

Beyond2015

A COMMITMENT TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION?

A Review of Statements delivered during the UN Sustainable Development Summit – 25-27 September 2015

October 2015

I. INTRODUCTION:

The [United Nations Sustainable Development Summit](#), held in New York, from 25-27 September 2015 marked the the culmination of a multi-year process for the definition of the universal, people centered, indivisible and interlinked [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) and the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)).

In preparation for the UN Summit, Beyond 2015 prepared some [key messages](#) regarding our expectations towards commitments from Member States.

This report aims at reviewing a number of statements delivered by Heads of State and Government, Ministers and High Level dignitaries during the **plenary session** of the Summit. The analysis focus on whether a clear commitment to national and regional strategies as well as to accountability mechanisms – developed, implemented, monitored and reviewed with people and stakeholders – were reflected in the statements.

II. METHODOLOGY

The Beyond 2015 Secretariat researched for statements delivered by **96 Member States** (list below and in the annex). From those, **22 were not available** (see annex) at the [UN papersmart website](#) and could not be complemented with information collected by the [report of the International Institute for Sustainable Development \(IISD\)](#) or by notes from a collective monitoring effort from Beyond 2015.

Countries were selected based on several criteria including:

- 1) Presence of a Beyond 2015 national hub or focal point;
- 2) Countries where B15 leads have resources from the “Innovation fund”;
- 3) Countries that strongly engaged in the negotiations of the post-2015 agenda;
- 4) Countries partnering with Sweden in the [High Level Group](#) for Implementation and
- 5) Countries flagged in the IISD report with commitments towards implementation.

Countries Researched (including those which statements were not available at UN website)									
Argentina*	Burkina Faso	Czech Republic	Greece	Kenya	Mali	Nepal*	Romania	Switzerland	Uruguay
Australia	Burundi	Denmark	Guatemala	Kiribati	Malta	Netherlands	Rwanda*	Tajikistan	Venezuela
Austria	Cambodia	DRC*	Hungary*	Korea	Mauritania	New Zealand	Samoa	Tanzania*	Vietnam
Bangladesh	Cameroon	Eritrea	India	Kuwait*	Mauritius	Nigeria*	Serbia	Timor Leste	Western Samoa*
Belize	Canada*	European Union***	Indonesia	Laos	Mexico	Norway	Sierra Leone	Togo	Zambia*
Belgium	Chile	Fiji	Ireland	Latvia	Mongolia	Pakistan	Slovakia	Tunisia**	Zimbabwe
Bolivia*	China	Finland	Italy*	Liberia	Morocco*	Papua New Guinea	Solomon Islands	Turkmenistan	
Botswana	Colombia	France*	Japan	Lithuania*	Mozambique	Paraguay	South Africa	Uganda*	
Brazil	Congo	Gambia	Jordan	Luxembourg	Myanmar	Peru	Spain	United Kingdom	
Bulgaria	Costa Rica	Germany	Kazakhstan	Malaysia*	Nauru	Philippines*	Sweden	United States*	

*Statement not available at UN Papersmart or via the B15 collection of inputs or IISD report.

**Statement only available in Arabic

*** Listed as a country in this report for analytical purposes only.

Due to capacity issues, the Secretariat could not research for additional statements or to look for statements not included at the UN papersmart website.

III. REVIEW OF THE STATEMENTS

It is important to highlight that this review is based on what governments presented during the Plenary Session of the Summit – several may already have established commitments towards implementation that were not reflected in their statements though.

1) General Comments:

- The statements were in general **short**, 3-4 pages on average and several were not available for consultation.
- All statements **praised the new Agenda and the process** towards which it was developed which shows a great level of ownership by Member States towards the outcome document.
- Countries took the opportunity to review their achievements regarding the **MDGs** and several statements present details on that.
- A great number of countries used the opportunity of the Summit to call for a strong **Climate agreement** later in December in Paris.

- When praising the agenda, countries would in general mention specific goals and actions that are being implemented or will be implemented but the majority did not provide details about full implementation of the commitments at national level. [**A cherry picking approach?**]
- The **divide between developing and developed countries was still very clear**. Developing countries would praise the agenda and highlight its ambition and, at the same time, would express concern about capacity of implementing it without appropriate means of implementation. Developed countries, on the other hand, focused mainly on international cooperation and commitments to support others but were less clear about the domestic implementation of the Agenda. [**A concern for the universality of the Agenda?**]

2) Specific Criteria

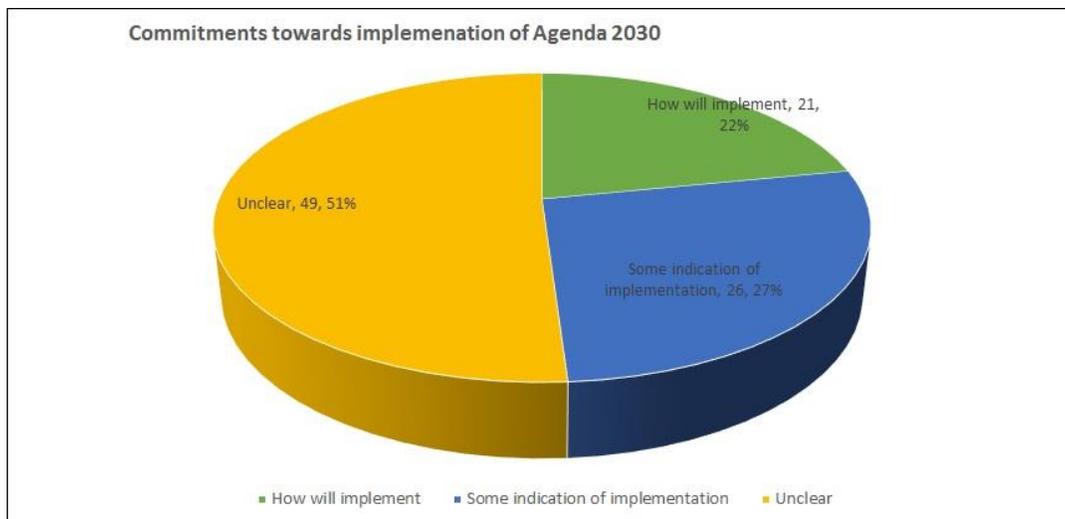
Statements were revised considering three criteria:

- **Clear messages on how the country was planning to implement the agenda at national level**

The review looked for countries expressing clearly how Agenda 2030 and the SDGs were being translated to their national level. The review did not consider goal-specific commitments but looked for messages about the structural arrangements for the implementation of the full set of goals – adaptation of national sustainable development plans, setting up of commissions, etc.

From the 96 countries reviewed, **twenty-one (21, 22%) brought clear references about how they are already translating Agenda 2030 to their national reality; twenty-six (26, 27%) provided some indication about local implementation and forty nine (49, 51%) did not mention national plans in their statements.**

Picture 1: Commitments towards implementation of Agenda 2030 – Number of countries revised: 96



(A) Countries listing clearer actions towards implementation include (21): Bangladesh, Belize, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Germany, Indonesia, Jordan, Laos, Mauritius,

Pakistan, Romania, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Timor Leste, Venezuela and Zimbabwe.

(B) Countries that presented some indication about national implementation (26): Austria, Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Chile, China, Denmark, EU, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Korea, Liberia, Myanmar, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Slovakia, South Africa, Spain, Togo, United Kingdom, Vietnam.

➤ **What countries with clear actions towards implementation (A) committed to:**

During the Summit, countries expressed their commitments towards the implementation as:

Commitments	Countries
Aligning national plans with Agenda 2030	Bangladesh, Belize, Congo, Czech Republic, Colombia, Costa Rica, Germany, Indonesia, Jordan, Lao, Mauritius, Pakistan, Romania, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Timor Leste, Venezuela, Zimbabwe
Setting up national mechanisms/commissions to advise and follow up on implementation	Bangladesh, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czech Republic, Jordan
Reference to consultation with Stakeholders	Colombia, Costa Rica, Jordan, Switzerland, Zimbabwe
Report to the High Level Political Forum already in 2016	Germany
Setting up of a Global Group focusing on implementation	Sweden (with Brazil, Colombia, Liberia, South Africa, Tanzania, Germany, Tunisia, Timor Leste) http://www.government.se/press-releases/2015/09/swedish-government-initiates-high-level-group-in-un/

- **Accountability Plans**

From the statements revised, only **twelve (12)** referred to monitoring and accountability and mainly highlighting the need for robust follow up mechanisms rather than presenting how they would be held accountable.

Countries mentioning accountability/monitoring/follow up: **Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, China, Czech Republic, European Union, Japan, Korea, Liberia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Slovakia, Zimbabwe.**

- **Inclusion of civil society and other stakeholders**

Eighteen (18) Member States referred to the inclusion and participation of civil society and other stakeholders. Several of them were reflecting on the inclusive and participatory intergovernmental process while others highlighted how achieving the SDGs would demand the engagement of all stakeholders.

The best reference came probably from **Switzerland**: *“The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is thus an agenda of the people, by the people, for the people. In implementing the SDGs, we will proceed with the same approach: while the process will take place within a political framework, citizens will be given the opportunity to contribute. This is why the participatory process in the development of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was so important. Now, let’s get to work - together, with the people, for the people”*.

Countries referring to civil society and stakeholder engagement: **Australia, Austria, Botswana, Chile, China, Denmark, European Union, Fiji, Indonesia, Japan, Jordan, Liberia, Mauritius, Mongolia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland**

3) Conclusions

The statements delivered at the Plenary session of the UN Sustainable Development Summit were an opportunity for Member States: to flag the adoption and commitment to Agenda 2030 and the SDGs; to take stock about the achievements of the MDGs; to call for a climate agreement in Paris and to reflect on the challenge of implementing the ambitious Goals.

It was clear that whereas some Member States are already engaged and committed to adapting and bringing the SDGs into their national realities, **the majority of the UN Membership has not yet developed clear plans towards the implementation of Agenda 2030**. Keeping the momentum generated by the Summit will be critical to move from Policy to Action and civil society and stakeholders will need to remain vigilant and continue advocating for those commitments to translate into change at all levels.

IV. ADDITIONAL LINKS

- a. **Link to Statements:** [UN papersmart website](#)
- b. **CEPEI** – Interactive review created by CEPEI - <http://cepei.org/unga-70/> (In Spanish, focus on statements from Latin America and Caribbean) and Getting ready for SDG implementation in Latin America (<http://cepei.org/portfolio/getting-ready-for-sdg-implementation-in-latin-america/>)
- c. **IISD** – Summary of Statements and Analysis: <http://www.iisd.ca/download/pdf/enb3224e.pdf>

V. ANNEX

- a. Extracts of statements revised by Beyond 2015.

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