

Madam President of the Economic and Social Council,  
Distinguished Ministers,  
Mr. Under-Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, allow me to extend a warm welcome to all of you in Vienna. I am very honored that - for the second time - Austria hosts a High-level Symposium in preparation of the Development Cooperation Forum at the United Nations Office in Vienna.

This high-level Symposium brings together policy-makers from North and South, members of parliaments, the civil society as well as regional and international organizations in order to make mutual accountability mechanisms more effective at the global and at the country level and to discuss possible common standards in mutual accountability and aid transparency. This symposium is a true multi-stakeholder event and a unique opportunity to enable an inclusive and universal dialogue.

Organizing this event together with UNDESA is an expression of Austria's interest in the efficient and effective functioning of the organisations of the United Nations Development Group. In this context, Austria attaches particular importance to the "Delivering as One" initiative which aims at making the work of the United Nations Development Group in the field more effective. The progress achieved so far in the pilot countries is promising and we trust that some more countries will follow this initiative.

A milestone in the United Nations reform was achieved in mid-September when the General Assembly adopted a resolution establishing a composite gender entity to be headed by an Under Secretary General. This new unit will significantly enhance the capacity, accountability and effectiveness of the United Nations in the area of gender and also positively contribute to the development efforts worldwide. The promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women are crucial for the development process of any country. There is no sustainable development without women having equal rights and opportunities as men; there is no lasting peace and reconciliation without the active contribution of women to peace building and conflict prevention. There is no development without the rule of law and human security. Security and development go hand in hand. In view of the tenth anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security we are strongly committed to galvanising renewed and revitalized momentum towards its full implementation.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Making development assistance more effective is a goal we all share. In view of the recent financial and economic crisis, it is more than ever important that we stay on track and deliver on the commitments we have made. Accountability and transparency are one of the key words in a global partnership on development.

I hope that the Vienna Symposium will provide you with ample opportunity not only to discuss the questions at hand but also to get to know better the Vienna based UN-Organizations.

Vienna enjoys a well known reputation for dialogue and fruitful encounters. I wish you therefore an interesting debate and all the best for your endeavors.