



Mr. Liu Zhenmin Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

## Closing Statement

### 2018 ECOSOC Partnership Forum “Partnering for Resilient and Inclusive Societies: Contribution of the Private Sector”

Delivered by ASG Elliot Harris

Your Excellency, Ms. Chatardová,  
President of the Economic and Social Council,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to congratulate everyone on a successful 2018 ECOSOC Partnership Forum.

My deep appreciation goes to the President of ECOSOC for her leadership in bringing the issue of inclusion and participation to the Council.

The Forum has offered an excellent space to reflect on the role of the private sector in promoting more resilient and inclusive societies. While we are a diverse group, we have come together with open minds, eagerness to learn, and readiness to make concrete commitments for action. Your interventions were stimulating and thoughtful. Moving from the 2018 ECOSOC Partnership Forum, to the challenging realities ahead, I would like to offer six key observations.

First, the investment for building inclusive and resilient societies is a “win-win situation” for the private sector. Bringing in women, youth and vulnerable populations in all business strategies and operations helps the private sector better understand the needs of these groups, helping to expand markets, and potentially leading to larger returns on their investments.

Second, the private sector needs to focus much more on building human capacity and long-term trust, through genuine and mutually beneficial partnerships with all, including the most marginalized, to make their future business more sustainable and help build a better world.

Third, national and local governments should align their policies with the inclusion targets of the 2030 Agenda, including in particular, those geared towards incentivizing the practical contributions of the private sector towards more inclusive growth.



Fourth, more robust mechanisms of public-private dialogue should be put in place and aimed at strengthening the interface between the private sector and communities, in particular vulnerable groups, in the respective national contexts.

And finally, development partners can provide the necessary financial and technical capacity support for both public and private sector entities in developing country contexts – including fragile environments – to encourage investment and implement inclusive business strategies.

Excellencies,

We have heard best practices from both developed and developing countries. These aim to make positive impacts in the lives of the most vulnerable populations through their investment, R&D, procurement, hiring, blockchain solutions and big data analytics, among others.

There is strong consensus on the need to concretize the contributions of the private sector towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Many companies are already working in this direction and the Global Compact is building such momentum. Equally important, there is a strong sense that all stakeholders need to work together for more impactful and accountable partnerships.

The discussions also pointed not only to opportunities, but also to the gaps – in capital, capacity and data. Addressing these gaps requires a shift in our mindsets. We must re-align our vision with the aspirations of the 2030 Agenda.

The Department of Economic and Social Affairs, serving as Secretariat to the ECOSOC, High-level Political Forum and other key functional commissions and expert bodies, is committed to helping bridge these gaps to promote and mobilize the kind of business activities, investments and partnerships that will help us realise the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

To this end, the ECOSOC Partnership Forum has an important role to play in accelerating efforts to achieve a sustainable future for all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The year 2030 may seem distant, but we have already spent 17 percent of our time in collective efforts to implement the SDGs. We cannot afford to lose another day. Let us move forward with the decisive focus shown throughout the day today.

I thank you and wish you a safe journey home.