

Remarks by Marion Barthelemy
17th session of CEPA

Madam Chair,
Distinguished CEPA Members,

I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election. Congratulations also to the Chair and the Bureau.

I am particularly pleased to see you gathered here today. I had the opportunity to interact with many of you on videoconference or otherwise.

As you know, two months ago, I moved from the Division on Public Institutions and Digital Government to another division which supports the work of the GA, ECOSOC and the HLPF.

It is in this capacity that I will be addressing you today. The Chair and Patrick asked me to explain the political and institutional context in which you are starting your four years mandate.

Your Committee is an important piece of the UN architecture on sustainable development, even if its remit is very specific.

[SLIDE 2]

You are joining CEPA at an important moment for the UN. We are in year three of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for SD, which all UN Member States adopted in September 2015. This Agenda – and its 17 SDGs- is of unprecedented ambition. It is a roadmap for people, planet and prosperity. It has been seen as a major success for the UN. Many countries have been moving fast ahead and implementing the Agenda. For the UN, the key challenge is to keep the momentum of the SDGs alive and keep countries and people engaged in realizing them.

I will first speak about the UN architecture and how CEPA fits into this. I will then talk about the contribution CEPA can make to the realization of the 2030 Agenda.

I. The UN architecture and where CEPA fits in:

[SLIDE 3]

The Charter established 2 main organs in the area of development the GA and ECOSOC. The Security Council very rarely addresses development related issues.

The **GA** is the overarching UN policy making body. It comprises the 193 UN Member States. It can discuss pretty much what it wants within the areas covered by the Charter. Development is one of the three key pillars of its work, along with peace and security and human rights.

ECOSOC

[SLIDE 4]

ECOSOC supports the GA in addressing development. It comprises 54 countries which are elected by the GA.

ECOSOC has some very specific functions notably to oversee and coordinate the work of the UN system funds and programmes and specialized agencies.

[SLIDE 5]

But ECOSOC also more generally discusses policies on major sustainable development issues. It addresses a main theme each year on which it adopts a ministerial declaration.

ECOSOC also discusses a range of other themes such as the situation of the least developed countries, social development, economic issues, science and technology etc and public administration and governance.

On such themes, ECOSOC adopts resolutions. Those are a kind of soft law. They state principles on which all countries agrees and contain some

commitments. In the area of development, the aspiration is to adopt resolutions by consensus.

[SLIDE 6]

ECOSOC has a role in coordinating or guiding the work of numerous entities. Some say it addresses 70% of the UN development work. The slide shows the specialized agencies and UN funds and programmes. It also includes a different kind of entity which is the intergovernmental bodies that are subsidiary to ECOSOC.

[SLIDE 7]

ECOSOC has a number of subsidiary bodies, which support its work on a range of issues. There are 8 functional commissions. They deal with social development, the condition of women, population, statistics, drugs and crime, science etc. Functional commissions are composed of a limited number of countries elected by ECOSOC. There are also 5 regional commissions.

CEPA is also a subsidiary body of ECOSOC. But it is a Committee of Experts. You have been elected based on your specific expertise and you participate in the committee's work in your own capacity. This means that you contribute based on your knowledge and experience and you are not talking on behalf of your country. Traditionally, the discussions in CEPA are not political even though the topics it addresses are sensitive.

[SLIDE 9]

So the work of CEPA aims to support ECOSOC. You will produce two key outputs: the first one is a draft resolution. The Bureau will prepare a draft resolution based on your discussions during the session. You will then discuss this draft and agree on certain amendments. The resolution is then examined by ECOSOC. It is usually negotiated by countries members of

ECOSOC. In the end, ECOSOC adopts the revised resolution as its own. Your critical output is this resolution.

The other output is CEPA's report. It contains a thematic summary of your discussions and some procedural aspects. The rapporteur and bureau prepare the draft with the help of the Secretariat. The report is for the information of ECOSOC.

[SLIDE 10]

CEPA also provides a contribution to the most recent UN platform on sustainable development, the HLPF. The HLPF was created in 2013 and now oversees the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It is the HLPF. The HLPF meets at ministerial level every year –under the auspices of ECOSOC- and at summit level every four years. The HLPF conducts various kinds of reviews of the 2030 Agenda. It reviews progress towards all the SDGs. It reviews a theme-which this year is sustainable and resilient societies. It also conducts VNRs, which 65 countries have done so far. It finally reviews a few SDGs every year. This year, it looks at the SDGs on water, energy, cities, SCP, natural resources and finance and technology.

II. The 2030 Agenda and CEPA – addressing global priorities

[SLIDE 11]

This leads me back to the 2030 Agenda. This Agenda has put CEPA on the map.

At the heart of the Agenda are 17 SDGs and 163 targets to be realized by 2030. The SDGs cover the multiple facets of people's lives. There are SDGs on poverty, hunger, health education. There are SDGs on employment, growth and infrastructure. There is an SDG on natural resources, one on climate change, one on SCP. And the penultimate SDG is on making societies peaceful and inclusive and on making institutions effective, accountable and inclusive.

This is a major novelty, because, in the past, institutions and governance were considered as separate from the development agenda. The 2030 Agenda recognizes their critical importance for development.

SDG 16 is CEPA's SDG. CEPA has a key role to keep the focus on institutions and public administration as an integral part of the follow-up to the SDGs.

[SLIDE 12]

This is happening to some extent in the countries. The 65 VNRs at the HLPF have shown that many countries are moving fast ahead with implementation of the 2030 Agenda. And they show that the first step is often organizing and mobilizing institutions. Many countries have entrusted specific ministries or new coordination or other bodies to ensure that the whole of the government responds to the SDGs. Local governments and parliaments are being mobilized in some cases. New approaches and structures are being tried.

CEPA can analyze those efforts and advise on what more needs to be done, or what needs to be done differently, in order to reach the SDGs. You can inform the efforts of countries and the delegations who meet in New York.

[SLIDE 13]

CEPA started to put the SDGs at the centre of its work before they were formally adopted. A key message of its recent sessions was that governments have the key role in implementing the SDGs. But they must govern differently. They need to engage and consult people much more proactively. They must place the concern for the most vulnerable people at the heart of their work. They must engage local governments but provide commensurate capacities and resources. CEPA also stressed the role of public servants in implementing the SDGs, which receives little attention.

As I said, in addition to contributing to ECOSOC, you are invited to provide a contribution to the HLPF for its reviews. In July 2019, the HLPF will review SDG 16. It is critical that CEPA contributes to this review. No one else in the UN system has the depth of your knowledge on SDG 16. I encourage you to start preparing for this review this year already.

One important contribution can be the work you will do this session to elaborate principles of effective governance.

[SLIDE 14]

Your work can truly help implement the SDGs by keeping the dimensions of institutions at the heart of the dialogue at the UN.

Conclusion:

Before I conclude, let me say that your constituency, as CEPA, is very much the governments –both in the capitals and delegates here in New York. You need to be a bridge between the analysts and specialists of public administration and the policy makers. It is important that you address the priorities of the UN and contribute to its processes. It is also important that you speak the language of policy makers and that you are always simple and focused on actions.

I know Geraldine, the Colleagues in the Division-notably Patrick-have many ideas for you to consider. There are already innovations during this sessions.

I feel a bit jealous that you are starting this journey when I changed jobs. But I will be at the receiving end and will to my utmost to make sure CEPA's contribution are given adequate attention.

Thank you.