

Statement by  
H.E. Mr. Néstor Osorio  
Permanent Representative of Colombia  
President of the Economic and Social Council  
At the 15<sup>th</sup> session  
of the Committee for Development Policy  
19 March 2013

Distinguished Members of the Committee for Development Policy,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to address this session of the Committee for Development Policy and to welcome the new membership of the Committee that includes 24 distinguished experts reflecting a wide range of development experience. I was not able to be with you in the opening session, but I wanted to have the opportunity, as President of the Economic and Social Council to thank you all for contributing with your advice and expertise for the work of the ECOSOC. The Committee has provided most valuable insights to our discussions over the years and we know that we'll continue to count on your contributions on the years ahead.

The Committee has enhanced international understanding on emerging cross-sectoral development issues and on international cooperation for development through its work, generating innovative ideas and approaches to tackle the persistent problems of development.

The Committee is also responsible for identifying and reviewing the status of least developed countries (LDCs) and for monitoring their progress after moving up from the category. The Committee's comprehensive analyses of the structural impediments for sustainable growth of low-income countries have helped the Council and the General Assembly to define the category of

most structurally weak countries. In fact, the General Assembly has recently sought your advice on a related matter; that is, how the international community can help least developed countries to implement a smooth transition.

The contribution of the Committee for Development Policy is not restricted to the work on least developed countries. The Committee has an important role to play in the definition of the international development strategy beyond 2015 and the need to confront the emerging new challenges in the global economic environment.

I would like to draw your attention to the initiatives that ECOSOC should undertake this year. As you know, the outcome document of Rio+20 – The Future We Want—expresses, among other things, the desire by Member States to take urgent action to achieve sustainable development and recognizes the key role of ECOSOC in achieving a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. In this regard I would like to reiterate my commitment as President of ECOSOC, to encourage concrete progress in the definition of a balanced integration, which reflects the importance and complementarity of each of the pillars of sustainable development.

At the Council we should make more use of your insights. We should strengthen our ties and increase the dialogue and interactions between us in order to enhance harmonization and coordination between the works of the subsidiary bodies, including this Committee and that of the Council.

The Millennium Development Goal strategy has had important achievements, representing a global commitment to poverty reduction and

development that should be continued after 2015. However, there is a current need for a more structural and systemic approach that can deliver on the transformative change needed to address current and emerging challenges and suggests credible strategies towards a secure, sustainable and inclusive pathway for global development.

Your recommendations on alternative national strategies address current and emerging global challenges, and provide the principles upon which the post-2015 transformative development agenda should be based. The Committee will continue its work on the post-2015 UN development agenda and seek to identify a development strategy that is capable of promoting an inclusive growth with job creation, while guaranteeing environmental sustainability. This is exactly what ECOSOC would like to achieve in a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Moreover, such an approach translates the vision sought in “The Future We Want” into the post-2015 agenda. I look forward to your analysis and recommendations on such development strategy.

“The Future We Want” also singles out the specific challenges and circumstances of certain groups of countries, such as least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small-island developing states. The Council requested in 2011 the Committee for Development Policy to submit its views on how to further implement fully and effectively the Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy. The high vulnerabilities and special development needs of small-island developing states have been a long-standing concern for the Council. Facing the increasing challenges arising from a global economic environment and the mounting threats associated with climate change, the international

community needs to determine if new and additional support for these island states is necessary. The views and recommendations of the Committee for Development Policy in this regard are of critical importance to the Council and may be of special relevance in light of the international conference on small island developing states to be held in Samoa in 2014.

Turning to the theme of the 2013 Annual Ministerial Review, science, technology and innovation have a strong bearing for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. In fact, information and communication technologies play a key role in empowering people, through levelling playing fields. Science, technology and innovation have the power to transform society and improve economic competitiveness and resilience. They have also the potential to propel and sustain development efforts by generating knowledge and technological and social innovations. These tools have the ability to make people “visible” in socio-economic activities and facilitate knowledge transfer. But it is always a very challenging task for people and countries to absorb existing knowledge and skills and turn them into the economic activities that enrich material well-being of people. Some countries, particularly those in Southeast and East Asia made significant economic progress by learning technologies and skills from developed countries and improving them for their advantage. But the majority of developing countries have made less progress and science and technology have contributed less to poverty reduction or economic productivities. What are the key elements that have facilitated the transfer and absorption of science and technology in the Asian countries? Can other developing countries learn lessons from their experience in order to accelerate their economic progress, reduce the incidence of poverty and improve education and health status? I hope these are some of the questions you will be addressing in your discussions in the next five days.

In terms of inclusive development, partnerships to strengthen the scientific and engineering capabilities of developing countries, together with global and regional coordination to foster research, product development, and technology access, transfer and adaptation, will be crucial for enabling transformative development.

I wish you very productive deliberations over the coming days and I look forward to the Report you will submit to the Council to support our further discussions on the way to facilitate and sustain the economic, social and environmental progress of our people.

Thank you for your attention.