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**Closing statement by
Mr. WU HONGBO
UNDER-SECRETARY GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS,
TO THE DCF BELGIUM HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM**

Brussels, 8 April 2016, 3:30 p.m.

Mr. Peter Moors, Chief of Cabinet Development Cooperation, Belgium,
Ambassador Oh Joon, the President of ECOSOC,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I begin with my sincere thanks and appreciation to my co-Chair, Deputy Prime Minister De Croo and the Government of the Kingdom of Belgium, for hosting this important meeting, and to my dear friend, Mr. Peter Moors, and the entire Belgium team.

I thank the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Oh Joon, for his support. My deep gratitude goes to our stellar moderators and panelists, who have guided and inspired us these three days, and to all participants, for your energetic engagement, honest reflections and thoughtful contributions.

I cannot possibly capture the richness of the discussions here, in just a few minutes. Allow me please to share with you, in this moment, five messages I heard.

First, the global sustainable development agenda reflects the new reality: We are all developing countries, though at different stages. At any stage of development, sustainability, inequality, vulnerability and, fundamentally, poverty eradication concern us all.

Despite this universality, differentiated approaches are needed. Development cooperation has to be geared to support specific national and local efforts to achieve the SDGs. It should drive both public and private resources to where needs are greatest and capacities weakest. LDCs and others in vulnerable contexts need to be the primary focus. At the same time, we should also recognize the specific challenges facing the middle-income countries and limitations of income-based classification.

Second, there is tremendous potential in digital transformation to support poverty eradication and sustainable development. Unreliable infrastructure, lack of effective regulatory systems and human resource capacities pose challenges, in particular in LDCs. Among others, reliable, comprehensive and disaggregated data and statistics will be critical to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Development cooperation has a key role to play in this regard.

Third, development cooperation can play an important role in domestic resource mobilization (DRM) through various modalities, of ODA, South-South cooperation, triangular cooperation and so on. A broad approach to DRM should be taken to promote sustained economic growth as well as sustainable revenue expenditure/incomes. Such cooperation needs to

recognize national ownership and also include policy change at global and regional levels targeting the systemic issues that affect DRM.

Fourth, development cooperation offers multiple levers to help drive and support implementation, but there is no one panacea. And there is no replacement for delivering on existing commitments, to LDCs and to the broader global partnership for sustainable development. Many participants including the host country called for reversing the declining trend of ODA to LDCs.

Fifth, the interconnectedness of global challenges and current crises are both painfully and powerfully clear. The 2030 Agenda offers a generational opportunity to get over the fragmentation in approaches and action. It is not about humanitarian assistance vs. peacebuilding or development cooperation, or climate finance vs. development finance. With the 2030 Agenda to orient our work, we should make better progress in designing and implementing coherent and integrated approaches at all levels. National institutions and frameworks should bring together various strands of resources behind a single development agenda. And development cooperation itself has a distinctive role to play in supporting this.

We must have the courage to look for new forms of development cooperation, find smarter and more flexible ways to carry it out, and keep a constant focus on knowledge sharing and mutual learning. Citizen leadership and the key role of women and of local actors have been emphasized throughout.

Please check against delivery.

We have learned much from you here. All these messages will be brought to New York, as we finalize the agenda for the ECOSOC High-level Segment in July, including the High-level Political Forum as well as the High-level Meeting of the DCF. They will also feature prominently in the Inaugural ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development later this month.

I hope to see many of you at the 2016 DCF, carrying forward the work of this unique global platform and our shared work in development cooperation.

I thank you and wish you a safe journey home.