva and act as a convener, facilitator, catalyst, broker and activator helping all interested actors to meet and exchange information, ideas and experiences and turn expertise and knowledge into practice.

UNDP informed about the opening of the UN SDG Campaign Centre in Bonn, supported by the German Government. The UN SDG Action Campaign will be present at several locations, including in New York to facilitate the link with the UN Secretary-General's Executive Office and the UN Development Group management process and conferences.

The discussion that followed the presentations included the following main points:

- Dialogues with Member States are important for the region and the practice should be continued.
- Wider engagement with the EU member states and EU institutions are important. Further updates from the UN Brussels Team will be welcome.
- Strategic cooperation with the EU around financing is needed to link financing on SDGs with financing for development.
- Synergies between a plethora of SDG centres, hubs and initiatives need to be ensured.
- A mapping of the UN presence with offices in the EU member states was suggested to be undertaken by the UN Brussels Office.
- Connections with other regions where the EU is active will be important to be established: the regional UN system in Europe and Central Asia could benefit from sharing experiences with the regional UN systems in Africa and Asia on the work with the EU.
- Systematic engagement with Member States is important (e.g. work with the Russian Federation) and advocacy on the SDGs should not be limited to positioning SDGs as governments' agenda; instead, the UN should advocate for the Member States to advocate for the 2030 Agenda at the regional level.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- Dialogues with Members States will become regular; the exact timing of the 2017 Dialogues will be discussed at a later stage. Efforts will be made to involve governments as co-organizers to strengthen participation.
- Strategic cooperation with the EU is crucial: the UN must remain a reliable partner and competition among agencies for EU funding should be avoided.
- Issue-Based Coalitions will serve as platforms for engagement with non-UN partners, including in countries with no UN programme presence.

Item 2: UPDATE OF THE REGIONAL ADVOCACY PAPER

The R-UNDG Chair provided an update on key parameters and elements of the Regional Advocacy Paper (RAP):

- The RAP covers development challenges present in the region, not individual SDGs.

- The updated RAP will highlight the changes and trends within respective areas, showing linkages with the SDGs and potential impact on their attainment, ensuring integration of the SDGs universality principle, and integrating the agreed cross-cutting issues.
- The Regional Advocacy Paper will rely on the findings of and build on the key joint messages highlighted in the recent Transition Report from MDGs to SDGs and the Joint Regional UN Positioning Paper.
- A consultant was hired to facilitate the update of the Issue Briefs of the Regional Advocacy Paper and the preparation of the executive summary.

The following comments were provided to the draft Issue Briefs:

- Issue Briefs (IBs) need to cover the entire region (universality element must be ensured) = 54 Member States.
- IBs need to ensure integration and prominence of the SDGs.
- IBs need to focus on substantive issues, rather than focusing on what is done by the UN.
- IBs should avoid silo thinking, which is still present in a number of draft IBs.
- Agencies (co-)leading the preparation of the IBs should be given the authority to accept/decline the comments provided by the other agencies.
- The consultant needs to capture synergies between the IBs and avoid overlaps.
- References to specialized academic literature is not needed, while references to concrete projects/initiatives are encouraged.
- Until finalized, all IBs should be presented as “draft”.
- The introduction of a new IB on energy was suggested.
- Key messages at the end of each IB were suggested to ensure smooth communication of the UN-wide advocacy goals.
- Harmonized approach is to be adopted by the consultant.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- The Consultant will work on the draft IBs, ensuring consistency across all IBs. Comments by the agencies are to be provided to the consultant.
- The RAP will adopt the definition of “Europe and Central Asia” region, which includes 54 Member States (of the UNECE region without Canada and United States).
- A standard length for all IBs (not more than 4-5 pages) will be ensured by the Consultant. The IBs will be finalized by the end of January 2017. A complete RAP package should be available in February 2017.
- Co-leading agencies are given the authority to work with the comments/revisions provided by the other agencies and make final decision on what is or is not accepted into the final draft IB.
- An additional IB on energy will be produced provided UNECE and UNDP confirm co-leadership, with the inputs to be provided by UNIDO, IAEA and others.

Item 3: JOINT RETREAT ON SDGs IMPLEMENTATION

UNFPA presented the [outcomes of the SDGs Retreat](#) on behalf of the co-organizing agencies (UNFPA and UN-Women):

- Diagnostic of key regional and national needs, challenges and opportunities for implementation of the 2030 Agenda in ECA was undertaken; good practices on national and regional initiatives were

shared; key priorities for regional support were identified and discussed; coordination and collaboration challenges were identified.

- Three key priority proposals from the Retreat Co-Labs include: exchange of experiences across the region (through a digital platform); regional UN support team (similar to “Peer Support Group”); advocacy for data and effective statistical systems for monitoring and reporting on the SDGs.
- Next steps will include: agencies will provide information about the on-going work to the R-UNDG Secretariat; regional initiatives and events (“shared calendar”) is to be created (populated) and continuously updated by agencies themselves; a digital platform for information sharing and access to expertise will be created.
- Regular follow-up on the progress e.g. virtual meetings, possibly another retreat back-to-back with regional meeting, etc. was suggested.

The following key points were made during the discussion:

- The role and functions of SDG Focal Points need to be clarified: some agencies have specifically appointed SDG coordinators (e.g. WHO); some agencies have several people responsible for covering different SDGs; the question of how this function is related to the work of the PSG was raised.
- Available mechanisms and treaty bodies should be tapped in (e.g. UPR), especially for monitoring and reporting.
- Rapid Integrated Assessment is a useful tool; cooperation with UNDP is needed to ensure that other agencies, especially the NRAs, can participate in the MAPS missions and benefit from the results of the tool application. It was reiterated that a mapping (shared last year during the RCM/RDT) has shown that the UNDAFs are aligned with the SDGs and that efforts to move the SDG agenda forward need to build on the UNDAFs.
- Special attention should be paid to data, monitoring and reporting, especially in view of the lack of methodologies for a number of Tier 3 indicators. The Conference of European Statisticians will be a crucial partner (all agencies are invited to participate in this Member States-driven process). A proposal was made to organise a meeting with all UN agencies on SDG monitoring.
- In addition to responding to the governments’ needs for support on specific SDGs, the role of the UN is to advocate for the realization of all human rights.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- Information sharing is the first step to be undertaken as a follow up to the SDGs Retreat: all UN agencies are to provide information on their (regional) initiatives/activities which contribute to the SDGs to the R-UNDG Secretariat, as agreed during the Retreat. This will populate an online calendar to be established in 2017.
- Close collaboration between the participants will be required with possibly a similar SDGs Retreat taking place in 2017.
- PSG members during their meeting on 7-8 December 2016 will discuss whether the PSG could serve as an inter-agency platform to provide support to UNCTs and RCs on the SDGs roll-out.

Item 4: UNDAF ROLL-OUT AND IMPLEMENTATION

An [Update on progress, results and challenges](#) was provided by the PSG Co-Chairs (UNAIDS and UNDP):

- Peer Support Group is a robust and stable mechanism of support and quality insurance, which should be used strategically (without overburdening the members who are full-time agencies’ staff).

- New UNDAF guidance is important and PSG support is provided to the UNDAF roll-out countries (in 2016: Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine) on its application.
- There should be two PSG co-convening agencies with one year overlap between the rotating agencies to allow for mentoring of the incoming co-convening agency member.

OHCHR provided an update on leveraging human rights in UNDAFs:

- In 2016, good cooperation with RCs and UNCTs on human rights in Moldova, Serbia, Ukraine, etc.; in 2017, more should be done in deepening this work with UNCTs and RCs.
- The 3rd cycle of the UPR is starting: it is important to ensure that recommendations are taken on board and supported by UNCTs.
- OHCHR is working on a new organizational plan for 2018-2021, which will require OHCHR to adopt a subsidiary approach, when other agencies are taking on board some of the recommendations. OHCHR will directly work on ensuring the implementation of only those recommendations that cannot be implemented by the agencies on the ground.

The R-UNDG Chair provided a brief overview of RQRs that took place in 2016: thematic (on migration) and geographic (covering Turkey; Moldova, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; Tajikistan and Bosnia and Herzegovina), as well as a sub-regional scan of Western Balkans.

The discussion after the presentations focused on the following points:

- Processes like UPR and [Environmental Performance Reviews](#) can be linked to the UNDAF roll-out processes through CCAs and comments provided by the PSG members.
- A lot of trainings are available through PSG, which countries should benefit from when offered.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- Agencies that are not part of the PSG yet (IAEA, UNCTAD and UNODC) are invited to provide their nominations to the PSG.
- UNAIDS remains the co-convening agency of the PSG for 2017.
- UNFPA will come back with a final confirmation to replace UNDP as one of the co-convening agencies in 2017-2018.

Item 5: REPORTING BACK BY THE ISSUE-BASED COALITIONS

Updates were presented by the co-convening agencies for the Issue-Based Coalitions:

Issue-Based Coalition on Health (presented by WHO): was established in May 2016 on the basis of the UN Regional Thematic Group on Non-Communicable Diseases and Social, Economic and Environmental Determinants of Health (SEEDH). Terms of Reference were developed and adopted. The first IBC meeting took place on 10 November 2016 and was chaired by the WHO Regional Director with the participation of UNAIDS, UNICEF, UNDP, UNODC and other agencies. The main focus of the IBC is health through the life-course (maternal and child health); communicable diseases (HIV and TB are still increasing in the region); universal health coverage; migration and health (with aspects of emergencies); environment and health.

Issue-Based Coalition on Social Protection (presented by ILO): includes 15 national and 6 regional focal points and is co-chaired by ILO, UNDP and UNICEF; all information is available through the web-site. IBC undertook a survey in 2016 to identify priorities for its work. Next steps were outlined and include: work on Issue Brief 6 of the Regional Advocacy Paper; face-to-face meeting is scheduled for April 2017; work towards

a Multi Partner Trust Fund (MPTF) for joint programming/implementation continues (two agencies are needed).

[Issue-Based Coalition on Gender](#) (presented by UN Women): is co-chaired by UN Women and UNFPA and includes representatives of 11 agencies. Work in 2016 focused on the development of the Guidance for SDG-related gender mainstreaming and on the preparation of the Issue Brief on Gender. Among the results are: creation of gender SURGE capacity on SDGs (32 gender experts) with 52 activities carried out in 2016; regional analysis of 15 UNDAFs and CCAs on gender mainstreaming; Inter-Agency Yammer, connecting GTG/RGG members and TOT participants across 18 countries + RWGG members.

[Issue-Based Coalition on Youth](#) (presented by UNFPA): is co-chaired by UNICEF and UNFPA. A meeting in November was attended by UNDP, ITU, ILO, UNICEF, UN Women and UNFPA. Terms of Reference were drafted and aim to involve youth with a greater focus on coordination. The IBC provides a forum for: cooperation and support, on-going exchange of information, knowledge management and tools, joint advocacy, and facilitate youth engagement and participation in processes the UN System is involved in.

[Issue-Based Coalition on Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience](#) (presented by UNHCR): is guided by the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants, and is co-chaired by UNDP and UNHCR, in close cooperation with IOM. The IBC has not met yet. The work has focused on the preparation of the Issue Brief on Migration for the Regional Advocacy Paper with a focus wider than the recent migration crisis in Europe. The IBC will aim to work on resilience and pay specific attention to the work of volunteers and civil society, municipalities and local communities.

Discussion after the presentations included the following key points:

- Real commitment by participating agencies is crucial, as well as coordination between the IBCs.
- All IBCs are still new and varying degree of progress and results are delivered.
- IBCs should ensure direct country support to RCs/UNCTs when requested.
- Knowledge management systems are important and ways of exchanging information should be explored. A proposal was made to have an online platform to share documents.
- IBCs should reach outside of the UN agencies circle to develop initiatives and campaigns with non-UN partners at various levels.
- IOM as a newcomer to the UN system expressed interest to actively participate in the processes that are taking place in the region with regard to the IBCs' work.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- Terms of Reference of all IBCs should be finalized and shared with the regional UN system members by the IBCs' co-convening agencies.
- IBCs should develop their annual workplans for 2017 and share with the regional UN system members.
- IBCs shall cooperate and share information, specifically lessons learned, to ensure stronger results-oriented approach to work (integration of beneficiaries, common approaches to resource mobilization).
- IBCs in their work should be driven by the needs from the country level. Linkages to UNCTs should be ensured by the IBCs.

Item 6: REGIONAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

UNECE provided an update on the [preparations for the 2017 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development](#) and the involvement of the regional UN system:

- Discussion Paper from 2 November 2016 outlines the structure of the Regional Forum planned for 25 April 2017 and is a result of informal consultations with member states.
- The Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will be a self-standing one-day meeting back-to-back with the UNECE 70th Anniversary Session.
- Based on member states' requests, the Regional Forum will consist of a Policy Segment and a Peer Learning Segment with three parallel Regional Round Tables to exchange best practices and address transboundary issues. The Regional Round Tables will promote peer learning on nationalization and localization of SDGs; sub-regional cooperation for SDG implementation; and data and monitoring.
- The Regional Forum will be preceded by a joint UN DESA/UNECE expert meeting for the 12 countries of the region that will present National Voluntary Reviews at the 2017 HLPF, and by a self-organized civil society consultation (financially supported by UN DESA).
- A synthesized background document is being prepared for the Policy Segment. Inputs from the UN agencies are requested (assessments, strategies and policies that are implemented or planned in countries or by the UN agencies). Concept notes for each Round Table will also be prepared and shared.
- The conclusions (Chair's summary) of the Regional Forum will constitute the regional input to the 2017 HLPF.

Main points raised during the discussion include:

- In terms of specific SDGs in focus at the Regional Forum, it was clarified that the Regional Forum follows the SDGs that are under in-depth review at the HLPF.
- Participation of civil society is important. UN DESA will be providing support for this component.
- The Regional Advocacy Paper will be launched in February and can be provided as a background document.
- UN agencies are invited to provide support in identifying speakers for the Regional Forum. For instance, WHO offered to explore the possibility of engaging ministers of health in the Regional Forum.

UNECE also provided a short update on inter-agency cooperation on data and monitoring:

- The Conference of European Statisticians Steering Group for Statistics on SDGs (co-chaired by Switzerland and the US) is working on the regional Road Map on statistics for SDGs within 6 sections: (1) assess readiness of countries to report on global SDG indicators; (2) identify regional indicators; (3) provide guidance on national and subnational indicators; (4) clarify setup of reporting on SDGs; (5) build statistical capacities; (6) communicate and disseminate SDG statistics.
- Next steps include: presentations of the zero edition of the Road Map at the first [UN World Data Forum](#) in January 2017; a survey on countries' plans and strategies on SDG statistics will be sent out in December 2016; a template for assessment of readiness to report on global indicators will be ready for distribution in December 2016; an expert forum to discuss road map and survey outcomes will take place in April 2017.
- The last meeting of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators was hosted by UNECE in November 2016 and considered the availability of methodology for data collection, disaggregation, etc.: methodology exists for 35% of indicators; for 25% of indicators data is not available; for 45% of indicators, methodology needs to be developed. IAEG will review the disaggregation of data.

- The next step will be the finalization of the indicator refinements and presentation to the UN Statistical Committee in March 2017.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- Members of the regional UN system were invited to provide inputs to UNECE for the background document of the Regional Forum by **15 December 2016**.
- UNECE will invite and involve agencies in the statistical expert forum in April 2017.
- Statistical focal points from agencies can join respective sessions of the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2017.
- Agencies will continue mutual information-sharing and involvement in statistical activities.

Item 7: UN SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA (SPECA)

Update on the recent developments under SPECA was provided by UNECE:

- SPECA is led jointly by UNESCAP and UNECE and is one of the few mechanisms that aim to bring the sub-region together.
- There are signs of positive sub-regional dynamics in SPECA and stronger engagement of the UN system will be welcome by UNECE.
- The last round of SPECA meetings was held in Ganja, Azerbaijan in November 2016.
- 6 SPECA Thematic Working Groups are following up on their workplans.
- Next chair of SPECA will be Turkmenistan, followed by Kazakhstan, which is planning to hold the SPECA meetings at the ministerial level in Astana in 2018.

The discussion included the following interventions:

- More tangible outcomes of SPECA would help UN agencies engage in it.
- Central Asia is an important sub-region, where many programmatic consortia are working (e.g. Peacebuilding Fund work with Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Afghanistan).
- Russian Federation is interested in reviving sub-regional cooperation and can provide resources for this work. The EU should also use the platform and build stronger connections with Central Asia.
- UNEP briefed the participants about the Regional Conference “Towards a common vision for Agenda 2030 in Central Asia” organized by UNEP and UNDP on 2-4 November in Almaty, Kazakhstan, and the outcome document that resulted from the Conference.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- UNECE will keep the regional UN system informed on the developments and work of SPECA.

Item 8: UPDATE ON QCPR RESOLUTION FOR 2016-2019

A brief update on the first draft of QCPR resolution was provided by the RCM and R-UNDG Chairs:

- The draft QCPR resolution was drafted taking into account the proposals voiced out during the ECOSOC Dialogues and the suggestions prepared by the Independent Team of Advisors.
- The draft resolution contains references (paragraphs 61 and 62) to the regional level work of the UN.
- The draft resolution calls for the UNDS to join forces, seek synergies and use existing structures and mechanisms instead of creating new ones for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

- Cooperation among the entities of the regional UN system is well developed and is being further strengthened in line with the spirit of the QCPR process.

The discussion included the following key questions and points:

- The draft resolution does not call for radical changes and shifts in the governing structure.
- It is not clear how the current CEB will change, if at all.
- Pooled funding is an important element, but it refers mostly to financing of the new agenda, not funding of the UNDS.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- When available, the adopted QCPR resolution will be shared with the members of the regional UN system.

Item 9. GEORGIA: SUPPORTING REFORM-ORIENTED EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT

UN RC (via Skype) provided [an overview of the political, economic and social situation in Georgia](#) and the UN work in support of government’s efforts:

- Improvement in universal education coverage has been recorded; health coverage has increased. However, marginalization has also increased.
- Human rights progress is yet to be achieved (selective justice and politically motivated prosecution together with the questions on minority and women’s rights and problems of displaced populations).
- The UN is one of the major partners of the Government of Georgia. Joint cooperation has yielded positive results in Georgia. UN work: joint work plan; joint resource mobilization strategy.

Following the presentation, questions and comments were posed by the Regional Directors to the members of the UN Country Team in Georgia (via Skype):

- The UN Country Team has been commended with the excellent team work results and leadership of the RC.
- Support to education sector is provided and needed: there are issues with attendance and access and quality of learning outcomes, which may be challenging to improve in view of 2017 budget cuts.
- Universal health coverage has improved for vulnerable groups but the gaps are still evident; budgetary constraints remain.
- Legislative environment of de-facto authorities is deteriorating (e.g. abortion prohibited in Abkhazia); abortion legislation is triggered by the sentiments to improve demographic situation. UNFPA for the past 8 years has been working with health professionals to equip local professionals with knowledge and skills on how to advocate for improving legislation.
- UN Women has been lobbying with the government the need to add a few targets of SDG 5 to the already prioritized goals and targets. Istanbul convention was signed but not ratified.
- UN Women and FAO work together to reach out to IDPs to encourage improvement of livelihood opportunities. FAO and UNDP are helping the government to develop a vision how to address the rural economy.
- UNICEF and UNPFA work together to implement MICS to fill in the data gaps in Georgia related to education, health and protection.
- UNECE is ready to provide a bridge to the statistical side of the SDGs work, if there is a need and request.
- The UN RC requested support on the work with the EU funding in the future.

- As the Batumi Initiative on Green Economy ([BIG-E](#)) has not received a voluntary commitment of Georgia, the UN RC was requested to follow up on this pledge.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- The members of the regional UN system will follow-up on specific requests from UNCT Georgia.
- UN Brussels Office will provide additional information and guidance on engaging with the EU partners.
- Issue-Based Coalitions will explore the opportunities for raising resources needed for joint programmes in Georgia.
- Information about ARC will be shared by DOCO and R-UNDG Secretariat, once available.
- UNFPA's suggestion on dedicating an RQR in 2017 to human rights and reproductive rights (on the example of Georgia) will be considered.

Item 10: THIRD UN CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT

UN Habitat briefed (via Skype) the regional UN system meeting participants on the [outcomes of the Habitat III Conference in Quito](#):

- The Conference witnessed strong participation of civil society and local authorities.
- The outcome is the New Urban Agenda and the Quito Implementation Plan (more than 100 commitments were made during the conference).
- Legislative background for Habitat III and the relation of New Urban Agenda to other global commitments was offered by the UN system, including on the structure of the New Urban Agenda document.
- Implementation of NUA and conceptual framework of the urban dimension of the SDGs were outlined.

During the discussion, the following points were raised:

- [Regional report](#) for Habitat III is available as draft and will be published soon.
- UNDP in Quito presented its own sustainable urbanization strategy and is looking to further cooperation.
- WHO informed on the launch of the publication how health can be improved in cities and announced the Environment and Health Conference in June 2017.
- Urbanization should be seen as a driver of transformative change, not a problem. This messaging should be clearly communicated to the RCs.
- There are various opportunities to use existing platforms for the implementation of the NUA in the region, including the Regional Forum in 2018 (when SDG 11 will be under in-depth review), the UNECE [Committee on Housing and Land Management](#), the [Ministerial Conference](#) on Environment and Health (13-15 June 2017, Ostrava, Czechia), the [Healthy Cities](#) movement and others.
- UN Habitat asked if there is merit in creating an Issue-Based Coalition on urban development: UN Habitat is keen on collaborating with existing platforms. UN Habitat is open to all proposals from sister agencies.

DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- Instead of establishing a stand-alone Issue-Based Coalition, issues of urban development shall be mainstreamed into the work of the existing Issue-Based Coalitions.

Item 11: EXPO-2017 ASTANA

Ms. Sultanoglu has been recently appointed by the UN Secretary-General as the UN Commissioner-General for EXPO-2017. She informed the participants about the preparations for the EXPO-2017 in Kazakhstan:

- The theme of EXPO-2017 is “Future Energy” and it will take place in Astana, Kazakhstan, during 10 June – 10 September 2017. The UN Commissioner has met with the Permanent Representative and Deputy Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan and DPI USG to discuss the preparations for the EXPO-2017.
- UN Resident Coordinator in Kazakhstan, who will act as the Deputy Commissioner for EXPO-2017, has been working with several UN agencies to start the preparations for the EXPO. Six kiosks will be available for the UN agencies (these were allocated to the agencies that had been originally invited to participate in the EXPO by Kazakhstan government) in an international organizations pavilion.
- Agreement between the UN and EXPO organizers outlining all duties and obligations of the host country and the UN is with the OLA for clearance. Shipment of materials and VIP travel for agency heads is expected to be paid by the host government.
- Since the appointment of the UN Commissioner is quite late in the process (normally, this is done 12-18 months in advance), letters were sent to the agencies who were invited by the Government of Kazakhstan to explore what has been planned and request nomination of the focal points.
- A special “UN Day” dedicated to the work of the United Nations, alongside the “National Days”, will be requested.

The discussion included the following points:

- FAO recommended contacting FAO Assistant Director General Fernanda Guerrieri who was in charge of closing EXPO-2015 in Milan, Italy, for lessons learned and recommendations.
- Letters that were sent to the agencies were requested to be shared with the Regional Directors.
- Information on further steps would be appreciated: not all agencies have received detailed communication from the UN RC.
- An Energy Ministerial on “*Meeting the challenges of sustainable energy*” will be held on the second day of the EXPO-2017 (11 June) under the auspices of the UNECE and hosted by the government of Kazakhstan.
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DECISIONS AND AGREED FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS:

- Agencies that are negotiating shared use of kiosks will inform the UN Commissioner.
- The UN Commissioner will visit Kazakhstan to further negotiate the preparations bi-laterally and will inform the Regional Directors of the progress achieved.

A web-conference between the UN Commissioner and the agencies’ focal points will be organized once the responses are received from the UN agencies.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ILO briefed the participants about the Regional Consultation on the Alliance SDG 8.7 “For a world without forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour”:

- In 2016-2017, Regional consultations are taking place in all regions. In Europe and Central Asia, Hungary will be hosting the regional consultations to be organized by ILO and OECD, potentially in collaboration with UNICEF based on further discussion.
- ILO expressed the request for support and participation of the UN agencies.

- The ILO Deputy Regional Director will act as a focal point for Regional Directors on all aspects of the Regional Consultations. The ILO Europe Office is coordinating the preparations.

ITU briefly presented (via skype) the [World Summit on the Information Society](#) planned for June 2017:

- ITU is a lead facilitator (along with UNESCO and UNDP) in coordinating the multi-stakeholder implementation of the *Geneva Plan of Action*.
- WSIS global framework and process timeline were presented.
- Most UN Regional Commissions in collaboration with other UN Agencies are working towards regional WSIS implementation reviews.
- The WSIS Forum in 2017 will involve more than 70 ICT ministers. There will be thematic workshops and country workshops together with Action Line Facilitation meetings and Innovation Track.

The outcomes of the Batumi Environment for Europe Ministerial Conference were briefly presented:

- UNEP and UNECE are cooperating on the implementation of the outcomes.
- The Conference adopted the Pan-European Strategic Framework for Greening the Economy as a universal tool to greening the economy across the region that is fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- There are still opportunities for UN agencies to submit voluntary commitments under the Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E) .
- UN agencies are requested to fill in a brief survey on their green economy activities by **4 January 2017**.

Dates and venues for the 2017 regional UN system meetings were discussed:

- UNECE will host the spring meeting on 11-12 May in Geneva;
- UNESCO will host the fall meeting on 19-20 October (tentatively) in Venice.

AGREEMENT ON THE NEXT STEPS & CLOSING REMARKS

The meeting was closed by Mr. Christian Friis Bach, UNECE Executive Secretary/ Chair RCM, and Ms. Cihan Sultanoglu, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Europe and the CIS/ Chair R-UNDG. The R-UNDG Chair also informed that the draft report of the work of R-UNDG will be prepared and shared in December 2016-January 2017, alongside the draft work plan for 2017.

AGENDA

5 DECEMBER 2016

Time	Item	Background
09:30-10:00	<i>Welcome Coffee</i>	
10:00-10:15	WELCOMING REMARKS BY HOST ORGANIZATIONS <i>Mr. Li Yong, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization</i> <i>Mr. Dazhu Yang, Deputy to the Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation of the International Atomic Energy Agency</i>	
10:15-10:30	OPENING <i>Mr. Christian Friis Bach, UNECE Executive Secretary/ Chair RCM</i> <i>Ms. Cihan Sultanoglu, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Europe and the CIS/ Chair R-UNDG</i>	
	GROUP PHOTO	
JOINT ADVOCACY AND OUTREACH		
11:00-11:45	Item 1: SDGs DIALOGUE WITH MEMBER STATES - <i>Update on the Dialogue “Moving from MDGs to SDGs in Europe and Central Asia: Untangling Complexity, Taking Action” (R-UNDG Chair)</i> - <i>Outreach to EU institutions and member states (RCM Chair, Director of UNDP's Representation Office in Brussels)</i> - <i>UNOG SDG Lab (RCM Chair)</i> - <i>Discussion over the next steps in dialogues with Member States</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary report on the Dialogue with Member States • European Commission Communication • UNOG SDG Lab
11:45-13:00	Item 2: UPDATE OF THE REGIONAL ADVOCACY PAPER - <i>Overall update on key parameters and elements (R-UNDG Chair)</i> - <i>Comments/discussion on the draft issue briefs (R-UNDG/RCM members)</i> - <i>Sharing/use of the updated Regional Advocacy Paper</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue Brief (IB) 1 (general); • IB 2 on population dynamics; • IB 3 on migration; • IB 4 on gender equality; • IB 5 on decent jobs for all; • IB 6 on social protection; • IB 7 on health; • IB 8 on education; • IB 9 on production patterns; • IB 10 on consumption patterns; • IB 11 on agriculture; • IB 12 on ecosystems; • IB 13 on governance; • IB 14 on partnerships.
13:00-14:00	<i>Lunch Break</i>	
COUNTRY SUPPORT		
14:00-14:30	Item 3: JOINT RETREAT ON SDGs IMPLEMENTATION - <i>Update on the SDGs retreat, conclusions and next steps (UNFPA and UN-Women)</i> - <i>Discussion on country-level needs and the support of the regional UN system</i>	Summary Report on the Retreat
14:30-15:15	Item 4: UNDAF ROLL-OUT AND IMPLEMENTATION - <i>Update on progress, results and challenges (PSG Co-Chairs)</i> - <i>Decision on rotation of a PSG Co-Chair (R-UNDG Chair)</i> - <i>Leveraging human rights in UNDAFs (OHCHR)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference of the Peer Support Group • Terms of Reference of the PSG Co-Convening Agency • Leveraging human rights through UNDAFs and Programming
15:15-15:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>	
INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION		

15:30-17:00	<p>Item 5: REPORTING BACK BY ISSUE-BASED COALITIONS</p> <p>Co-Convening Agencies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Health - Social Protection - Gender - Youth - Large Movements of People, Displacement and Resilience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBC on Health – Terms of Reference; • IBC on Health – First meeting report; • IBC on Social Protection – Terms of Reference; • IBC on Social Protection – Addendum. Roadmap for building an Issue Based Coalition; • IBC on Gender – Terms of Reference; • IBC on Gender – List of members; • IBC on Youth – Terms of Reference of the IBC on Youth; • IBC on Youth – Roadmap to an IBC; • IBC on the Large Movement of People, Displacement and Resilience – Terms of Reference;
17:00-17:45	<p>Item 6: REGIONAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on preparations for 2017 Regional Forum and involvement of regional UN system (RCM Chair) - Inter-agency cooperation on data and monitoring (RCM Chair) 	<p>Discussion Paper Regional Forum</p>
17:45-18:15	<p>Item 7: UN SPECIAL PROGRAMME FOR THE ECONOMIES OF CENTRAL ASIA (SPECA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on recent developments (RCM Chair) - Next steps (RCM Chair) 	<p>SPECA Ganja Declaration</p>
19:00-	<p>GROUP DINNER (Tempel Restaurant)</p>	
<p>6 DECEMBER 2016</p>		
08:30-09:00	<p><i>Welcome Coffee</i></p>	
<p>INTER-AGENCY COOPERATION (continued)</p>		
9:00-9:20	<p>Item 8: UPDATE ON QCPR RESOLUTION FOR 2016-2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on the first draft of QCPR resolution: main aspects (RCM Chair and R-UNDG Chair) - Update on the meeting between UNDG Chair, Executive Secretaries of Regional Economic Commissions and the R-UNDG Chairs (RCM Chair) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft QCPR resolution; • Summary of Key UNDG Proposals for a More Strategic and Dynamic QCPR Policy Response to an Ambitious and Transformative 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda • Minutes Meeting UNDG R-UNDG RECs
9:20-10:20	<p>Item 9: GEORGIA: SUPPORTING REFORM-ORIENTED EFFORTS BY THE GOVERNMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discussion with UN RC and UNCT (UN RC Georgia) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNPSD Georgia 2016-2020; • UN in Georgia - overview
10:20-11:00	<p>Item 10: THIRD UN CONFERENCE ON HOUSING AND SUSTAINABLE URBAN DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Update on Habitat III Conference on 17-20 October and follow-up (UN Habitat) 	<p>New Urban Agenda (Habitat III Outcome Document)</p>
11:00-11:30	<p>Item 11: EXPO-2017 Astana</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Theme, preparation and participation in the EXPO-2017 (UN Commissioner-General for Expo 2017) - Energy Ministerial Conference (RCM Chair) 	
11:30-12:15	<p>ANY OTHER BUSINESS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional Consultation on the Alliance SDG 8.7 “for a world without forced labour, modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour” (ILO) - World Summit on the Information Society – Regional Review (ITU) - Greening the Economy (UNEP, UNECE) - Next meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alliance 8.7 Vision Document; • Alliance 8.7 Factsheet; • Green Economy Framework
12:15-12:30	<p>AGREEMENT ON NEXT STEPS AND CLOSING REMARKS</p> <p>Ms. Cihan Sultanoglu, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Europe and the CIS/ Chair R-UNDG Mr. Christian Friis Bach, UNECE Executive Secretary/ Chair RCM</p>	

List of participants

RCM	Christian Friis Bach	Chair, UNECE Executive Director
R-UNDG	Cihan Sultanoglu	Chair, UNDP Assistant Administrator, Regional Director/Bureau for Europe and the CIS
UNDP	Olivier Adam	Deputy Regional Director of the Bureau for Europe and CIS
UNFPA	Alanna Armitage	Regional Director for Eastern Europe and Central Asia
UNICEF	Marie-Pierre Poirier	Regional Director for Central, Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States
UN Women	Ingibjorg Gisladottir	Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia
ILO	Heinz Koller	Regional Director for Europe and Central Asia
UNAIDS	Vinay Patrick Saldanha	Director of the Regional Support Team for Europe and Central Asia
UNESCO	Ana Luiza Thompson-Flores	Director of the Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe
UNOPS	Moin Karim	Director for Europe and Central Asia Region
IAEA	Martin Krause	Director, Division for Europe
UNEP	Jan Dusik	Director and Regional Representative for Europe
UNIDO	Jacek Cukrowski	Chief of the Regional Division for Europe and Central Asia, Department of Regional Programmes and Field Representation
IOM	Argentina Szabados	Regional Director, Office for South-Eastern Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia and Liaison Office to the UN and other International Organizations in Vienna
FAO	Cristina Amaral	Deputy Regional Representative for Europe and Central Asia
UNHCR	Diane Goodman	Deputy Director of the Regional Bureau for Europe
ILO	Rie Vejs-Kjeldgaard	Deputy Regional Director
	Daniel Smith	Regional Programming Officer
WHO	Piroska Ostlin	Director, Division of Policy and Governance for Health and Well-being
	Bettina Menne	Coordinator sustainable development
	Marija Kishman	Strategic Desk Officer
WFP	Carl Paulsson	Head of Programme & Policy
UNICEF	Nele Bostoen	Planning Officer
OHCHR	Hulan Tsedev	OHCHR Head of the Europe and Central Asia
ITU	Ilaha Rzayeva	Programme officer
UNECE	Monika Linn	Principal Advisor to the Executive Secretary
	Michael Kunz	Economic Affairs Officer
R-UNDG Secretariat	Liudmila Barcari	Regional Coordination Specialist
	Olena Ovchynnikova	Regional Coordination Specialist

United Nations Brussels Office	Barbara Pesce-Monteiro	Director, United Nations Brussels Office
	Anna Leichtfried	UN Coordinator Specialist, Brussels Office

Participating online

UN Habitat	Paulius Kulikaukas	Chief (Ag), Office for Europe and European Institutions
OHCHR	Gianni Magazzeni	Chief, Americas and Europe and Central Asia Branch, Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division
United Nations in Georgia	Niels Scott	UN Resident Coordinator
	UN Country Team Members	<p>UNDP Mr. Shombi Sharp, Deputy Resident Representative</p> <p>UNICEF Ms. Laila Omar Gad, Representative</p> <p>WHO Mr. Marijan Ivanusa, Representative</p> <p>UN Women Ms. Tamar Sabedashvili, Deputy Country Representative</p> <p>UNFPA Ms. Lela Bakradze, Assistant Representative</p> <p>FAO Ms. Ia Mirazanashvili, Programme Assistant</p> <p>UNIDO Mr. Giorgi Todua, National Consultant</p> <p>UNRGID Ms. Irina Yegorova, Political Affairs Officer</p> <p>OHCHR Mr. Vladimir Shkolnikov, Senior HR Adviser for South Caucasus</p> <p>UN Ms. Ann-Sofie Hellgren, Special Assistant to UN RC</p> <p>UN Mr. David Mushkudiani, UN Coordination Officer</p>
ITU	Gitanjali Sah	Policy Analyst
	Joanna Brooks	Consultant to facilitate the update of the Regional Advocacy Paper