

**President of the General Assembly's
High-level Thematic Debate on Means of Implementation for a Transformative
Post-2015 Development Agenda**

*Panel 1: Infrastructure development in the post-2015 development agenda and
partnerships for realizing the SDGs*

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Comments as delivered

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Distinguished chair and fellow panelists, it's a pleasure to be back here at the United Nations with a different 'hat' to be speaking on this panel.

I am going to briefly cover three points related to partnerships, including but not only with regard to infrastructure, and looking at (1) why are these partnerships important in the agenda, (2) which areas may need the most attention and (3) what is the implication of increased partnerships on national ownership of the agenda.

First, why are partnerships important in terms of the post-2015 agenda? Many of my fellow panelists have covered this point, so I will do so very briefly. The scale of the needs of the agenda that you are currently considering goes far beyond what ODA on its own can achieve. The scale of flows which are potentially available for financing, in the fifteen years since the original Millennium Development Goals were negotiated has shifted such that now private flows and remittances, for example, dwarf ODA. Hence, to get the best potential out of the new agenda, there is a need to adjust to that change in the flows. Additionally, the variability of the different available sources of financing for different countries is an issue. ODA is still a very important source of finance for LDCs and will likely continue to be, where on average it represents 10% of GDP at present versus 0.3% of GDP in middle-income countries. Thus, there is a difference in the overall picture of the available flows facing countries in the next period, where ODA is likely to be very important, but ways to go beyond ODA are also crucial for the agenda.

Second, which areas are likely to be most important for partnership? Here, there is a real need to explore and understand which areas of the proposed goals and means of implementation under consideration already have effective partnerships in place and which are starting from an earlier level in terms of trying to form partnerships. To create a rather basic division, we can see that in some of the areas that have been part of the agenda for the last 15 years, there are some effective partnerships established. Health is an example of this; in the health sector, we already have a number of partnerships in place that can be built from including the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, which has offered disease treatment and prevention tools to more than 400 million people and GAVI The Vaccine Alliance, which has immunized 500 million children and has worked to make vaccines more affordable across the globe. Similarly, if

we look to education and water and sanitation, there are quite effective partnerships in place, which no doubt can be strengthened but provide a good basis for action.

However, there are other areas of the agenda where that work is likely at an early stage, which can be divided into two distinct groups. There are areas of the proposed post-2015 agenda that are ‘newer’ and where partnerships are at a more of an ‘embryonic’ form. These might include the focus in the agenda on inequality, jobs, infrastructure and peaceful and inclusive societies. Many of my colleagues have also talked about underinvestment in infrastructure and the need to involve sovereign wealth funds and pension funds in addressing these areas through partnerships.

Similarly, my organization, New York University’s Center on International Cooperation, has worked to unpack what would be the necessary partnerships to achieve proposed SDG target 16.2 to “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence and torture against children”. Through our research and analysis, we found effective partnerships from public, private and international actors in the nutrition, clean water, education, health and security sectors would all be needed to achieve that target alone. A similar exercise would be necessary for the other new areas of action in the post-2015 agenda.

The second area in which partnerships are at an earlier stage is on means of implementation issues, which again are somewhat newer in terms of consideration. As examples, many of the speakers referred to action on taxation, not only domestic, but also international taxation and transfer pricing issues. Similar comments could be made on areas like social protection floors and other beyond aid mechanisms, including mechanisms to ensure remittances and public-private partnerships are really taken within the agenda this time around.

Third question, what are the issues in terms of partnerships, implementation of the post-2015 agenda and questions of national ownership? It was clearly a central preoccupation of member state discussions that national ownership and strategies tailored to national needs be taken account of and be respected in the new SDG agenda.

Here there are two questions to ask on how partnerships fit into national ownership.

One is on the means of implementation, where there will be a need for new types of nationally owned plans. During the MDG agenda, the main mechanism for means of implementation was Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs). PRSPs generally looked at aid and domestic resources. They did not look much at the actions of the private sector. They very rarely looked at remittances. So they had a fairly narrow scope. As such, there is a question there of considering broader plans on which to act as the basis for means of implementation with the SDG agenda.

Second, in taking lessons from some of the partnerships established in the last fifteen years, avoiding vertical stovepipes that establish a supply-driven approach to country problems will also be key. Some of the funds that were established in areas such as health

or education, were very successful in mobilizing action, but were sometimes perceived by countries as difficult to use by countries to respond to country-specific problems. That balance between strong global action with flexibility to country circumstances will be a challenge in the agenda moving forward.

Let me conclude on two points on the implementation of a strong partnership agenda.

There are of course several events coming up this year that will allow the addressing of different constituencies. There will be (1) the first international summit on finance for development since the Doha summit in July, (2) the SDGs agenda to be confirmed here at the UN in September, (3) the WTO's next ministerial summit in December and (4) the UNFCCC climate summit also in December.

Focusing on partnerships indicates that communication needs to be a very important part of this agenda. Once the agenda goes beyond aid, we are talking about constituencies that are not necessarily under the direct control of government action, but where setting incentives, regulation and an encouraging framework is important to bring those constituencies together. To do that, communication on the agenda will be key.

Many thanks.