



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14 March 2014

Excellency,

Following my letter of 14 January, 2014 informing of the availability of the Concept Notes for the High-level Events and Thematic Debates that I am convening over the next few months, I have the pleasure to send you the provisional program and the background note for the General Assembly and ECOSOC joint Thematic Debate/Forum on Partnerships on “The role of partnerships in the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda”. Both documents are also available on my website at <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/68/events/>

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John W. Ashe".

John W. Ashe

To all Permanent Representatives
and Permanent Observers
to the United Nations

Provisional Program

GENERAL ASSEMBLY and ECOSOC JOINT THEMATIC DEBATE/FORUM ON PARTNERSHIPS "The role of partnerships in the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda"

9 and 10 April 2014

Wednesday, 9 April 2014

10:00 am – 11:00 am	Opening Session H. E. Mr. John Ashe, President of the General Assembly H.E. Mr. Martin Sajdik, President of ECOSOC H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations Civil Society Representative Keynote address
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<i>Harnessing partnerships to implement the MDGs and the Post-2015 development goals"</i>	
11:00 am – 1:00 pm	Panel Discussion 1: Realizing the MDGs: Building on Key Partnership Opportunities and the Way Forward
3:00 pm - 4:30 pm	Panel Discussion 2: Collaborating with businesses, foundations, civil society and other actors in support of the Post-2015 Development Agenda
4:30 pm - 6:00 pm	Panel Discussion 3: Towards a more effective framework for monitoring the implementation of global development goals

Thursday, 10 April 2014

<i>Partnerships Opportunities for building productive capacity</i>	
10:00 am – 1:00 pm	Panel Discussion 4: Scaling up partnerships opportunities in food and nutritional security and marine resources
3:00 pm – 5:30 pm	Panel Discussion 5: Scaling up partnerships opportunities in sustainable infrastructure
5:30 pm - 5:45 pm	Address: Imagining Future Partnerships in the Post-2015 era
5:45 pm - 6:00 pm	Closing Session H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations H.E. Mr. Martin Sajdik, President of ECOSOC H. E. Mr. John Ashe, President of the General Assembly

BACKGROUND NOTE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND ECOSOC JOINT THEMATIC DEBATE/FORUM ON PARTNERSHIPS

“The role of partnerships in the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda”

9 and 10 April 2014

9 April 2014

The panel discussions are intended to provide a platform for member states to address how strengthened global partnerships for sustainable development, including multi-stakeholder partnerships, can contribute to the implementation of the post 2015 development agenda. It is intended to promote the scaling-up of the impact of all forms of cooperation in the post 2015 development agenda, and promote the urgent implementation of existing commitments under the global partnership for development while also addressing the emerging role of innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Panel 1: Realizing the MDGs: Building on key partnership opportunities and the way forward

Partnerships among Governments, business, civil society, foundations, international organizations and individuals have played a critical role in accelerating the achievement of the MDGs. The urgency of achieving the MDGs by 2015 has inspired innovation by creating, for example, new partnership models, new and innovative sources of financing as an adjunct to official development assistance and trade, new uses of technology, and new ways of building capacity and engaging with low-income communities to increase access to basic services. Further leveraging these innovative approaches will be critical to the successful conclusion to the MDGs. We must also draw on these partnership experiences as we look to the strategic formulation and approach of multi-stakeholder participation to deliver on the post-2015 development agenda. As we talk about a renewed global partnership for development, the task at hand is to move beyond consideration of financial flows only and adopt a larger vision which encompasses resources intended as innovation, technology, research, human capacity, and more.

Panel 2: Collaborating with businesses, foundations, civil society and other actors in support of the Post-2015 Development Agenda

Implementing a unified and universal Post-2015 development agenda that is broader in scope will require additional capacity and mobilization of resources. The role of the private sector, philanthropy, and civil society has dramatically expanded in size, sophistication, and global reach. These players are pivotal in bringing to the table innovative methods and strengthened tools for leveraging funding, creating decent employment, technology, innovation and research. As Member States work toward a shared vision for a post-2015 development agenda, further exploring in particular the role of private sector engagement to accelerate the achievement of the future development agenda may offer valuable insights. It would be important to create an enabling policy and institutional environment, including incentives that would lead to stronger engagement and involvement by the businesses, foundations and other actors to ensure the success of the new Development Agenda in the post-2015 era.

Panel 3: Towards a more effective framework for monitoring the implementation of global development goals

A robust monitoring and accountability mechanism will be critical for the successful implementation of the Post-2015 Development agenda. The lack of an effective framework is often seen as one of the explanatory factors for gaps in MDG implementation. These mechanisms can help ensure that shared values, goals and resources are upheld and that stakeholders, including governments, commit to inclusive and sustainable development. Engaging with a diverse mix of stakeholders through partnership efforts also allows for shared decision-making and responsibilities to enhance transparency, credibility and legitimacy. The architecture of accountability frameworks needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the diverse nature of partnerships and partners. Sharing of lessons learned and further exploring ways to engage diverse constituencies is critical to deepen the understanding of the challenges and opportunities to advance best practices in partnering. The session will address gender, human rights and peacebuilding issues, where relevant.

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These panel discussions will provide a link between the interactive multi-stakeholder policy discussions of 9 April 2014 with the more solutions and outcome-oriented discussion of 10 April 2014. The objective of these roundtable discussions is to generate ideas and concrete solutions for specific sustainable development challenges through multi-stakeholder partnerships, with special attention to SIDS, LLDCs, LDCs and MICs. The outcomes of those discussions will help inform major conferences being held in 2014, namely the Third Conference for Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States of SIDS which will be held in Samoa from 1-4 September 2014, the Ministerial Conference on New Partnerships for the Development of Productive Capacities of LDCs to be hosted by the Government of Benin in July 2014 and the Comprehensive Ten-Year Review Conference of the Almaty Programme of Action to be held 3-5 November 2014 in Vienna, Austria."

Panel 4: "Scaling up partnership opportunities in food and nutritional security and marine resources"

According to FAO, 842 million or one in eight people suffer hunger every day. The costs to society include lost productivity, health, well-being, decreased learning ability and overall reduced fulfillment of human potential. Malnutrition is associated with food insecurity, is particularly impactful on the unborn and young children, leading to impaired cognitive development and stunting. Eradicating food and nutritional insecurity must begin with increasing investment in food and agricultural investment. Fisheries and aquaculture also a vital source of food and therefore the unsustainable use of marine resources should also be addressed. Investing in "Blue Growth" and ensuring the sustainable management and use of aquatic resources is particularly important for small island developing states (SIDS). Solutions to food and nutritional security also rests on creating non-farm rural employment opportunities and promoting rural development while at the same time strengthening the resilience of farming systems and food supplies to climate change. While there is no magic wand, public-private partnerships are indispensable to bringing science, technology, financing and capacity building to tackle food and nutritional insecurity. Examples of multi-stakeholder partnerships of a public-private sector nature include the Zero Hunger Challenge and Scaling up Nutrition Movement as well as the Global Partnerships for Oceans.

Panel 5: “Scaling up partnership opportunities in sustainable infrastructure”

Infrastructure is a core component of sustainable development and for most countries a key enabler for generating economic growth and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) as well as future development goals. The quality and quantity of infrastructure of a country determines its capacity to produce, the level of productivity of its economic activities, and the capacity to compete and trade in international markets. The construction and maintenance of hard or physical infrastructure such as (i) transport infrastructure, including roads, railways, airlines, ports, border crossing facilities etc., (ii) energy infrastructure, (iii) information and communications technology infrastructure, and (iv) urban planning, water management systems, waste management systems, amongst others, creates an enabling environment for sustainable and inclusive growth. This is particularly relevant for certain vulnerable groups of countries, such as landlocked developing countries, which face acute infrastructure problems affecting transport efficiency often resulting in high transit transportation costs. One of the challenges to developing sustainable infrastructure is the substantial outlay and continued use of financial, human and natural resources. Another significant limitation is the lack of integration of environmental and social aspects into all stages of infrastructure development, from planning, financing, building to management and operation. Partnerships can play an important role in helping to address such challenges and limitations, and should therefore be an integral part of sustainable infrastructure development in developing countries. They are also important for identifying new and innovative sources of financing that is critical for successful resource mobilisation for infrastructure development.