



# Chief Executives Board for Coordination

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

(United Nations Children's Fund, Global Supply and Logistics  
Hub, Copenhagen, 3 October 2023)

### I. Introduction

1. The High-level Committee on Programmes (HLCP) of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) held its forty-sixth session at the Global Supply and Logistics Hub of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in Copenhagen on 3 October 2023. The agenda of the session and the list of participants are contained in annexes I and II, respectively, to the present report.

2. The Chair of the Committee, the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Inger Andersen, greeted members and expressed warm appreciation to UNICEF for generously hosting the meeting. The Director of the Supply Division of UNICEF, Leila Pakkala, delivered brief welcoming remarks.

3. In opening the session, the Chair recognized that the Committee was convening just two weeks following the conclusion of the high-level meetings of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly, held at United Nations Headquarters, and that the session was thus an opportunity to reflect on what had happened when the world's leaders had gathered in New York. Citing widespread expectations about the reform of the United Nations, the Security Council and the international financial architecture, she emphasized that the upcoming Summit of the Future in September 2024 would be a pivotal moment for multilateralism. The Chair observed that the Committee had demonstrated its ability to tap into the resources and knowledge of its members and their respective organizations to support the Secretary-General's vision, in particular concerning the Common Agenda, and that it would continue to do so. She also pointed out that, at the high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (Sustainable Development Goals Summit) on 18 and 19 September 2023, it had been recognized that progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals had fallen short; she stressed that HLCP had a role to play in helping to reverse that trajectory. Setting the tone for the discussion, the Chair recalled the value of the Committee as a platform for strategic collective thinking, which helped the Secretary-General and CEB to address complex issues, and therefore invited members to contribute from that broader perspective.



4. In presenting the session agenda for adoption by the Committee, the Chair indicated that HLCP would have an opportunity to reflect on the outcomes of the high-level week of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly and to consider how it could best contribute to the follow-up to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the preparatory ministerial meeting for the Summit of the Future. The Committee would continue to review the work carried out under its strategic narrative on duties to the future and international data governance. Members would also discuss promoting system-wide coherence on internal displacement.

## **II. Reflection on the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the preparatory ministerial meeting for the Summit of the Future**

5. Turning to the reflection on the Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the preparatory ministerial meeting for the Summit of the Future, held in September 2023, the Chair reminded members that the objective of the discussion was to consider key takeaways from those processes and explore the implications for the wider United Nations system and work of HLCP. The insights would be useful in the light of the Committee's efforts to support the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and would serve as an enabling force for some of the transformative ideas that had been put forward by the Secretary-General in his report entitled "Our Common Agenda" ([A/75/982](#)). The Chair recounted some key moments in the lead-up to and during the two high-level events and highlighted some salient elements in the outcome documents (General Assembly resolution [78/1](#) and General Assembly decision [77/568](#)). She recognized the complexities with which the multilateral system was confronted, as well as the opportunities and challenges that could be expected in 2024. She welcomed the presenters, the Acting Director of the Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Neil Pierre, and the Director for the Our Common Agenda team in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, Michèle Griffin, and invited them to share their assessments and observations in relation to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the prospects for the Summit of the Future in 2024.

6. Reflecting on the outcomes of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit specifically and the high-level week more broadly, Mr. Pierre shared a number of key takeaways. Recognizing that a political declaration had been adopted by consensus at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit and subsequently by the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, he highlighted its strong focus on bolstering the multilateral system, with the United Nations at the core. While Member States acknowledged that multilateralism was the cornerstone for achieving the 2030 Agenda and recommitted to delivering on the Goals, he noted that a specific plan to get the Goals back on track had not been articulated in the political declaration. It did, however, send a strong political signal, in particular with respect to financing for sustainable development, with provisions on the reform of the international financial system to support sustainable development. The Secretary-General's Sustainable Development Goals stimulus package was also welcomed in the political declaration.

7. At the same time, there had been points of divergence during the high-level week, such as the call by some countries for more resources to implement the Goals, which contrasted with the appeal by another group of countries for more efficient use of resources. Many countries had also stressed the need to redress inequalities and address historical and systemic injustices, including in relation to climate, which, Mr. Pierre reported, had been a recurrent theme throughout the Sustainable

Development Goals Summit. In that context, strong support had been voiced for the Bridgetown Initiative for the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture, as well as for the implementation of a loss and damage fund, as agreed upon at the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. He expected that the various issues would continue to be discussed in intergovernmental forums, including during the forthcoming meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund, as urged by the Secretary-General.

8. Mr. Pierre highlighted the achievements of the Sustainable Development Goals Action Weekend, which had preceded the Sustainable Development Goals Summit and featured robust engagement from civil society, including the voices of young people and women. The event had resulted in the launch of a series of high-impact initiatives that were supported by United Nations system entities and had garnered substantial attention and support. He observed that the next task was to scale up those initiatives and engage more countries.

9. Lastly, Mr. Pierre shared the intentions of the President of the Economic and Social Council to utilize the 2024 session of the Council to translate the political direction and commitments from the Sustainable Development Goals Summit into policy guidance and practical actions to support countries in advancing the implementation of the Goals. Other important upcoming opportunities to champion a rescue plan for the Goals included the Summit of the Future, the fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and a potential world social summit in 2025.

10. Ms. Griffin then offered insights on the implementation of Our Common Agenda and the lead-up to the 2024 Summit of the Future. She observed that while the Sustainable Development Goals Summit had been about the “what”, that is, agreed goals and commitments, the Summit of the Future would centre on the “how”, namely the big changes that would be needed to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals and address emerging threats and opportunities.

11. She observed that, during the high-level week, Member States were aligned on the need to improve global governance and on the scope of the Summit of the Future, which had been recently adopted by the General Assembly. Ms. Griffin reported that participation in the preparatory ministerial meeting had been strong, with more than 120 countries represented at the ministerial level, including the five permanent members of the Security Council. Countries were becoming increasingly engaged in the process leading up to the Summit of the Future. She further observed that there was a greater sense of urgency, welcoming the engagement being focused on substance (rather than modalities), and that there was growing momentum on a number of issues, including the Goals, reform of the international financial architecture, financing for sustainable development, digital cooperation, reform of the Security Council and peace and security matters. The issue of the governance of new domains, for example biosecurity, artificial intelligence, outer space and cybersecurity, was also receiving growing attention. Some of those areas offered the potential for common ground between the global North and the global South and/or across many countries, but there were also some issues, such as questions about the intergovernmental character of the United Nations versus ideas to enhance “multi-stakeholderism” that would be difficult to navigate.

12. There was a general understanding that the Summit of the Future would support the delivery of the Goals and an agreed path towards adopting “A Pact for the Future”. Some political fault lines had, however, been observed during various international negotiations and were expected to come into play during the negotiations. Ms. Griffin cited challenging geopolitical dynamics, but underscored that there had been positive

and constructive signals with potential for common ground to re-emerge. The very nature of the focus of the Summit, namely new, complex and fluid issues, presented some challenges. In that regard, Ms. Griffin underlined the role of the United Nations system in clarifying the issues and highlighting the benefits of seizing the opportunities afforded by the Summit.

13. Ms. Griffin concluded with an overview of the next steps, including plans for the reappointment of co-facilitators by the President of the General Assembly and consultations on the five chapters of “A Pact for the Future”. Stressing that the Summit of the Future was a once-in-a-career opportunity to help to shape global governance, she underlined that the Secretary-General appreciated the support of the entire United Nations system, at the global, regional and country levels, in advocating for the proposals put forward in the policy briefs and providing support to Governments in their engagement in the Summit.

14. In the course of their discussion, members expressed satisfaction with a range of outcomes of the high-level week, such as the strong reflection of environmental issues in the political declaration, as well as the dedicated language on gender equality in both the political declaration and the elements for “A Pact for the Future”, strong statements linking peace and development, productive engagement at the Climate Ambition Summit and growing recognition of the potential of sustainable and inclusive digital technologies to accelerate progress towards the Goals. They also pointed to other recent intergovernmental achievements that had showcased effective multilateralism. While appreciating the strong messaging and intentions expressed by Member States during the high-level week, it was observed that challenges remained in terms of the implementation of the outcomes.

15. Looking ahead, a range of potentially impactful outcomes of the Summit of the Future were anticipated, for example relating to the reform of the international financial architecture; financing for development; progress beyond gross domestic product; a better integration of peace, prevention, development and human rights issues in the context of the consideration of a New Agenda for Peace; and agreement on issues such as intergenerational justice and responsibility in the context of the Declaration on Future Generations. Members also identified the issues that they felt were missing or needed to be strengthened in the context of the Summit, including the environment, climate change, human rights, gender equality, global public goods, culture, displacement, legal migration pathways, demographics, remittances and transport. Acknowledging that not all the initiatives would necessarily be reflected in the final “A Pact for the Future” or be formalized as a result of the Summit, the process, nevertheless, provided an important platform for giving visibility to issues that could be taken forward in other relevant contexts after the conclusion of the Summit. It was also stressed that adaptability in the follow-up to and implementation of the Summit and beyond would be important, given the scale, speed and nature of change.

16. Members highlighted various upcoming global and regional meetings and events that presented opportunities to reinforce and boost some of the key issues and proposals ahead of the Summit of the Future, as well as to reinforce the sense of urgency to meet the Goals. They agreed that a joint narrative from the United Nations system would be valuable, given that it could serve to advance key messages, such as the imperative to leave no one behind and the need to integrate the climate and development agendas. Without downplaying the challenges, the importance of conveying positivity in the narrative was stressed. It was suggested that the narrative could help to articulate the complementarities between topics and common messages coming out of various intergovernmental processes and events to help stakeholders to digest more easily the large amounts of information. In the context of the Summit of the Future, the importance of widening stakeholder conversations, in particular with

civil society, was stressed, as was recognizing and leveraging the interest of local and subnational governments in multilateral cooperation. Regional organizations could also be useful advocates and champions in that respect. It was mentioned that the co-facilitators of the Summit were supportive of the organization by the United Nations Secretariat of a civil society conference in the global South in 2024; the engagement of all United Nations system entities would be welcomed.

17. Members enumerated ways in which their organizations were contributing substantively to the preparations for the Summit of the Future and supporting actions to support the 2030 Agenda. Members felt that HLCP should continue to come together as a system around key issues, as it had recently done in the areas of progress beyond gross domestic product and finance. It was highlighted that the Committee had an opportunity to help to keep the issue of future generations central in the lead-up to the Summit and to support the realization of intergenerational equity and justice, by building on the work of the Core Group on Duties to the Future of HLCP.

18. At the close of the discussion, Mr. Pierre reacted to questions and observations. At the request of a member, he elaborated on the proposal for a world social summit, indicating that it was anticipated to be discussed by the Third Committee of the General Assembly before the end of 2023, and he encouraged entities to express their support for it. In the meantime, the inclusion of the Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for Just Transitions in the political declaration was a positive signal. He further observed that the topic of data and digitalization had attracted considerable political attention during the high-level week, including at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session, which was another positive indication that work on those issues, including in the context of HLCP and the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM), was bearing fruit. Finally, he underscored that the political declaration had contained a number of provisions relating to the environment, which would have to be actualized through the follow-up and implementation thereof.

19. In her closing remarks, Ms. Griffin addressed questions relating to the inclusion of additional topics in “A Pact for the Future”. She recalled that the Summit of the Future was meant to have a focused outcome that was aimed at filling gaps in global governance. Issues, therefore, for which there was an existing governance regime or international agreement were not expected to be addressed. Member States had made deliberate decisions regarding the scope of the Summit on the basis of that logic. It was up to Member States to take negotiations forward with a view to adopting “A Pact for the Future”, using the Secretary-General’s policy briefs available to them as input, alongside other material, such as the report of the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. Ms. Griffin reaffirmed that HLCP collectively, as well as individual organizations, could help by projecting a unified narrative and common messaging on the Summit. Key meetings and events in the lead-up to the Summit would be important opportunities in that regard.

20. Concluding the reflection, the Chair observed that the Secretary-General had launched the journey towards the Summit of the Future at the beginning of his mandate, having understood that it was necessary to reform multilateralism and the international architecture. The way forward was in the hands of Member States. The Committee reaffirmed its commitment to thinking together and lending its system-wide reach, analytical capacity and subject matter expertise to support and contribute to the process towards the Summit of the Future, and to striving to support the reinvigorated implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

### III. Progress under the Committee's strategic narrative

#### A. Duties to the future

21. The Chair invited the Committee to turn its attention to the review of progress under its strategic narrative and the first item thereunder, namely duties to the future. Emphasizing the need to adopt a more intergenerational vision, she recalled the work that had been advanced on the topic since the forty-second session of the Committee. Most recently, at its forty-fifth session, HLCP had approved the United Nations System Common Principles on Future Generations, which was subsequently endorsed by CEB, and supported the recommendation of the Core Group on Duties to the Future to unpack and operationalize them. The Chair noted the importance of considering the Common Principles on Future Generations in the work of every entity and beyond, including in intergovernmental processes and the development of policy recommendations.

22. Expressing her appreciation for the work of the Core Group on Duties to the Future and welcoming the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization as a fourth co-lead, the Chair introduced the Executive Officer/Strategic Coordination Officer of the Office of the Director of the Bureau of Strategic Planning at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Caroline Siebold; the Head of Frontiers in Environmental Law Unit of the Law Division at UNEP, Andrew Raine; the Chief of Foresight and Policy at UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti, Jasmina Byrne; and the Head of the Geneva Office of the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research, Adam Day. She also acknowledged the contribution and support of the Environmental Law Specialist of the Frontiers in Environmental Law Unit of the Law Division at UNEP, Juliana Almeida.

23. Ms. Siebold presented an update on the status of the work of the Core Group on Duties to the Future and an outlook of the activities that had been planned, building on the Common Principles, for feedback from the Committee. Underlining the importance of linking the work of the Core Group and the Common Principles to future-oriented work in the United Nations system, the acceleration of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and the preparations for the Summit of the Future, she recalled interactions with the co-facilitators of the Declaration on Future Generations; the Strategic Foresight Network of HLCP, which was transitioning into a community of practice in support of the transformation towards United Nations 2.0; the resident coordinator system and United Nations country teams; and the members of the sister committee of HLCP, HLCM. In support of its overall objective of enhancing a United Nations system-wide understanding of and approach on future generations, the Core Group had agreed to pursue three main mutually supportive activities, subject to the feedback from the Committee: (a) the preparation of a set of frequently asked questions; (b) the drafting of a commentary on the human rights dimension of the Common Principles, in particular on promoting a vision for future generations based on human rights and equity; and (c) the elaboration of a series of thematic deep dives that could highlight the application of the Common Principles in various sectoral and practical contexts. Building on the fifth and eighth principles, namely to ensure meaningful representation of future generations and their interests and to strengthen inclusive partnerships and global cooperation, the thematic deep dives would be aimed at bringing together actors from within and outside the United Nations system to discuss topics such as transforming education systems, future-oriented ocean science, agrifood systems and anticipatory policymaking. Noting that the deep dives could also serve to further socialize the Common Principles and future-oriented concerns among United Nations system

entities and in various thematic contexts, Ms. Siebold invited entities to submit an expression of interest to contribute to that activity.

24. In his presentation of the draft frequently asked questions, Mr. Raine observed that the aim of the document was primarily to provide conceptual clarity with a view to developing a common language within the United Nations system for complex issues and concepts associated with future generations as entities started to unpack and operationalize the Common Principles. It was also considered a means of supporting Member States in their normative deliberations on the topic of future generations and intergenerational equity. Expanding on the content of the draft frequently asked questions, Mr. Raine emphasized the important relationship between the concepts of future generations and intergenerational equity, and highlighted related concepts, such as intergenerational solidarity, responsibility and justice with their nuanced meanings and implications. He emphasized that the intention of the Core Group on Duties to the Future was to further unpack and explore the human rights dimension of future generations and to link the work to ongoing initiatives on futures literacy and strategic foresight. Mr. Raine welcomed the Committee's feedback on how to improve the draft frequently asked questions.

25. Complementing the presentations, Ms. Byrne echoed the interest expressed by the co-leads in receiving guidance and direction from HLCP members on the work of the Core Group. She expressed interest in hearing their views on whether the Common Principles could be translated into policy, how to best engage with Member States and civil society in the lead-up to the Summit of the Future and beyond, and whether a dedicated event could serve to showcase the Common Principles in the context of the Summit of the Future. Recalling that the recommendations of the High-level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism included future-proofing multilateralism, Mr. Day offered the support of the United Nations University in co-organizing an event, which would provide an opportunity to connect the work of the Advisory Board and the Common Principles.

26. In the subsequent discussion, members commended the work of the Core Group on Duties to the Future, which demonstrated the relevance and leadership of the United Nations in that area and merited being made available to a broader public. The frequently asked questions were viewed as a valuable tool for communicating and sharing knowledge about the topic. It was proposed to develop a shorter version of the frequently asked questions or a glossary of terms. Clear messaging was needed to highlight that caring for future generations did not imply taking away from current generations. In the process of refining the frequently asked questions, it was recommended that the relationship between young people, children and future generations be further unpacked and that the aspect of intergenerational justice also be considered as it related to past generations. The frequently asked questions and thematic deep dives were considered to be complementary, with the frequently asked questions serving to provide greater conceptual clarity and the thematic deep dives illustrating the broad practical relevance of the Common Principles, while at the same time creating space to grapple with the complexity of the topic. Youth engagement, cities of the future, the future of work, gender equality and unpaid care work, forced displacement, transport and mobility, industrial transformation, digital inclusion and capabilities, and artificial intelligence were proposed as potential topics for the thematic deep dives, in addition to those that had been identified by the Core Group.

27. The proposal to translate the Common Principles into policy and specific action was welcomed as an important contribution to thinking, planning and acting with future generations in mind. In that context, the importance of considering future risk and possible unintended consequences when taking policy decisions and making investments was stressed. Decisions and investments must be aligned with efforts to avoid locking existing inequalities and injustices in for future generations and had to

be considered in a past-present-future continuum. The relevance of indigenous knowledge systems was highlighted in that regard. Reflecting further on how to unpack the Common Principles at different levels, attention was drawn to the need to move towards the practical application thereof at the country level and to consider how the United Nations could be accountable for the commitment to future generations in a context where budgeting and planning were often constrained by shorter time frames. A road map with clear guidance was proposed to support national Governments translate normative commitments to future generations into practical policy changes.

28. To help realize the Common Principles, it was recommended that United Nations system entities foster staff capacities to integrate them into policy and programming work and learn from cases where their integration had already taken place. Collecting practical examples of the application of the Common Principles within the United Nations system was also considered to be important for inspiring and informing work and accelerating their uptake. Linkages between the Common Principles and Our Common Agenda policy brief 11, “UN 2.0 – forward-thinking culture and cutting-edge skills for better United Nations system impact” ([A/77/CRP.1/Add.10](#)) were drawn, thus highlighting mutually reinforcing aspects in terms of the recognition of open science, data, strategic foresight, futures thinking and the future workforce of the United Nations. Members stressed the multiple dimensions in which strategic foresight and futures thinking could inform the understanding of the rights of future generations, as they related to the environment, the climate emergency and biodiversity crisis, youth engagement and emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence.

29. In their response to the discussion, the co-leads expressed appreciation for the constructive feedback received and for the rich expressions of interest by entities to contribute to the thematic deep dives. On the basis of the guidance received, they would continue to seek opportunities to link the work on duties to the future under HLCP to intergovernmental processes, further unpack the Common Principles, including by exploring connections with the work of the Futures Laboratory network, and seek specific and practical examples of how the Common Principles were being applied. They acknowledged the importance of enabling discourse about future generations, a green transition and notions of trust, the social contract and broader social fabric, existing marginalization, equality and inherited injustices.

30. In concluding, the Chair emphasized the importance of connecting the work with the Summit of the Future and beyond. She noted that the feedback received would be included in the next iteration of the frequently asked questions, which would be made publicly available once the first iteration was finalized. The Chair encouraged members to familiarize themselves with and use the vocabulary, in order to help to disseminate it within their entities with a view to applying the same language across the United Nations system.

### **Conclusion**

**31. The Committee welcomed the next steps and planned activities of the Core Group on Duties to the Future and requested that the Core Group incorporate members’ feedback and suggestions into the next iteration of the frequently asked questions.**

## **B. New global public goods: international data governance**

32. The Chair invited members to turn their attention to the agenda item entitled “New global public goods: international data governance” and the draft document on



“Normative foundations for an international data governance framework: goals and principles” prepared by the HLCP working group on international data governance. The draft had been developed in response to the request by the Committee at its forty-fifth session for the working group to “explore the normative foundations of an international data governance framework, with a view towards developing international data governance principles grounded in human rights and sustainable development that promote accountability, agility and fairness” (CEB/2023/4). It also served as a follow-up to the paper entitled “International data governance: pathways to progress” (CEB/2023/1/Add.2), which had been approved by HLCP at its forty-fifth session and subsequently endorsed by CEB. Noting the trend towards increasing digitalization in the world, the Chair emphasized the importance of international data governance, which had implications for all entities. She also noted the linkage between data governance and the governance of artificial intelligence, in particular the impact of data on artificial intelligence in terms of biases, inequalities, human rights infringements and gender exclusion. She expressed her appreciation to the working group for preparing the document and invited the co-leads, the Director of Data and Analytics at the World Health Organization, Stephen MacFeely, and the Chief of the Research and Trend Analysis Branch of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Angela Me, to present it.

33. Mr. MacFeely updated the members on the progress that had been made since the approval of “International data governance: pathways to progress” and then introduced the document. Within the context of a rapidly changing data and digital landscape, the draft document, to be read together with “International data governance: pathways to progress”, outlined a proposed set of universal goals and principles that would serve as the normative foundations for an international data governance framework. Those goals and principles were intended to be adaptable and to foster consistency across actors and countries, while at the same time building on globally recognized frameworks, such as human rights law and the Sustainable Development Goals, under the broad chapeau of data stewardship. He explained that the principles were organized under three overarching goals, namely: value, to maximize the value of data across all relevant domains and all pillars of the work of the United Nations; trust, to ensure trust across the data life cycle and to prevent harm and misuse; and equity, to increase access to data and promote an equitable distribution of the benefits thereof. All three goals applied to the full data life cycle, including collection, extraction, storage and processing, and at all levels.

34. Ms. Me emphasized that the work did not occur in a vacuum. Instead, it built on current data governance literature and earlier work by the working group. Existing normative instruments, in particular human rights law and the Principles for the Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in the United Nations System, had informed the development of the principles. Noting the linkages between data and artificial intelligence, Ms. Me emphasized the foundational importance of data for the development, adoption and use of artificial intelligence systems. It was, therefore, crucial that data governance was aligned with the values, goals and principles outlined in the document. Acknowledging the importance of stakeholder engagement, consultations were seen as a way forward to further refine the goals and principles. Members were encouraged to provide guidance on follow-up actions that would provide additional support to Member States in the area of international data governance, including in the lead-up to the Summit of the Future.

35. In the ensuing discussion, the Committee supported the overarching goals of value, trust and equity, as well as the principles contained in the document and the need for global data governance more broadly. The exponential growth in the volume of data, rapid advancement in artificial intelligence and ongoing digitalization had outpaced the development of laws, cybersecurity measures and data protection. The

continuously changing landscape of data, including the impact of artificial intelligence and other emerging technologies, was noted by several members, and many referred to the evolution within their respective organizations towards knowledge-based and, therefore, data-based organizations, further underlining the need to develop international data governance and expand data capacities.

36. Recalling the joint session of HLCP and HLCM on the use and governance of artificial intelligence and related frontier technologies to be held on 4 October 2023, members recognized the importance of linking the discussions on data governance and the governance of artificial intelligence. Artificial intelligence was seen as having changed the data universe, given that text, images and metadata were all forms of data that were being processed on a massive scale. Data collection had also changed, with much of the data being gathered and owned by the private sector. Given the impact of artificial intelligence on the data universe and on data collection, it was suggested that, to the extent possible, the principles be aligned with the Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence.

37. Within the changing context of data governance, members called for a balance between two important objectives, namely protecting human rights and privacy and unlocking data for decision-making. The diversity of data held by the United Nations system, with its varying levels of data sensitivity and differing mandates, drew further attention to the challenge of striking the right balance between protecting data and making data openly accessible. Aside from data that were made publicly available, the enhanced interoperability of data across the United Nations system was also seen as important, and the development of standards and principles were viewed as one approach for preventing fragmentation.

38. Members appreciated that a human rights-based approach had been applied to the principles, including the principle of self-identification. Owing to the variety of impacts of data on human rights, it was underscored that the approach taken to manage the entire data life cycle needed to uphold human rights as well as the goals and principles outlined in the document. The issue of the specific rights and interests of children was also raised, given that children were often not in a position to make determinations and required others to act in their best interests. Members supported a human-centred or people-centred approach for addressing the issue of international data governance, identifying that as an area for further development, in particular concerning data ownership.

39. The Committee also made specific suggestions regarding the goals and principles contained in the document. One area identified for consideration was to further improve the utility of the principles. In that regard, it was suggested that specific standards and guidance could be further explored, as well as mechanisms for implementing the principles, including monitoring, enforcement and redress mechanisms. Data inequalities and data poverty were also areas for further elaboration, given the risk of data reproducing existing inequalities and the lack of data further deepening inequalities, with some members suggesting that data disaggregation on the basis of gender and other demographic factors and more representative data were useful for addressing those inequalities. Enhancing gender equality within the leadership teams of data-related industries was also seen as a path towards improving equity and bringing diverse approaches to the field.

40. Regarding United Nations system action on international data governance, three broad areas for implementation of the principles were identified. At the global level, models and mechanisms for international data governance could be explored; at the United Nations system level, a shared data governance framework across entities could be considered; and at the individual entity level, normative guidance could be used for informing specific internal policies. Investments in data-related skills and

technology infrastructure were also seen as important for the operationalization of the principles. While some members supported a more universal approach, by which the normative foundations were for use in the work of individual entities and in system-wide efforts, other participants expressed a preference for individual entities to develop their own policies, underpinned by the broad guidance. A flexible and adaptable approach was generally encouraged so that the goals and principles could be updated in response to rapid changes in technology.

41. In order to advance the development of the normative foundations, members supported the idea of engaging in consultations with other stakeholders. Subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, including the Statistical Commission and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, were offered as forums that could be leveraged to engage in consultations with Member States and stakeholders. Noting the diversity among data owners, engaging national statistical offices, the private sector and civil society was viewed as a way to build support and political will for international data governance, in particular in the lead-up to the 2024 Summit of the Future.

42. The co-leads, Ms. Me and Mr. MacFeely, thanked members for sharing valuable insights and for suggesting areas that could be enhanced. The co-leads agreed to further examine the issues of data poverty, the rights of women and children, capacity development, redress mechanisms, a stronger future orientation and the need for adaptability. The next step for further developing the normative foundations was to engage in multi-stakeholder consultations, including through the forums suggested during the discussion. They invited members to support or facilitate multi-stakeholder engagement. The co-leads informed members that the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System sought to develop a generic United Nations system data governance framework and that the normative foundations would be a useful resource in that regard.

43. In closing, the Chair expressed her appreciation to the co-leads for their presentations and to HLCP members for the rich discussion. There was agreement that the goals and principles were useful for the United Nations system, but could also serve as a contribution for the international community more broadly. Reflecting on the changing nature of data and the need for consultations, the Chair encouraged the co-leads to leverage the forums offered by members for engaging with stakeholders on the proposed goals, values and principles, and also to establish appropriate linkages with the Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence in the light of the close connection between data and artificial intelligence. The Chair concluded by asking the working group on international data governance to further elaborate the goals and principles taking into account the discussion that had taken place that day.

#### **Conclusion**

**44. The Committee requested the working group on international data governance to take into consideration feedback from HLCP members in its efforts to further develop the set of proposed goals and principles that were offered as a normative foundation for an international data governance framework for future consideration by HLCP.**

#### **IV. Scoping discussion: promoting system-wide coherence on internal displacement**

45. The Chair invited members to engage in a scoping discussion on promoting system-wide coherence on internal displacement. She noted that it was the first time that the issue had been brought before the Committee and looked forward to

examining the desirability and feasibility of pursuing a process within HLCP to promote system-wide coherence on internal displacement. She provided some background on the growing challenge of internal displacement before introducing the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Solutions to Internal Displacement, Robert Piper, and inviting him to address the Committee.

46. Mr. Piper welcomed the opportunity to present his proposal to the Committee. He provided some additional background on internal displacement, noting that the drivers of displacement were deeply structural and that cases were rising and becoming more protracted, including due to the increasing impact of climate change. One reason that the United Nations had found it difficult to address the issue was that it cut across many organizational mandates. He stressed that there was no intergovernmental forum or international convention on the issue and that the humanitarian system had been primarily left to manage internal displacement alone, notwithstanding the protracted nature and structural drivers thereof. Furthermore, different United Nations system organizations were engaging on distinct aspects of the issue, without a vision from Member States about what they wanted.

47. In short, internally displaced persons had no “institutional home”. In order to step up action on internal displacement, the Secretary-General had issued an Action Agenda on Internal Displacement in 2022, the implementation of which had been led by the Special Adviser. It had generated substantial momentum in efforts to reverse the escalating trends in new displacements and move internally displaced persons out of situations of displacement more quickly.

48. Detailing the challenges and lessons learned one year into the implementation of the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement, Mr. Piper concluded that, fundamentally, the United Nations system was not reliably providing a coordinated and coherent practical response to internal displacement in countries. Given the range of capacities and presence of United Nations system entities around the world, it had been hard to build a predictable system to respond to internal displacement with clear roles and responsibilities. As set out in the proposal for consideration by the Committee, Mr. Piper was seeking the agreement of HLCP to produce a solutions-focused system-wide vision and approach for addressing the issue of internal displacement, by building on existing analyses and efforts and connecting related activities at the organizational, inter-agency and intergovernmental levels.

49. In the discussion that followed, members recognized that displacement was a complex, multidimensional, cross-pillar and long-term problem that was expected to continue to grow in scale. The issue was seen as very important, in particular because it related directly to the commitment to leave no one behind. It could not be solved by humanitarian actors alone and, therefore, required an integrated cross-pillar approach. It was stressed that issues relating to internal displacement needed to be placed within the context of the pursuit of sustainable development. Likewise, internal displacement had strong peace and political dimensions that needed to be addressed to achieve sustainable solutions.

50. Members recognized that no single United Nations entity could effectively tackle internal displacement. It was also acknowledged that there were coordination and fragmentation challenges. There was, therefore, strong support for the proposal made by the Special Adviser, which leveraged the broad membership of HLCP and its mandate to foster policy coherence. The Committee saw merit in United Nations system entities aligning behind a comprehensive, systematic, solutions-oriented approach that would meet the needs of affected communities. Each entity, including the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization, could contribute according to its expertise and resources. Lessons learned from other areas of work, such as on refugees and humanitarian responses, could help to inform the effort. The

whole-of-system effort of HLCP would be particularly important in identifying the systemic changes required and putting in place appropriate structures to sustain the action needed and achieve the desired impact on internal displacement in view of the limited mandate of the Special Adviser, which would be ending in 2024.

51. There was wide agreement that, with regard to its future work on the issue of internally displaced persons, HLCP needed to be cognizant of the ongoing review of the humanitarian response to internal displacement by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee and strive to bring that and other relevant parallel efforts together, including by effectively utilizing additional mechanisms, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Group.

52. Members were united on the importance of engaging and supporting Governments, including to help to advocate for the internal displacement agenda, generate the political will needed, foster ownership and build capacity at all levels. The need to look beyond efforts at the national level to other levels, in particular the local level, was emphasized given that local authorities had a vital role to play in responding to internal displacement. In the same vein, community engagement was seen as fundamental to helping the integration of internally displaced persons. Moreover, the importance of intergovernmental engagement was echoed, in particular to increase the visibility of the issue, as well as to provide practical policy-oriented and normative guidance to address internal displacement in the long term.

53. HLCP recognized the central role of resident coordinators and United Nations country teams in addressing internal displacement issues. Resident coordinators in the 15 pilot solutions countries<sup>1</sup> and beyond had embraced their designation through the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement as country leads on solutions and they intrinsically understood that, in order to advance solutions, a multi-actor and multidisciplinary effort that cut across all the pillars of the United Nations was needed through whole-of-country, whole-of-system cooperation. It would be important to identify how the work of HLCP could best aid and support resident coordinators both at the United Nations Headquarters and country levels, in particular recognizing that careful political engagement was often required. Common country assessments and United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks were useful tools for aligning the United Nations system to support the solutions agenda.

54. It was observed not only that human rights violations often drove internal displacement but also that internal displacement caused human rights violations. Human rights, therefore, needed to be part of the long-term solution; in that context, it was recommended that transitional justice should be more firmly placed in the humanitarian-development-peace nexus. Several members highlighted the impact of climate change, for example in exacerbating natural disasters and conflict, as a growing cause of displacement. More attention, therefore, needed to be paid to that interlinkage.

55. Prevention, including efforts to analyse and address the drivers of displacement in order to avert crises, was emphasized as a vital complement to solutions for internally displaced persons. In that context, improving the ability of the United Nations system to use strategic foresight in the context of issues, such as discrimination, climate change, the water crisis and other such causes of displacement, was needed. The importance of data and evidence to inform durable solutions strategies was repeatedly stressed. However, it was observed that crucial data gaps existed, which therefore required renewed efforts. Furthermore, members identified opportunities to incorporate a variety of angles into solutions pathways,

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<sup>1</sup> Afghanistan, Central African Republic, Chad, Colombia, Ethiopia, Iraq, Libya, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan, Vanuatu and Yemen.

such as employment, education, women's empowerment, the creation of resilient human capital, social protection, financial inclusion, connectivity and digital transformation, and disaster risk reduction.

56. Members offered suggestions on specific elements that could be addressed within the workstream of HLCP. Having a shared understanding of terminology relating to internal displacement and common answers to policy questions, such as when a person was no longer regarded as an internally displaced person, would be important for providing clarity and facilitating agreement on collective aims and actions. It was proposed that a more systematic analysis of the interconnections between the planetary crises and conflict could be undertaken by HLCP with the support of the United Nations Environment Management Group, as well as an examination of the quality of climate finance as it related to displacement. A common framework or guidelines promoting, inter alia, a unified approach to ensure adequate, long-term, predictable funding and equitable resource allocation for internally displaced persons could be explored. A monitoring and reporting framework was also proposed.

57. Many members expressed interest in engaging in the working group that would develop the proposed system-wide approach on the issue of internal displacement. Over the course of the deliberations, members detailed work within their entities related to the challenge of internal displacement, including in the context of the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement specifically, and described the expertise, tools and other contributions they could bring to the collaborative HLCP process. Several members made reference to current research, analysis and reporting that their entities were conducting.

58. At the conclusion of the discussion, Mr. Piper expressed his appreciation to members for their feedback. He stressed the need for the full United Nations system, including the international financial institutions, to come together to address the issue of internal displacement, noting that HLCP assembled a wide cross section of actors.

59. Mr. Piper reminded members that the Action Agenda on Internal Displacement had laid out a set of actions to improve the prevention of, response to and solutions for internal displacement; what was needed in 2024 was to bring those efforts and ideas together in a system-wide vision and approach on internal displacement, which would build on existing work and complement decision-making at the intergovernmental level and within other inter-agency coordination processes. He was convinced that systems challenges hampered solutions to internal displacement to a greater extent than any technical or financial challenges. He summarized three elements that he felt were needed, namely: (a) a common multidimensional analysis and diagnosis of the problem and how the United Nations system was addressing internal displacement, including areas of strength and weakness, and gaps that needed to be filled, and an understanding of how the work on internal displacement fitted within the various United Nations system entities; (b) based on that analysis, an awareness-raising effort to help the respective governing bodies of organizations to recognize touchpoints between their mandates and internal displacement and create intergovernmental space to address the issue; and (c) a shared vision of the division of labour based on organizational mandates and strengths. Considering how to translate that vision and approach into tangible action, through the resident coordinator system, the Joint Steering Committee to Advance Humanitarian and Development Collaboration, the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group, the United Nations Environment Management Group and other relevant mechanisms, would be an important part of the efforts of HLCP.

60. Mr. Piper concluded by urging HLCP members to participate in what he anticipated to be a multifaceted and evolving process to develop a system-wide approach for addressing the issue of internal displacement that would ultimately gain the support of CEB. He reiterated that the approach would have to take into consideration developments in other forums and build in appropriate connections to complementary processes in order to avoid duplication of efforts and ensure the sustainability of solutions. He also requested that members look for opportunities to bring the issue of internal displacement into governing body policy discussions.

61. In summing up the discussion, the Chair stressed the urgency of the issue. She appreciated hearing accounts from members of what their organizations were already doing in the area of internal displacement and urged them to raise the matter with their governing bodies, as it related to their mandates. The system-wide approach for addressing the issue of internal displacement proposed by Mr. Piper would be valuable in reflecting the various facets of the problem and bringing together the wide range of thinking and expertise across the system. On that point, for example, she felt that the full extent of the impact of the environmental crisis had not been captured in existing work and that human rights and gender considerations should also be strongly reflected in the approach. The Chair also noted that synergies with the strategic foresight initiative were advancing as part of the Secretary-General's vision for a United Nations 2.0, given the focus on prevention in the context of internal displacement.

62. The Chair confirmed that HLCP would proceed to establish, under the leadership of the Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement, a working group to deepen thinking on the topic and, on that basis, to prepare a proposal for consideration by HLCP at its forty-seventh session. The proposal should include the recommendations of the working group on what the proposed approach could deliver and what processes and mechanisms might be needed. A timeline should also be included, given that it was important that the United Nations system act quickly in order to organize itself better to deal with the accelerating challenge, but also in the light of the complementary work that was under way in other mechanisms. She requested that the HLCP secretariat follow up with members to solicit nominees for the working group.

### **Conclusion**

**63. The Committee agreed to pursue a process that was aimed at promoting system-wide coherence on internal displacement. It decided to establish, under the leadership of the Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement, a working group composed of interested members of HLCP and requested the working group to prepare a proposal for consideration by the Committee at its forty-seventh session.**

## **V. Summary of information items**

64. Further to the electronic review and endorsement of the progress reports in advance of the session, the Committee took note of the progress report on the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries, submitted to HLCP 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 [76/258](#), in which CEB and HLCP had been invited to support the coordination and follow-up of the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action on a system-wide basis.

65. The Committee also took note of the progress reports on the work carried out by UN-Water and UN-Energy, submitted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which served 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 Legal Affairs.

#### **Conclusion**

**66. The Committee took note of the progress report on the implementation of the Doha Programme of Action, as well as the progress reports on the work of UN-Water, UN-Energy and UN-Oceans.**

## **VI. Any other business**

### **A. A United Nations system common approach on pollution**

67. The Chair invited the Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the UNEP New York Office, Ligia Noronha, to provide a brief update on the development of a United Nations system common approach on pollution.

68. Ms. Noronha recalled that, in 2022, the United Nations Environment Management Group had started a process to develop a United Nations system common approach on pollution. The final version had been prepared in consultation with the members of the United Nations Environment Management Group, comprising 51 United Nations system entities, in mid-July 2023. It was aimed at achieving impact in three areas: (a) people, by focusing on the protection and promotion of human rights, health and well-being; (b) planet, by focusing on maintaining and restoring healthy and productive ecosystems to support life on Earth; and (c) inclusive and sustainable growth, by emphasizing the importance of fostering economic and societal transformation that balanced the short-term needs of current generations with the longer-term needs of future generations through circular approaches. She expressed optimism that it would be endorsed at the upcoming meeting of senior officials of the United Nations Environment Management Group.

69. In addition, Ms. Noronha reported on the preparations for the third session of the intergovernmental negotiating committee to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, to be held in Nairobi from 13 to 19 November 2023. The session would be preceded by regional consultations and a one-day meeting during which Member States would start negotiations on the zero draft. Furthermore, she noted that, having completed a mapping of the activities of United Nations entities on addressing plastic pollution in 2022 and a common offer on plastic pollution in 2023, the mandate of the core working group on plastic pollution of the United Nations Environment Management Group had concluded in 2023.

### **B. Dates and location of the forty-seventh session of the Committee**

70. It was proposed that the forty-seventh session of the Committee be held in New York on 11 and 12 March 2024.

#### **Conclusion**

**71. The Committee approved the dates and location of its forty-seventh session: 11 and 12 March 2024 in New York.**



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## Annex I

### Agenda

1. Reflection on the high-level political forum on sustainable development and the preparatory ministerial meeting for the Summit of the Future.
2. Progress under the Committee's strategic narrative:
  - (a) Duties to the future;
  - (b) New global public goods: international data governance.
3. Scoping discussion: promoting system-wide coherence on internal displacement.
4. Summary of information items.
5. Any other business:
  - (a) A United Nations system common approach on pollution;
  - (b) Dates and location of the forty-seventh session of the Committee.

## Annex II

### List of participants

**Chair:** Ms. Inger Andersen (United Nations Environment Programme)

**Acting Secretary:** Ms. Xenia von Lilien (High-level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination)

<i>Entity</i>	<i>Name</i>
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	Beth Crawford
International Atomic Energy Agency	Nuno Luzio
International Civil Aviation Organization	Arun Mishra
International Labour Organization	Peter van Rooij
International Monetary Fund	Robert Powell
International Maritime Organization	Damien Chevallier
International Organization for Migration	Pär Liljert
	Giovanni Cassani
International Trade Centre	Iris Hauswirth
International Telecommunication Union	Tomas Lamanuskas (Co-Chair, Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence)
	Ursula Wynhoven
	Preetam Maloor (Inter-Agency Working Group on Artificial Intelligence)
Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS)	Angeli Achrekar
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	Sajjad Malik
Secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination	Maaïke Jansen
	Remo Lalli
	Cheryl Stafford
	Li Zhou
	Florian Wintermeyer
United Nations	
Department of Economic and Social Affairs	Neil Pierre
Department of Global Communications	Maher Nasser

<i>Entity</i>	<i>Name</i>
Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Peacebuilding Support Office	Awa Dabo
Development Coordination Office	Marta Cali
Executive Office of the Secretary-General	Michelle Gyles-McDonnough Michèle Griffin (presenter)
Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs	Hansjoerg Strohmeier
Office for Disarmament Affairs	Michael Spies
Office of the Special Adviser on Solutions to Internal Displacement	Robert Piper (guest)
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights	Rio Hada
Regional commissions	Yera Ortiz de Urbina
United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction	Paola Albrito
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	Fedor Klimchuk
United Nations Children's Fund	George Laryea-Adjei Jasmina Byrne (co-lead, Core Group on Duties to the Future)
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	Angel González Sanz
United Nations Development Programme	Francine Pickup
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization	Mariagrazia Squicciarini Caroline Siebold (co-lead, Core Group on Duties to the Future)
United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women)	Sarah Hendriks
United Nations Environment Programme	Ligia Noronha Andrew Raine (co-lead, Core Group on Duties to the Future) Isabella Marras
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change secretariat	Daniele Violetti
United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)	Angela Me (co-lead, working group on international data governance)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization	Natascha Weisert

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<i>Entity</i>	<i>Name</i>
United Nations Office for Project Services	Moin Karim
United Nations Population Fund	Diene Keita
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East	Kaan Cetinturk
United Nations University	David Passarelli Adam Day (co-lead, Core Group on Duties to the Future)
Universal Postal Union	Yana Brugier
World Bank	Farhad Peikar
World Food Programme	Valerie Guarnieri
World Health Organization	Stephen MacFeely (co-lead, working group on international data governance)
World Intellectual Property Organization	Edward Kwakwa
World Tourism Organization	Zoritsa Urosevic

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