Second Global Workshop for 2024 VNR Countries

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Welcome and Opening

The opening session of the workshop was convened at the main auditorium of the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Speakers reiterated the significance of multilateral cooperation, gender equality, and civil society engagement in advancing the SDG agenda. With Brazil reaffirming its commitment to the 2030 Agenda, the session underscored the pivotal role of partnerships, innovation, and inclusive governance structures in achieving sustainable development goals both nationally and globally.

In his opening address, Mr. Mario Moreira, President of the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation (Fiocruz), stated that Fiocruz was honoured to host the event, and reiterated the steadfast commitment to the SDG agenda since its establishment. Mr. Moreira highlighted Fiocruz's integral role in Brazil's pursuit of the SDGs, emphasizing evidence-based policymaking through extensive research and partnerships spanning 11 states.

Mr. Enio Verri, Brazilian General Director of ITAIPU Binacional, emphasized Brazil's global leadership in sustainability forums, stressing an integrated approach towards achieving the 17 SDGs.

Ms. Luciana Servo, President of the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA), emphasized the importance of rebuilding Brazil's National Committee for the Millennium Development Goals to facilitate sustainable development initiatives. The imperative of transparent reporting on SDG progress and the government's renewed commitment to SDGs were highlighted, echoing a call for sustained collaborative efforts.

Mr. Márcio Pochmann, President of the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), highlighted IBGE's pivotal role in representing Brazil and collaborating with the United Nations to track progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, focusing on poverty and hunger alleviation.

H.E. Ambassador Maurizio Massari, Permanent Representative of Italy to the United Nations in New York, who participated by means of a recorded video, emphasized partnership and cooperation between Italy, Brazil, and the United Nations to support workshops on national reviews for SDGs, preparing for presentation at the high-level political forum on sustainable development.

Joining the session through a video recorded message, H.E. Ambassador Paula Narváez, Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations and the President of ECOSOC, commended Brazil's dedication to the SDGs and acknowledged Italy's support in organizing the event. Participants were encouraged to leverage the platform for peer learning and sharing best practices in SDG implementation.

Ms. Silvia Rucks Del Bo, United Nations Resident Coordinator, Brazil, highlighted the urgency of promoting the 2030 agenda and gender equality amidst unprecedented crises, with only 15% of global indicators on track. Brazil's commitment to the SDGs, particularly racial equality, reducing inequalities, and climate change, was underscored, along with its leadership in establishing SDG 18 on racial equality. Despite challenges,

Brazil's successful population census and engagement of civil society are crucial in monitoring SDG progress nationally.

H.E. Mr. Márcio Macedo, Minister of the General Secretariat of the Presidency of the Republic, Brazil, emphasized the need to adhere to the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) under President Lula's leadership. He highlighted Brazil's unique approach of integrating civil society participation in policymaking, showcasing two technical chambers dedicated to coordinating SDG implementation efforts. Furthermore, he outlined plans to consolidate implementation, taking advantage of the experiences of institutions like Fiocruz. Minister Macedo emphasized the importance of the 2023 Brazil G20 summit in linking discussions to SDGs and ensuring civil society involvement.

Delivering her keynote address, Her Excellency Ms. Rosângela Lula da Silva reiterated Brazil's commitment to the 2030 Agenda and SDGs, acknowledging the challenges in pursuing gender equality while stressing the importance of global alliances and cooperation to address issues like climate change and health. She highlighted President Lula's initiatives against hunger and poverty and shared progress on gender equality in Brazil, while underscoring the need for coordinated action to achieve the SDGs globally by 2030, leaving no one behind.

1 Session 1: VNRs after the half-way mark

The first session of the workshop was moderated by the Acting Director, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development (OISC), DESA. The presenters in this session included the Co-Chair of the Independent Group of Scientists of the 2023 Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR), and representatives from different countries. Discussions revolved around improving VNR reporting, addressing funding shortages, and enhancing data collection mechanisms. Participants stressed the importance of policy coherence, inclusive governance, and leveraging existing resources to accelerate progress towards SDGs before 2030. The guiding questions for this session included:

- To your knowledge, how have the new commitments from the SDG Summit been adopted at the national level?
- Have your VNR reports contributed to the needed transformation to achieve the SDGs nationally?
- What is your government's vision on ways to achieve the SDGs in the remaining years before 2030?
- How can we improve on VNR reporting, nationally, regionally, and globally at the HLPF?

The Co-Chair of the Independent Group of Scientists, Ms. Imme Scholz, emphasized the need for public policies to progress multiple SDGs simultaneously by leveraging their interconnections. She highlighted the importance of integrated and synergistic policy solutions to address interconnected crises like climate change and stressed the necessity of broad societal coalitions to support transformation processes.

A delegate from one of the participating countries highlighted its approach to addressing hunger and nutritional challenges through multi-stakeholder efforts, focusing on SDG 2 (Zero Hunger). They emphasized the significance of multi-stakeholder platforms, government action, and international cooperation in realizing SDGs, along with specific action items such as focusing reporting on SDG 2 and enhancing multi-stakeholder engagement.

Another participant outlined six national commitments derived from an assessment of progress over the past 7.5 years towards SDGs. The country emphasized on coordination among government ministries, the private sector, UN agencies, and other stakeholders, aiming to implement these commitments through various pathways including aligning plans and policies, financing, partnerships, monitoring, and citizen participation. Despite progress made in strengthening coordination and monitoring, with forums and conferences playing a role, challenges persist as only 15% of targets are on track. The country prioritizes stakeholder consultations, finalizing the national development plan, and enhancing financing frameworks with private sector involvement. The speaker further stressed on the importance of data collection for monitoring progress, with support from UN agencies, and are actively

engaging citizens through online platforms to raise awareness and collect feedback to show commitment to inclusivity and transparency.

A representative of another participating country had integrated the SDGs into its national development plans, focusing on inclusive economic growth, good governance, and human capital improvement, with particular emphasis on infrastructure, agriculture, and mining sectors. Despite facing challenges in funding SDG implementation, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, the country managed to implement 72% of its plan through secured international funding. The country identified the need for better data collection mechanisms to prepare robust national reports on SDG progress and enable timely corrective actions, highlighting a crucial aspect for effective SDG implementation. With a vision for sustainable development and a commitment to overcoming challenges, the representative indicated that his country remains committed to aligning its national strategies with the global agenda for sustainable development.

During the interactive Q&A session, participants delved into multifaceted challenges hindering the effective implementation of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Notably, the discourse underscored the persistent lack of progress despite being six years away from the deadline, worsened by recurring hurdles in data collection and securing adequate financial resources. Emphasizing the necessity of action, Co-President of the Heinrich Böll Foundation and Co-Chair of the Independent Group of Scientists advocated for employing participatory analyses and capitalizing on existing resources to identify and prioritize urgent actions, eschewing the wait for flawless data.

Financing solutions proposed, echoing the proposals of the UN Secretary General, ranged from advocating for a stimulus package to advocating for comprehensive reforms within international financial systems. Also, participants highlighted the imperative for countries to proactively engage with alternative data sources and leverage on the available resources, with UN country teams standing ready to provide support in advancing the 2030 Agenda. The session concluded with a commitment to revisit the identified action items encompassing data enhancement, financial mobilization, and priority-setting in subsequent workshop deliberations.

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Session 2: National experiences on implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda

This session discussed a country's experience in implementing and monitoring the 2030 Agenda, as detailed in the 2nd session, exemplified a robust participatory approach that underscores inclusivity and stakeholder engagement.

Representatives of key institutions, such as National Commission for the SDGs, elucidated the methodology adopted for preparing one country's Voluntary National Review (VNR), emphasizing the importance of hosting the 2nd Global VNR Workshop as part of the country's commitment to the 2030 Agenda. To achieve the 2030 Agenda, guiding long-term planning in the country and structures have been put in place to facilitate dialogue between government and society. Priority areas such as combating hunger, poverty, racism, and environmental protection, particularly in crucial biomes like the Amazon and Cerrado, were highlighted. Moreover, the collaborative effort involving institutions like IPEA, IBGE, and FIOCRUZ in drafting chapters of the VNR and adapting global targets to the national context underscores the country's comprehensive approach to monitoring the 2030 Agenda.

Other speakers from Brazil expressed the country's innovative strategies in aligning government policies and programs with SDG indicators to address core issues and foster long-term improvements in social, economic, and environmental well-being. Itaipu Binacional's territorial approach to the SDGs showcased a paradigm shift from traditional energy generation towards environmental stewardship and social responsibility, with significant investments in projects that directly impact local communities. The discussion also covered the country's strategic integration of health, development, and sustainability, particularly in light of challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. A representative of Fiocruz highlighted its contributions in emphasizing the nexus between health and sustainable development, advocating for inclusive development models that prioritize health as integral to global recovery processes.

Another country's national experience was presented by the Coordinator of the VNR at the Ministry of the Economy. The presentation highlighted the country's ongoing efforts as the country nears the completion of its 4th VNR report. Emphasizing key principles of commitment, continuity, and in-depth analysis, the forthcoming report promises to shed light on the country's substantial advancements across various SDGs, notably highlighting strides in SDGs 1, 2, and 10. The presenter highlighted significant policy interventions aimed at poverty reduction and inclusivity, with particular emphasis on initiatives such as the "Sowing Life Programme" (Sembrando Vidas). This flagship sustainable development endeavour has been instrumental in promoting productive reforestation practices to tackle rural poverty and environmental degradation,

particularly within indigenous communities. The program's impact extends beyond national borders, as its methodology has been adopted in several countries. Notably, the "Sowing Life Programme" has not only fostered crop diversity and food self-sufficiency but has also contributed to the remarkable recovery of vegetation coverage, exemplifying this country's commitment to holistic and replicable solutions in sustainable development.

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Session 3: Expectations and considerations for the VNRs reports and presentations

The session focused on expectations and considerations for the VNRs reports and presentations, providing participants with guidance and best practices for finalizing their reviews and preparations for the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF). The discussion centered on how countries can build on their previous VNRs, craft a narrative/theme for their VNR, and develop forward-looking recommendations. Additionally, it looked at issues related to structuring the VNR report and drawing out key messages. Participants shared experiences, lessons learned, and best practices. A presenter from the Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs (OISC/DESA) provided guidance to countries in the presentation to submit their audio-visual materials such as videos in one of the UN's official languages for translation. She also encouraged countries to present their VNR at a ministerial or higher level, and to consider including civil society representatives in the process. Additionally, she shared examples of previous country presentations as a resource for preparation, advising countries to review and consider benchmarking these presentations. Some of the Key Dates motioned were:

- The submission of main messages—April 24th, 2024
- Circulation of Questionnaire— July 17th, 2024.

One presenter outline how the country's commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be highlighted in its 2024 report. Emphasizing the country's dedication to human development, the presenter outlined the country's focus on judicial reforms as pathways to peace. Institutional arrangements, such as the active involvement of civil society organizations, were noted as key to driving the SDGs forward. The speaker also detailed the use of statistical analysis to measure the impact of these initiatives, particularly in addressing the refugee crisis and forced displacement, thereby ensuring that the country's approach to the SDGs is both comprehensive and compassionate.

Sharing a second country's perspective, another representative presented a forward-looking approach to the nation's SDG journey, emphasizing the importance of generating VNR reports every four years. The country's holistic approach was discussed, which gives equal weight to all 17 SDGs and relies on inter-ministerial cooperation and stakeholder consultation. The delegate underscored the role of specialized surveys and crime data in evaluating progress, and the ongoing efforts to finalize methodologies for future reports. By doing so, the country aims to maintain a guiding framework that not only reflects current achievements but also sets a vision for sustainable development and human rights enhancement.

A third speaker shed light on his country's national strategy to implement the SDGs, which is structured around four pillars, including environmental considerations. She spoke of the National Commission's role, led by the Prime Minister, in prioritizing 158 SDG targets tailored to the country's needs. The speaker emphasized the significance of the second national SDG report, which aims to assess the real impact on the population and address challenges head-on. Working groups had been formed to ensure coordination and effective dissemination of the SDGs, reflecting the country's commitment to improving statistical capacity and fostering economic diversification for the SDGs' success.

A fourth participant highlighted his country's approach to monitoring and reporting on SDG progress through VNRs. He outlined the categorization of progress and the importance of aligning national priorities with the SDGs, focusing on sustainable development and addressing challenges faced by vulnerable groups. He highlighted the improvements in data quality and the alignment of statistical systems with UN organizations as critical to the accuracy of the VNRs. The speaker outlined the commitment to domesticating the SDGs and ensuring policy transitions that reflect the nation's sustainable development goals.

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Session 4: Preparation for the VNR presentations at the HLPF

The Session offered in-depth discussion into the intricacies of preparing for the VNRs presentations at the HLPF. It served as a comprehensive guide encompassing practical arrangements, considerations, and the interactive component crucial to the success of the VNR process. The session not only provided an overview but also delved into the nuances of the process, ensuring that participating countries were equipped with the necessary knowledge and tools for effective presentations. Moreover, it addressed the role played by the Group of Friends of VNRs, an informal support system designed to aid participating delegations in navigating the complexities of the VNR presentations.

One of the two Co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of VNRs, in a virtual capacity, offered invaluable insights gleaned from her experience as a Counsellor at the Permanent Mission to the UN. Her presentation focused on the multifaceted preparations involved in presenting VNRs at the HLPF, emphasizing the collaborative efforts of the Group of Friends in helping delegations. Through consultations and knowledge sharing, the Group assists countries in honing their presentations, identifying key challenges, and fostering a conducive environment for peer-to-peer learning. The presentation underscored the country's journey in presenting its VNRs, highlighting the significance of stakeholder consultations led by government ministries in bolstering national ownership of the SDGs. Additionally, one country's initiatives were showcased, particularly its endeavour to harness insights through the VNR Knowledge Hub online platform, aimed at enhancing the clarity and effectiveness of national progress reports. The session emphasized the importance of leveraging peer-to-peer exchanges and knowledge sharing to enrich the VNR process, with a commitment to facilitating connections among countries as they prepare for their presentations.

The Chief of the ECOSOC Affairs Branch within the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management (DGACM), Ms. Emer Herity, provided a breakdown of what participants could expect from the VNR presentations at the HLPF. The presentation delved into the logistical details, ranging from seating arrangements to presiding officers, and the strict time constraints of 10 minutes allotted for presentations, inclusive of any accompanying videos. Emphasizing the interactive nature of the sessions, she elucidated the question period, where queries from countries, groups of friends, and other delegations are entertained, with the duration varying across sessions. The speaker's insights provided clarity on the collaborative process of preparing presentations, whereby countries are encouraged to plan meticulously with their teams and indicate preferred time slots. Additionally, she outlined the process for determining the order of presentations within panels, ensuring equitable representation and balance.

During the subsequent Q&A session, participants engaged in a robust exchange, seeking further elucidation on various aspects of the VNR process. Queries ranged from the logistics of presentation order to the inclusion of video content within the allotted time frame. Clarification was provided on the process for countries to be matched with friends or twinning partners, underscoring the importance of providing ample support for preparation and testing before the HLPF. The significance of having advisors to address queries during the session was reiterated, emphasizing the collaborative and supportive ethos underpinning the VNR process. Overall, the Q&A session enriched participants' understanding, ensuring they were well-equipped to navigate the intricacies of the VNR presentations at the forthcoming HLPF.

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Session 5: Data and data visualizations in VNR reports and presentations

This session focused on the critical role of data and its visualization in crafting impactful VNRs. This interactive segment was dedicated to mastering the use of data and visual tools to articulate the progress and hurdles in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The session explored the nuances of data storytelling, emphasizing the need for clarity and effectiveness in visual communication. It also served as a forum for countries to exchange their experiences, discussing the challenges of data collection and utilization, including the intricacies of disaggregation and the selection of national indicators. The goal was to share best practices and lessons learned to refine the VNR process and enhance post-VNR strategies for monitoring SDG advancement.

A representative of the Statistics Division of DESA steered the session with a focus on data storytelling and visualization techniques crucial for VNRs. A six-step practical guide aimed at grounding VNRs in solid evidence, highlighting the importance of engaging diverse audiences and underscoring key messages, was introduced. The presentation acknowledged the challenges of data gaps and the need for disaggregation, advocating for the integration of analysis and narrative to inform and influence effectively. She presented examples of compelling data stories and titles, urging the early development of communication plans to ensure that the data not only informs but also resonates with stakeholders.

One delegate showcased her country's achievement in enhancing food access for 10 million people, attributing this success to specific policy actions and demonstrating how sustainable agricultural practices can contribute to broader SDG targets. Another representative who a newcomer to the VNR meetings, shared its pressing challenges with education and climate change, emphasizing the interconnectedness of SDGs and the overarching issues of governance and security that impact progress.

A second representative highlighted the country's comprehensive approach to producing SDG indicators. She emphasized the collaborative governance structures involving various government institutions and divisions, with over 30 institutions contributing to SDG monitoring through working groups. While one of the counties had made significant progress in monitoring SDGs, some recovery indicators remain absent. The presentation showcased the country's utilization of platforms, publications, videos, and maps to communicate SDG indicators, showcasing inequalities across regions and

the innovative use of geospatial data, such as satellite images, for indicators related to environmental issues like deforestation and land degradation.

A third participant, presenting virtually, discussed lessons learned from their data and methodology assessment for reporting on SDGs. The country's focus on building resilience through decentralization and local governance was highlighted, particularly in their second VNR. The assessment identified improvements in data quality and availability since 2019, yet it also noted limitations such as a lack of data aggregation across sectors. The speaker recommended the development of a national data tool managed by the planning department, specific reporting on 30 SDG indicators, and the enhancement of collaboration between data producers and the statistics bureau.

Finally, the participant of fourth country discussed data collection and reporting challenges for one of the country's Voluntary National Review (VNR) on SDGs related to education, gender equality, and water/sanitation. Challenges included the absence of a dedicated national SDG database and reliance on global estimates for some indicator data, which may not accurately reflect the local situation. Plans to address these gaps involved assigning focal points in each sector ministry for data collection, creating a national SDG database over five years, and enhancing awareness through simple data visualization tools. The speaker underscored the necessity for comprehensive data over time, especially concerning issues like education quality, and stressed the importance of improved linkage and data sharing between sectors.

During group work and Q&A sessions, participants engaged in discussions surrounding the challenges and strategies related to data collection and decentralization efforts within the context of sustainable development. The panelists elaborated on the complexities of decentralization in island nations, emphasizing the need to consider both geographical dispersion and governance devolution to empower local communities. Strategies to address data gaps were explored, including qualitative data collection methods through policy implications and surveys, as well as initiatives to improve regular data production across institutions. Countries shared their experiences and initiatives, such as the country's efforts to enhance existing surveys with relevant questions and one country's plans to improve information sharing across ministries. Leveraging non-traditional data sources like regional platforms and stakeholder information from civil society and the private sector was highlighted to supplement existing data and fill gaps in SDG monitoring.

6

Session 6: Mobilizing institutions and engaging stakeholders for the VNRs

This session of the workshop focused on mobilizing institutions and engaging stakeholders for the VNRs. The session drew upon country experiences to reflect on institutional frameworks and stakeholder engagement within the VNR process. Representatives of the Division for Sustainable Development Goals, DESA, and the Division for Public Institutions and Digital Government, DESA, facilitated discussions linking SDG implementation with local actions and priorities, emphasizing the importance of localizing the Agenda at municipal, district, or provincial levels. Presentations and discussions explored how countries have adapted the 2030 Agenda domestically, the evolution of institutional structures, and ways to reflect stakeholder views and engagement in VNR reports and presentations. This session provided a platform for representatives from major groups and other stakeholders to outline their processes for supporting engagement with countries conducting VNRs on SDG implementation.

Stakeholder engagement and involvement of Major Groups and Other Stakeholders (MGoS) during the HLPF were discussed by co-chairs of the coordination mechanism for MGoS. They presented on the process of facilitating civil society participation in the HLPF, which begins with outreach to stakeholders from countries presenting VNRs. The timeline for preparation, from collecting initial interest to finalizing a two-minute statement for stakeholders to present at the HLPF, was outlined. The aim is to have in-person representatives from each VNR country's civil society deliver these statements. Potential questions for VNR countries were shared, focusing on evaluating meaningful participation, progress on SDG commitments, availability of disaggregated data, and key issues raised in independent stakeholder reports. Continued engagement after the HLPF was emphasized to follow up on commitments, learn lessons, and establish ongoing stakeholder plans at national and local levels.

A speaker from one country indicated that it had implemented a new national development plan following a government change in 2024, aiming to align public interventions and investment projects with the SDGs and 2030 Agenda. Multiple stakeholders, including UNDP, civil society, NGOs, and local governments, participated in developing the national development plan. The representative indicated that the country is working to integrate local VNRs from provinces into its global reporting to coordinate efforts across different levels of governance. Data on SDG initiatives is being collected through workshops, public reports, and interviews with innovative projects to showcase progress and beneficiaries. A webpage maps initiatives by province and tracks indicator progress to maintain dialogue and engagement on implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Another representative highlighted consultation held at national and provincial levels to prepare a national vision for accelerating the SDGs in one of the countries. Five priority areas were identified, and 16 local levels conducted local VNRs to provide input to the country's national review. The role of the private sector and civil society in contributing to the national review process needs clarification, as they express willingness to contribute but face uncertainties regarding their role. Engaging all 753 local levels presents challenges in terms of resources, rules, priorities, and time. An inclusive national review inception workshop involving government institutions, civil societies, and the private sector was held to finalize the national review, emphasizing the importance of collaboration across various stakeholders for effective SDG implementation.

7

Session 7: Reflecting emerging global and regional themes in the VNR reports and presentations

This session focused on the vital task of incorporating emerging global and regional themes into VNR reports to ensure they remain relevant and aligned with current global discussions on sustainable development. It aimed to broaden the analysis of SDG policies and progress, considering key issues such as SDG financing, international financial architecture reform, climate change impacts, migration challenges, and uneven economic growth.

The first panel, dedicated to discussing global and regional trends, featured insights from ECLAC highlighted several significant trends observed in VNRs, emphasizing the emergence of voluntary local reviews (VLRs) as contributors to integrated policies and enhanced government coordination. She stressed the importance of peer exchange and learning, the increased use of data and statistics in VNRs, and efforts to mobilize financing for sustainable development. The speaker underscored the alignment between the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement, the integration of migration issues into sustainable development policies, and the engagement of stakeholders in VNR processes. She emphasized the role of UN Regional Commissions in supporting countries to integrate regional and global themes effectively.

In the subsequent plenary discussion, three main trends impacting VNR reports were addressed: migration, climate change, and finance and debt. On the topic of migration, a representative outlined policies targeting the root causes of migration, including poverty and violence, with successful outcomes in poverty reduction and social cohesion. One of the representatives discussed collaboration with the UNCT to address current refugee crises threatening sustainable development efforts. Another participant highlighted his country's efforts to protect the human rights of migrants and refugees in their VNR report. Another country emphasized local perspectives on migration, considering its impacts as a transit route for immigrants. Another delegate stated his country focused on refugee integration, while another country presented its Migration Governance Framework as part of SDG 10.7 review. Another speaker highlighted the identification of internal migration issues through VLRs and emphasized the importance of localization efforts.

On climate change, one of the representatives underscored deep concerns regarding its pervasive impacts across all Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), emphasizing the urgent need for comprehensive action. The country's delegation shared

detailed initiatives aimed at mitigating these impacts, particularly through investments in renewable energy and the promotion of sustainable transport systems.

Additionally, The representative expressed a commitment to showcasing these efforts in their VNR report to illustrate their proactive approach to combating climate change. Another representative contributed to the discussion by highlighting the outcomes of extensive consultations within their country, which have resulted in actionable recommendations to address climate change impacts. These recommendations, integrated into their VNR, reflect the country's dedication to addressing climate challenges at both the national and international levels. Another representative emphasized the intricate interplay between SDG 13 (Climate Action) and SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) in their VNR report, highlighting the interconnectedness of climate change mitigation efforts and food security initiatives. This holistic approach underscores another country's recognition of the multifaceted nature of sustainable development. Furthermore, another speaker drew attention to the escalating frequency and intensity of climate-related events, a critical issue highlighted in their VNR. By prioritizing the discussion of climate events, the country aims to raise awareness about the urgent need for adaptation and resilience-building measures in the face of climate change-induced challenges.

On the topic of finance and debt, one representative provided a comprehensive overview of their national strategies aimed at prioritizing Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and mobilizing necessary funds for their effective implementation. The representative elaborated on the intricate process of prioritization, which involves careful consideration of various factors such as socio-economic indicators, developmental needs, and existing resource allocations. The speaker emphasized their commitment to addressing key areas encompassed by SDGs 8, 9, and 11, which respectively focus on decent work and economic growth, industry, innovation, and infrastructure, and sustainable cities and communities. Furthermore, they highlighted the importance of aligning financial mechanisms and policies with the overarching objectives of the 2030 Agenda to ensure sustained progress towards achieving sustainable development. The representative outlined concrete steps taken by the government to enhance financial inclusivity, foster public-private partnerships, and explore innovative financing models to bridge existing gaps in resource mobilization. Additionally, the speaker also underscored the significance of international cooperation and collaboration in leveraging external support and expertise to bolster their efforts towards SDG realization. Through transparent and participatory approaches, the country aims to optimize resource utilization, promote fiscal sustainability, and foster equitable development outcomes for all segments of society.

A second panel in this session, "Leaving No One Behind," featured UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children. The representative

emphasized the urgent need to invest in children, particularly amid ongoing crises reversing advances in education, protection, and well-being. She advocated for child participation in policy development and VNR processes. During discussions, one of the representatives highlighted a human rights approach to planning tools and the mapping of public policies' impact on different populations. Another speaker emphasized the guiding principle of Leaving No One Behind (LNOB) in public policies, driven by political will. The representative shared the country's plans to integrate LNOB across their VNR chapters.

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Session 8: Financing for Sustainable Development in VNR reports and presentations

This session aimed to highlight good practices for addressing financing-related issues within VNR reports and presentations. it delved into guidance and frameworks for integrating SDG implementation into national budgets, mobilizing resources from both domestic and international sources, and reflecting the commitments outlined in the SDG Summit Political Declaration in VNRs. Financing for Sustainable Development Office at UNDESA presented on this topic, providing valuable insights into the importance of financing for achieving sustainable development goals.

The speaker's presentation covered various aspects of financing for sustainable development goals, with a specific focus on SDG 17 and topics from the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. She offered context and examples from different countries to illustrate how they can effectively discuss SDG 17 topics in their VNR reporting. The presentation encompassed a wide range of financing-related subjects, including domestic resources, private investment, debt management, trade, and initiatives in science and technology. Moreover, various areas of international development cooperation and developing country initiatives in fields such as capital markets and blended finance were highlighted. The speaker concluded by mentioning that examples and guidance referenced in the presentation would be made available online through UNDESA to aid countries in their SDG 17 reporting efforts.

Following the presentation, the session moved to country presentations. One of the participants outlined the country's efforts in establishing a financial architecture to support sustainable development. The country's initiatives span both national and international realms, with a focus on areas such as agriculture, integration, and environmental conservation. The presentation highlighted the country's commitment to aligning its national priorities with the SDGs and mobilizing resources for sustainable growth, including the issuance of green bonds.

Another speaker provided insights into his country's approach to SDG implementation. The country's commitment to domesticating SDG implementation into its national development plan was emphasized, along with efforts to mobilize financing from various sources, including the national budget, revenue authority, loans, and official development assistance. The presentation underscored one of the country's dedication to tracking SDG progress and engaging stakeholders in the implementation process.

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A final speaker shared his country's strategies towards diversifying income sources and boosting economic growth. The speaker indicated that the country's focus on sustainable finance initiatives, such as the development of a Sustainable Finance Framework and the launch of a Social Protection Fund, showcased its commitment to addressing environmental and social challenges while promoting economic prosperity. The presentation outlined specific projects aimed at climate change adaptation, renewable energy expansion, and social protection, aligning with one of the country's goals of achieving long-term sustainability and resilience.

Closing and Next Steps

The closing session, led by Mr. Neil Pierre, Acting Director, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development (OISC), DESA, primarily focused on outlining the next steps and expectations for VNR countries on the road to the HLPF. Administrative announcements were made regarding upcoming deadlines and opportunities for Member States to participate in side-events during the HLPF. Participants were urged to maximize speaking time and submit applications for side events by the deadline. Due to budget constraints, a limitation on the number of side events allowed was noted, prompting organizers to encourage early registration for better chances of hosting events. Furthermore, the session emphasized the continuation of VNR labs this year, providing an opportunity for further discussion and preparation for VNR presentations.

Plans were also outlined for scheduling a third global workshop, typically held just before the HLPF, to finalize details regarding format, venue, and dates. Focal points for each country were highlighted as crucial contacts for logistical support and guidance in preparing for presentations, particularly for newcomers to the process. Information on funding availability, especially for least developed countries, was provided, along with instructions on accessing funds through permanent missions. The session concluded with expressions of gratitude to individuals and organizations involved in organizing the workshop, as well as encouragement for attendees to explore the host city and make the most of their remaining time in the city.

The significance of the venue for the workshop was highlighted, acknowledging the city's strong historical ties with sustainable development initiatives. In closing, on behalf of DESA, the Acting Director thanked the organizers for their unrelenting efforts in making the workshop a success.