

Opening statement by  
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At the 13<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee for Development Policy

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Madame Chair of the Committee for Development Policy,  
Under-Secretary-General of the UN-DESA,  
Distinguished Members of the CDP,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here today with you and to participate at the opening of the 13<sup>th</sup> plenary session of the Committee for Development Policy. I would like to welcome you all to the United Nations.

For over 45 years, CDP and its predecessor have been providing independent expert advice to the Council on emerging development issues and international cooperation. ECOSOC has been fortunate to count on the substantive support of the Committee's membership of eminent persons and leading experts in their respective fields. I am glad to see that such tradition continues today.

Since the World Summit in 2005, the Council has taken significant steps to improve the effectiveness of its review and coordination of the implementation of internationally agreed development goals and commitments. The MDG Summit Outcome Document and its Action Agenda for the next five years adopted by Heads of the States last September have given further impetus to the Council's resolve.

The strength of ECOSOC lies in the involvement of and participation of Governments, civil society organizations and UN-system partners. Yet, the Council could reach out further and strengthen its ties with other relevant stakeholders. The academic community is a case in point. And you, better than anyone else, know how much the academic work has to contribute to the work of the Council. Once again, the Council would like to count your expertise and insights to address the development challenges ahead.

In particular, we need to seize the opportunity offered by the forthcoming Fourth United Nations Conference on the LDCs in Turkey to promote development in this group of countries in a sustainable, inclusive and durable manner and to protect the poorest and most vulnerable.

That this group of countries continue to lag behind is not acceptable. In your report to ECOSOC last year, you suggested several ways in which the Istanbul Programme of Action could be made more effective and better aligned to the specific needs of the LDCs.

This was a welcome initiative and I would like to encourage you to continue to identify and analyse the obstacles to development the LDCs face and to propose possible solutions to the problems confronting these countries.

While we have made limited progress tackling the familiar problems of widespread poverty and limited productive capacity, new challenging trends have emerged and need to be addressed as well. One of the new challenges is climate change which can severely compromise the sustainability of peoples' livelihoods in LDCs further corroding their efforts to move ahead.

The climate challenge can no longer be dismissed and may very well represent an additional structural impediment to the development of the LDCs. And making use of your words, this is the group of countries that has least contributed to the problem, and the group that will face most of its consequences and with the least amount of resources and capabilities to do so. I therefore welcome your attempt to assess in which ways the climate challenge could be incorporated in the criteria designating countries as LDC. This is not an easy task in view of the multitude of forces and impacts at play, the lack of robust and unambiguous indicators and the need to maintain stability of the criteria so as to secure the credibility of the category.

Equally pressing are the challenges related to the smooth transition of countries graduating from the LDC category. Ensuring a smooth transition strategy is crucial for maintaining the development progress of graduated countries.

As you are aware, the General Assembly has adopted specific guidelines for bilateral and multilateral development and trading partners to support graduating countries to achieve smooth transition. It also recognized the primary responsibility of graduating countries to prepare a transition strategy to adjust to the phasing out of the benefits associated with the category. In practice, however, the insufficient institutional capacities in graduating countries act as obstacle to initiate and design such strategies. In this regard, the Council is interested in hearing your views on how the existing mechanisms can be strengthened to support the graduating countries more effectively as well as on the actions that are needed to ease the institutional constraints the countries are facing when embarking in the smooth transition process.

Looking at the agenda of the 13<sup>th</sup> session of the CDP, I am pleased to notice you will be addressing the implementation of the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to education, the topic of the 2011 Annual Ministerial Review.

Universal education is a human right, with merits on its own. Education is also at the heart of sustainable development of any country. It contributes to reducing poverty and malnutrition, improving health status of people and promoting equality. Education can also facilitate access to better paid jobs and support increased productivity. Better education, however, does not lead to higher incomes unless people find decent and productive employment. Without a strong and effective education-employment linkage, we may end up generating a large number of educated unemployed, whose frustrations

are so detrimental to social stability. I will be looking forward to your recommendations on this important issue.

International migration is another topic you will be addressing this week. On May 19th 2011, the General Assembly will convene thematic debate on international migration and development to reflect upon significant economic and social impacts of international migration and resulting policy needs. The recent global economic crisis have added new dimensions to international migration flows and affected the welfare of many migrants and their families. Your analysis and policy recommendations on the emerging dimensions of international migration can be important contributions to that debate and beyond, which brings me to the final point I want to make today: the need to be better prepared for the future.

While the AMR focuses on the current UN development strategy, the Council is aware that the quest for development will not end in 2015. While additional efforts are needed by the international community to help developing countries, it is imperative for the Council to shed some light on the post-2015 perspective. I am very encouraged by the fact that the CDP will look into possible new development paradigms and contribute to the strengthening of the UN development framework beyond 2015.

I very much appreciate your engagement and continued efforts to provide the Council with valuable advice on various pressing development issues confronting our world today. I look forward to your report to ECOSOC and recommendations. I wish you success in your deliberations for the benefit of all.

Thank you very much for your attention.