

**Economic and Social Council
Management Segment**

New York, 5 June 2024, 3-6 p.m.

**Item 18: Economic and environmental questions:
(f) Public administration and development**

Briefing on the 23rd session of CEPA

By Ms. Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, Chair of the Committee

via video link from Johannesburg

Mr. Vice President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

It is my honour to brief you on the 23rd session of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration, which took place from 15 to 19 April in New York. Against the backdrop of multiple global crises, a weakening multilateral system and the emergence of a multipolar world, our agenda was ambitious, focusing on sustainable, resilient and innovative governance solutions.

We recommend five urgently needed transformative actions to eradicate poverty and reinforce the 2030 Agenda. These are: anchoring the SDGs in the public discourse as a policy framework for the future; promoting sustainability through national budgets to increase public trust; investing in changing mindsets in the public sector; applying the principles of effective governance for sustainable development; and closing gaps in awareness of the Goals and their importance at all levels.

We observed that implementing the principle of leaving no one behind calls for a deep understanding of its significance in any given context. Progress also depends on the identification and mapping of vulnerable groups and the development of integrated, people-centred strategies that take into account the needs and aspirations of all segments of society as a matter of priority. This further calls for inclusive, targeted interventions that engage all relevant stakeholders, alongside laws and policies that address systemic inequalities, discrimination and exclusion.

In view of the ongoing climate crisis, we noted with concern that years of major losses due to more frequent and severe climate-related weather events have led to insurance coverage gaps in many countries, with devastating impacts for Governments and individuals, especially vulnerable groups. Recalling the Sendai Framework, we draw attention to the urgent need to enhance the capacity of Governments at all levels to analyze risks, incentivize investments in resilience, prevention and rehabilitation, and explore the development of tailored financing mechanisms, including parametric approaches to insurance – in partnership with the insurance sector.

We further underscore that Governments have an important role to play in artificial intelligence, both as regulators and users of the technology. Together with entities of the UN system and others engaged in the global dialogue on this issue, we encourage Governments to identify guiding principles and policy priorities for the regulation and use of artificial intelligence, specifically by the public sector, so that the diffusion of the technology reinforces implementation of the 2030 Agenda and leaves no one behind.

We stress that increased efficiency and effectiveness of public financial management could have a substantial bearing on public perceptions in the face of

declining trust in government in many countries. To advance the Goals at a time of multiple crises, we draw attention to the need for improvements in strategic public procurement, financial oversight, budget credibility, digitalization of public financial management and management of emergency funding. An integrated strategic approach to fiscal institution building and financial processes should be employed for the greatest impact.

We also call for sustaining the momentum of innovation in the public sector prompted by the COVID-19 pandemic, paired with comprehensive human resources development strategies, a change of mindsets in the public sector, raising awareness of the Goals, promoting public workforce diversity, and building the capacities of subnational authorities. In addition, investing in and building capacities in emerging areas, such as artificial intelligence, could encourage young professionals to join the public sector and motivate and retain them once hired.

Poverty interacts with conflict - both as a cause and as a consequence. In our analysis, ending poverty in all its forms is inextricably linked to strengthening public financial management frameworks in post-conflict situations. Sounder public financial management and improved capacities, while difficult to implement in such settings, are essential to prevent socioeconomic tensions from reaching a tipping point, while targeting multidimensional poverty and preventing more people from falling into poverty.

Lastly, in line with the recommendations made following the review of the work of the functional commissions and expert bodies undertaken during the 2022 session of the Council, we facilitated a peer exchange among VNR countries and VLR cities on institutional aspects of Goals 16 and 17. We also held a dedicated consultation with a wide range of observers. Both were very well received.

The session concluded with the adoption of a draft resolution and a draft decision for the Council's consideration. We also affirmed our contribution to the 2024 HLPF. All of these matters are covered in detail in the report that is before the Council this afternoon.

In closing, I would like to assure you of CEPA's continuing commitment to support accelerated progress in advancing the SDGs and eradicating poverty. We remain keen supporters of collaboration across the ECOSOC system and look forward to further joint efforts in pursuit of our common objectives.

I thank you.