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Economic and environmental questions: public administration and development

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 8 June 2022

[on the recommendation of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration
(E/2022/44)]

2022/9. Report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its twenty-first session

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolutions [2020/21](#) of 22 July 2020, [2021/12](#) of 8 June 2021 and other related resolutions on public administration and development, in which it affirmed that service to citizens should be at the centre of transforming public administration and that the foundations of sustainable development at all levels include transparent, participatory and accountable governance and a professional, ethical, responsive and information and communications technology-enabled public administration,

Reaffirming General Assembly resolution [70/1](#) of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”,

Reaffirming also General Assembly resolution [69/313](#) of 27 July 2015 on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development,

Reaffirming further the outcome document, entitled “New Urban Agenda”, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), held in Quito from 17 to 20 October 2016,¹

Recalling General Assembly resolution [69/327](#) of 14 September 2015, in which the Assembly reaffirmed the importance of freedom, human rights, national sovereignty, good governance, the rule of law, peace and security, combating corruption at all levels and in all its forms, and effective, accountable and inclusive

¹ General Assembly resolution [71/256](#), annex.



democratic institutions at the subnational, national and international levels as central to enabling inclusive and accountable public services for sustainable development,

Referring to the United Nations Convention against Corruption,² which entered into force on 14 December 2005,

Recalling General Assembly resolution [76/189](#) of 17 December 2021, in which the Assembly recognized the need to harness the potential of information and communications technologies as critical enablers of sustainable development and to overcome digital divides, and stressing that capacity-building for the productive use of such technologies should be given due consideration in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution [69/228](#) of 19 December 2014 on promoting and fostering the efficiency, accountability, effectiveness and transparency of public administration by strengthening supreme audit institutions, in which the Assembly emphasized that efficient, accountable, effective and transparent public administration has a key role to play in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution [74/236](#) of 19 December 2019 on human resources development,

Referring to General Assembly resolution [74/270](#) of 2 April 2020, in which the Assembly recognized the unprecedented effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, including the severe disruption to societies and economies, as well as to global travel and commerce, and the devastating impact on the livelihood of people, and reaffirmed its full commitment to the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development,

Recognizing the role of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration in providing policy advice and programmatic guidance to the Economic and Social Council on issues related to governance and public administration, and the relevance of the work of the Committee to the implementation of and follow-up to the 2030 Agenda,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Committee of Experts on Public Administration on its twenty-first session,³ and expresses its appreciation for the work done by the Committee on transforming institutions and governance to build forward better towards 2030 in accordance with the 2022 theme of the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development;

2. *Invites* the Committee to continue to place the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁴ at the centre of its work and to continue to advise the Council on how public administrations can support the implementation and progress reviews of the Sustainable Development Goals;

3. *Welcomes* the contribution of the Committee to the high-level political forum, and reaffirms that the principle of leaving no one behind should be a core principle of public administration;

Transforming institutions and governance to build forward better towards 2030

4. *Recognizes* the relevance of whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches to sustainable development and leaving no one behind, and encourages Governments to work together in the interest of all countries to strengthen public

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2349, No. 42146.

³ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2022, Supplement No. 24 (E/2022/44)*.

⁴ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).

institutions, enhance their social, physical and technological infrastructure and make their economies more resilient and agile, in order to protect against the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and to be better prepared to manage potential economic, social and environmental shocks in the future;

5. *Also recognizes* that achieving sustainable development and strengthening resilience require a long-term perspective in public policymaking, together with institution-building at all levels, based on effective governance for sustainable development, as well as a steadfast commitment to promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies;

6. *Further recognizes* that building forward better from the pandemic, while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda, calls, inter alia, for political will, a change of mindsets, transformational leadership, the sound management of public resources, respect for privacy and security of personal data, and the preservation of human dignity;

7. *Notes with concern* that the fragmentation of responsibility for combating climate change and for the sustainable management, protection and restoration of natural resources can be a major institutional barrier to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 13, 14 and 15, and encourages Governments to prioritize the establishment and strengthening of mechanisms for policy coherence to this end, inter alia, through the promotion of ecosystem management and territorial development approaches within and across administrative boundaries;

8. *Also notes with concern* that there is an insufficient appreciation of the value of the environment in many countries, and urges Governments to build the capacity of the public sector in natural capital accounting based on the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, as well as strengthen the accountability of public institutions with regard to environmental protection by including an assessment of the state of natural resources under their jurisdiction as part of regular performance assessments;

9. *Reaffirms* the need for pragmatic ongoing improvements in national and subnational governance capabilities to achieve the 2030 Agenda and other international agreements, and encourages Governments at all levels to apply the principles of effective governance for sustainable development,⁵ endorsed by the Council in its resolution 2018/12 of 2 July 2018, to all public institutions and in support of the implementation of all Sustainable Development Goals, taking into account different governance structures, national and subnational realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities;

10. *Encourages* the Committee to continue to identify and review related technical guidelines and experiences to operationalize the principles at the national and subnational levels, including from sectoral perspectives, and to further engage the relevant United Nations organizations, regional organizations and professional and academic communities in this regard, in an inclusive manner, together with all relevant stakeholders;

11. *Encourages* Governments, especially in view of stronger budget pressures, to accelerate action to increase transparency and equal participation in and oversight of the budgeting process, establish transparent public procurement frameworks as a strategic tool to reinforce sustainable development and curb corrupt practices, and to embed commitments to the Sustainable Development Goals in budgetary and financial processes at the national and subnational levels by adopting practices to

⁵ *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2018, Supplement No. 24 (E/2018/44)*, chap. III, sect. B, para. 31.

monitor and report on the use of public financial resources in support of the Goals, such as reorganizing budgets, based on programmes and activities, and mapping and tracking budgetary contributions to each Goal;

12. *Recognizes* that building resilient institutions calls for more creative, flexible and integrated ways of working that are focused on the needs of people, as well as an adequate stock of competencies, capabilities and resources, and encourages Governments to further promote professionalization of the public sector workforce, invest in digital skills, update competency frameworks for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, address inequalities that exist within the public sector workforce, and take steps to address social inequities in the design and delivery of public services;

13. *Welcomes* the continuing work of the Committee on building strong institutions for sustainable development in fragile and conflict-affected countries, notes that peacebuilding and sustaining peace depend on long-term engagement in institution-building involving all stakeholders that is consistent with local norms and political realities, and looks forward to the Committee's further engagement in promoting effective governance for sustainable development in such situations and its contribution to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission;

14. *Underlines* that the COVID-19 pandemic has both accelerated the digital transition and revealed technological weaknesses of public administrations, reiterates that the impact of the pandemic exacerbates inequalities caused by digital divides, and encourages Governments to manage digitalization of public services in an inclusive, fair, ethical and people-centred manner, while accelerating efforts to bridge digital divides, inter alia, through hybrid models of public service delivery;

15. *Encourages* oversight agencies to strengthen the use of open data and artificial intelligence to detect and deter corruption and bribery in all their forms;

16. *Calls for* increased efforts to support national and international peer exchanges and peer learning on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, including through cooperation with existing international networks;

17. *Notes* the increasing demands for assistance with operationalization of the principles of effective governance for sustainable development and the Committee's emphasis on the need to strengthen the secretariat of the Committee to enable it to respond effectively;

Follow-up

18. *Requests* the Committee, at its twenty-second session, to be held from 27 to 31 March 2023, to examine and make recommendations on the theme of the 2023 session of the Council and the 2023 high-level political forum and to contribute to the review of the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 16, giving particular attention to the cross-cutting nature of all the Goals;

19. *Invites* the Committee to continue to advise on approaches and practices related to the institutions, policies and arrangements to promote the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, bearing in mind that the specific contexts and situations of countries differ widely, as well as to advise on making institutions effective, accountable and inclusive;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the present resolution fully into account in the work of the Organization, inter alia, in addressing gaps in research and analysis and in responding to the capacity development needs of Member States for building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels in pursuit of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals;

21. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to promote and support innovation and excellence in public services for sustainable development through the United Nations Public Service Awards;

22. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of and follow-up to the present resolution through the established working methods of the Committee.

*20th plenary meeting
8 June 2022*