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THE PRESIDENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
H.E. AMBASSADOR MARTIN SAJDIK

**ECOSOC Partnerships Forum**  
**“The role of partnerships in achieving the Post-2015  
development agenda: Making it happen”**

Welcoming remarks by the President of ECOSOC

in the Economic and Social Council Chamber  
United Nations Headquarters  
New York, 28 May 2015

Mr. Deputy-Secretary-General,  
Mr. Clinton,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to this year's annual ECOSOC Partnerships Forum. The theme for today's event is "The role of partnerships in achieving the Post-2015 development agenda: Making it happen". This year is of special importance to all of us as it marks our transition from the MDGs to a universal and transformative development agenda. Indeed, multi-stakeholder partnerships - involving business, the philanthropic community, civil society, and academia - will be central for the implementation of this new development agenda.

Today's meeting has a fairly straightforward objective – to bring even more fresh thinking and even more new ideas into the discussion on how we can harness the broadest range of actors in support of the new development objectives we are about to create. The lessons we have learned from the MDG process are to be linked to our efforts to make the proposed sustainable development goals as effective as possible. This is the moment to partner for the sake of sustainability.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In the last two decades questions of transparency, mutual accountability, monitoring and review have received growing prominence in the sphere of development cooperation, including also the role and results of partnerships. We know when going forward we will need to ensure strong coherence and clear, equally applicable standards on reporting. Effective review mechanisms would enable us to share best practices and enhance the impact of such initiatives. In addition, aligning multi-stakeholder partnerships with the future goals and objectives of the United Nations will lay the ground to find even more innovative ways to harness their benefits.

Earlier this year, in February, the Economic and Social Council undertook a preliminary discussion of these issues, and our Forum will build on that discussion today. In my opinion ECOSOC provides the ideal platform for inter-governmental deliberations on partnerships, using the synergies of the ECOSOC-system, with its wide range of functional and regional commissions as well as expert bodies. It thus supports the High-level Political Forum in its focus on the key political issues of and on strategic guidance for the Post 2015 Agenda.

The morning session of our meeting today – with our truly outstanding key note speaker - will provide an opportunity to delve into the issues of health partnerships, specifically those in support of strengthening health systems. From ECOSOC's December meeting on Ebola we have learned that to help solve complex health issues such as Ebola, new alliances and partnerships are necessary in order to better address the critical and often systemic gaps in health, especially when tackling the many social and economic dimensions of this epidemic. While the response to Ebola was unprecedented among the global health community - it also allowed us to better understand the gaps in basic health services and in emergency response to pandemics.

I am particularly grateful that the Ministers of Health of the three most affected countries will join us via videoconference to update us on the latest developments and to present their insights into the lessons we all have to draw from this horrible scourge.

Our panel later this morning brings together some of the leading experts in global health in an effort to ensure that the investments made in fighting Ebola so far will translate into long-term health gains and building resilience to pandemics.

This afternoon's panel discussion will include an examination of lessons learned from MDG partnerships and consider ways in which new partnerships can be catalysed in support of the Post-2015 development agenda. We will also take a look on how best to measure the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder partnerships as well as possible ways to measure results.

Distinguished participants,

This is a very special occasion. Today, in this ECOSOC Chamber, we have a unique gathering of representatives from government, the private sector, philanthropy, and civil society. Here, we have been long convinced of the need to leverage the contribution of many sources of ideas to achieve the common goals we all share. Our strength is in our collective wish to bring about effective solutions to the many pressing global development challenges facing us all. The Economic and Social Council, with its multi-stakeholder approach, is the platform for dialogue and the promotion of partnerships. ECOSOC is the partner of the partners.

I look forward today to a dialogue that will generate many new and exciting ideas as well as strengthened partnerships for the future years to come.

It is with great pleasure that I now give the floor to His Excellency, Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations, to make his opening address.