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**CLOSING STATEMENT
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PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

**2012 UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION FORUM
NEW YORK, 6 JULY 2012, 17:15 – 18:00, ECOSOC CHAMBER**

Deputy Secretary-General,
Under-Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to start by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to all the speakers and participants. You have brought a diversity of perspectives. It has been a great pleasure for the Economic and Social Council to host this successful Forum and I commend all those who contributed to its success.

We had enriching and insightful discussions and the Development Cooperation Forum has once again succeeded in serving as a global apex body for multi-stakeholder dialogue on key development cooperation issues.

Over the past two days, we have together identified important practical recommendations to surmount new challenges and enhance the coherence and results of development cooperation.

We have also made significant strides in developing a clearer vision for the future of development cooperation – a future all of us can shape to benefit the world's poor.

My purpose in this brief statement is two-fold: first, to present highlights of the contributions made by different stakeholders to the discussions; and second, to crystallize key suggestions for the future role and contribution of the DCF. A detailed summary will be presented later.

Distinguished delegates,

Let me now turn to each of the major themes we addressed yesterday and today.

In our first session, we heard about the many drivers of change in development cooperation. There were many strong calls for action to deliver on the global partnership for development agreed in Monterrey, including market access, trade facilitation, technology transfer, and combating illicit capital flows. It was also stressed that development assistance remains vital to combat poverty and hunger and accelerate progress to the MDGs. The global community must deliver on its commitments on the quantity and quality of aid.

Development cooperation should be allocated where it is most needed – especially in least developed and post-conflict countries. To match programme country priorities, it should be provided through modalities such as budget support and capacity development. Conditionalities should be sharply reduced and predictability and flexibility both improved.

Yesterday's discussions also focused on how development cooperation can unlock other sources of financing. A primary goal of development cooperation should be to eliminate long-term aid dependence, by mobilising domestic budget revenue and national savings through inclusive financial systems. Sound financial systems in developing countries are critical to support a dynamic private sector and to mobilize foreign capital and technology.

There was also broad consensus that mutual accountability and transparency are crucial to enhancing development results at national level. Several countries have managed to increase true “mutual” accountability with their providers, through strong aid policies, performance assessment frameworks with clear targets for individual providers, and broader inclusion of non-executive stakeholders. They need to share their experiences in more detail and the DCF was frequently mentioned as the most legitimate platform for such exchanges.

However, there was concern that imbalanced development partnerships may skew accountability away from where it is rooted: between governments and citizens. The latter must be the driving force – so accountability must focus on results which change their lives.

Because progress has been slow and uneven, the international community must accelerate its efforts to promote mutual accountability among all actors. Strong global and regional-level frameworks are needed to accelerate country-level progress. Political will and leadership from programme countries and providers, strong institutions and legal frameworks are crucial to change behaviour and increase results. Enhanced engagement of non-executive stakeholders will require civil society space and capacity-building support to be able to play their role effectively.

Recognizing the growth of South-South and triangular cooperation, and its complementary role to ODA, we must do more to benefit from the lessons learned and the distinct development experience of Southern providers. They are already delivering results very rapidly, with low costs and appropriate technology. Triangular cooperation is also playing a key role, especially in capacity development. Southern providers are also reinforcing the institutions they use to deliver development cooperation, enhancing coordination and evaluation within their own governments. But we must do much more to facilitate exchange on good practices and promote dialogue and analysis.

Another key thematic focus area for the 2012 DCF was the comparative advantage of private philanthropic organizations and decentralized governments. Private philanthropic organizations can introduce innovative approaches, take risks and target results closely. Decentralized governments can be adept at reaching local communities more directly. However, we need more detailed analysis on quality and impact of these cooperation channels.

At the same time, the multiplication of sources of development cooperation requires greater attention to coordination and new forms of partnership. We need to promote donor coordination and improved division of labour led by programme countries.

This afternoon we have discussed the renewed commitment to sustainable development and the role of development cooperation across its three pillars - economic, social and environmental sustainability. Coherence between the three pillars of sustainable development is critical, as well as tackling emerging challenges such as inequality, unemployment, population and urbanization. There will also be a need to mobilize large amounts of additional financing, notably from innovative sources, to meet high upfront costs. Sustainable development should be a priority in resource allocation, building on existing initiatives and mechanisms to avoid further fragmentation.

Finally, as the conference drew to a close, we looked ahead at what the future of development cooperation may hold. We all agree that, building on the strength of the MDGs, we must continue to work together on one shared global development agenda. The core values of the Millennium Declaration will continue to be relevant after 2015, but it will be vital that we improve this agenda further, by making it fully coherent with sustainable development, and reinforcing the MDG8 global partnership goals relating to development cooperation.

Distinguished delegates:

What do these discussions imply for the future role of the Development Cooperation Forum ?

As many of you have stated, the major comparative advantage of this Forum is the platform it provides for all of us - governments, civil society, private sector, parliamentarians and decentralized actors. You have seen your different perspectives reflected in its analytical work, and come together in its preparatory symposia, to develop best practice standards on key development cooperation issues which can be adapted and applied to national circumstances, particularly in the areas of mutual accountability, and results for women.

For the next phase, you have suggested the following areas of work:

- how development cooperation needs to adapt to the sustainable development and post-2015 agenda within the changing global landscape;
- how development cooperation can effectively catalyse other sources of finance for sustainable development to reduce long-term aid dependence;
- how it can capitalize on the comparative advantages and learn from the results of cooperation provided by all types of providers; and
- how to accelerate progress towards more accountable, transparent and results – oriented development partnerships; and
- how to enhance the impact of this work at the national level.

By fulfilling these goals, the DCF can become a crucial forum to distill the lessons of development cooperation for sustainable development. Let me therefore conclude by urging the DCF and all its stakeholders to continue down this path, determined to accelerate progress to the MDGs, sustainable development and jointly shape the post-2015 development agenda.

Thank you.