

**Closing Remarks by  
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**Expert Group Meeting on the 2015 and 2016 ECOSOC cycles  
New York, 5 December 2014**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This brings us to the conclusion of our Expert Group Meeting on the 2015 and 2016 ECOSOC cycles. Let me express my sincere appreciation to all of you for making these two days a success.

I would like to especially thank all the presenters and moderators for their stimulating contributions. My sincere gratitude also goes to the participants for their active engagement. Your participation injected fresh perspectives into the debate with action-orientated take-aways.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In this transition period for the Council, I have had the privilege to serve on an unusual tenure of no less than 18 months. This fortune has allowed me be part of the ECOSOC reform process and assist in the shift to a truly transformative post-2015 development agenda.

These two days of meetings have made a significant contribution to our collective efforts to create the foundations for such a new global sustainable development agenda. We have heard a rounded view about how the Council can shape its next two cycles towards the SDGs.

Allow me to sum it up in a few brief highlights.

As we have seen, the crucial challenge will be the change of mind-sets and institutional behaviours that will be necessary for reaching a universal and inclusive new development framework. As part of becoming fit for purpose, the UN system has to facilitate the paradigm shift, focussing on its comparative advantage, and strengthening partnerships among all stakeholders.

This necessary change of behaviours and attitude by all of us includes the adaptation of existing institutional, policy and accountability systems at the global, regional and national levels. The Council and the HLPF under its auspices, will be the key facilitators for this adaptation. We must shape these mechanisms so that we ensure that no one is left behind. As we have discovered, we will only achieve this by taking into account national realities and avoiding a one-size-fits-it-all approach.

The debates of these two days outlined other key challenges for a smooth transition to the sustainable development agenda. Policy frameworks founded on the SDGs should encompass for complex inter-linkages, spill-overs and trade-offs. Managing such frameworks will require a highly integrated approach to policy-making.

Multi-stakeholder, multi-level partnerships will have to go beyond traditional resources and funding modalities. Existing partnership mechanisms have to be enhanced and the UN system must play a strong coordination role for a new and meaningful South-South cooperation. I very much look forward to the Development Cooperation Forum in the Republic of Korea in April 2015.

An agenda that is truly inclusive requires the accountability of all the stakeholders and actors engaged. We have learned that mutual accountability will be the key to including all Member States, civil society, the private sector and the scientific community.

Dear colleagues,

Your expertise and perspectives from these two days will no doubt support the ECOSOC system to provide guidance for the two themes on managing the transition from the MDGs to SDGs for 2015, and on implementing the new agenda - from commitments to results - for the year thereafter.

I am quite certain that with the wisdom gained today, the Secretariat will be enabled to draft a solid report for consideration by the Council at the high-level segment next year. Being equipped with these insights, I look forward to your continued engagement in the upcoming two cycles of the Economic and Social Council.

To end, allow me to thank all of you for your participation, especially to those who travelled from afar. I wish you a safe journey back home.

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