

2024 ECOSOC Coordination Segment

Thursday, 1 February 2024, 10 a.m.-12 noon

ECOSOC Chamber, United Nations

Remarks by Ms. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi Chair, UN Committee of Experts on Public Administration and Chancellor, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa

A cascade of simultaneous crises has undermined the resilience of Governments at all levels as well as their capacity to address the root causes of complex challenges in a holistic and context-sensitive manner. We have used the application of the principles of effective governance for sustainable development as a foundation for the Committee's work.

Multidimensional coverage of these 11 principles provides a useful way to enhance policy analysis related to Sustainable Development Goal 16, including through the use of appropriate indicators. Indicators should be detailed enough to capture the quality of a government's response to the Goals while addressing important analytical gaps in follow-up and review processes.

Inclusiveness of public institutions is an area that has received particular attention by the Committee. Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty will depend on enhanced efforts by countries to implement adequate participatory measures and policies, based on their own models of participation, while strengthening the enabling environment for civic engagement, to ensure that no one is left behind. This underscores the importance of social compacts that ensure whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches.

Agile, and data- and insight-driven institutions are necessary to improve preparedness and resiliency in managing crises. Building such institutions depends on access to new skills, fostering collaborative, more citizen-centred mindsets among public servants, as well as building the capacity of subnational governments and developing countries.

A review of public sector workforce capabilities to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, and of related training efforts, is part of the solution. In addition, the Committee calls for making all actors aware of the ambitious nature and potential of the Sustainable Development Goals to accelerate their implementation.

In view of the urgent need to strengthen the global response to climate change, expanding the capacity of developing countries and subnational governments to better access climate finance is required. The provision of training and assistance to improve skills in analysing data and designing climate projects that can attract investments should be seen as a matter of priority for developed countries, international financial institutions and others committed to climate finance.

The Committee is currently looking at issues of insurance to better combat climate change and accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, the

Committee sees value in linking institution-building and environmental management in the context of peacebuilding in conflict-affected countries.

To better face multiple crises, it will be necessary to strengthen revenue forecasting and planning, and public financial management, while ensuring accountability, transparency and participation in budget processes. There is a need to clearly ensure that a focus on the SDGs is central to national development planning as well as in the development of budgets. National treasuries should consider how to look at SDG budgeting in an integrated manner, rather than as an add-on for the purpose of compliance with reporting requirements to international or regional forums.

Currently, the Committee is also looking into ways to reduce poverty in fragile and conflict-affected settings through sound public financial management.

Stimulating public sector innovation through digital technology remains a critical and complex issue with implications for all parts of government, including operational agencies, regulatory authorities and oversight bodies. The Committee has reiterated the need for hybrid approaches to public service delivery that reflect people's needs and aspirations while addressing digital capacity deficits.

Efforts are also required to improve data governance and mitigate risks arising from the use of new technologies, such as artificial intelligence and social media, by adopting new policy and regulatory regimes and standards. The Committee is currently looking into questions of artificial intelligence governance.

Lastly, in response to the call for increased collaboration among subsidiary bodies the Committee, together with the Committee for Development Policy, jointly organized a successful HLPF 2023 side event on strengthening the VNR reports and processes.

Thank you.