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**Opening remarks at the high-level political forum on
sustainable development
Monday, 10 July 2017
9:00 am, Conference room 4**

Under-Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Wu Hongbo,
Excellencies
Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am delighted to welcome you all to the 2017 High Level Political Forum on sustainable development: the second since we adopted the historic 2030 Agenda in 2015.

This is also the first HLPF after the adoption of resolution 70/299 which finalized the guidance on follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

This is the first HLPF that will discuss in-depth a set of goals (1, 2,3,5,9, 14) and SDG 17 which will be discussed each year. The Forum will also consider the theme "Eradicating poverty and promoting prosperity in a changing world". Poverty remains one of the greatest challenges of our time. This year's theme is therefore a very pertinent focus if our deliberations are to be truly relevant and make a positive impact in the lives of the people. There are high expectations from this global institution, and it is our duty to ensure that the HLPF lives up to them.

These parameters guided the ECOSOC Bureau and myself in defining the HLPF programme together with the presentations of follow-up and review of the 44 countries including my own.

We keep in mind the paramount importance of linking these with other SDGs, in line with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda.

The first week is dedicated to the in-depth review of this year's selected SDGs, the thematic review, as well as consideration of the means of implementation, the science-policy interface, interlinkages and the needs of



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countries in special situations as well as the special challenges of middle-income countries.

The Under-Secretary General, Mr. Wu Hongbo will present the Secretary General's SDG Progress report in a few minutes.

This report will give us an appreciation of where we are globally on each of the SDGs.

Based on the trends and direction emerging from this available data, each session on SDGs will start with a short statistical presentation that will lead into presentations by panellists on identifying challenges and progress and suggesting recommendations and possible solutions. Each session will also looking at the interlinkages with other SDGs.

We will also have some keynote speakers who will talk about where we are in year 2 of implementation.

The 2017 theme will be discussed through looking at how the multiple dimensions of poverty and inequalities are being addressed and how to leave no one behind.

This will also be done in various ways including through the lens of countries in special situations. We will also endeavour to discuss the special challenges of middle-income countries and countries in and emerging from conflict.

The regional dimension is very important and there will be two sessions dedicated to it.

One, which will start immediately after this opening, with the Executive Secretaries of the Regional Commissions and representatives of sub-regional organizations, will discuss the regional implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs. We have placed this session at the very beginning to enable us to take the regional dimension into account in the rest of our deliberations.



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The other session dedicated to the regional dimension will be at the opening of the ministerial segment of the HLPF where the ministers who chaired the regional sustainable development meetings will share the main recommendations from the regions.

As you know, we have 44 countries that will present their Voluntary National Reviews at this year's HLPF. I commend them all for their commitment. I know that a lot of work has gone into preparation at the national level and in many cases, the preparatory work has been that much more impactful due to commitment from the highest levels of Government.

As the reports have been coming in over the past couple of weeks, I have been encouraged by their richness and all-encompassing nature as well as by the level of ambition demonstrated by these 44 countries.

I am also gratified to note that the high-level of engagement in the VNRs has continued from last year as I see that the vast majority, if not all, of the presenting countries are at the ministerial level or higher.

This shows strong political will and sends the right message.

The 3 HLPF ministerial days will, after the opening, be dedicated to VNRs of these 44 countries.

I am also very happy to announce that Ministers and principals of the UN organizations will have a chance to meet and exchange their views on the implementation of the SDGs during the ministerial luncheon that I am organizing on Wednesday 19 July, in the Delegates' Dining Room. This, along with a significant number of complementary meetings, including side events that I am sure Mr. Wu will talk more about, shows the full breadth of the HLPF as the central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

I would also like to thank the Bureau for their tireless efforts in helping me to prepare this programme and for also taking on the task of delivering main messages at the opening of the ministerial segment of the HLPF.



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And last, but not least, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the Permanent Representatives of Austria and Jamaica for spearheading the negotiations on the Ministerial Declaration.

It is a very important intergovernmentally agreed outcome of the HLPF and this year is especially important as it reflects the refined structure of the HLPF where a set of goals is being discussed in-depth.

It goes without saying that its successful conclusion will certainly send a strong message of our collective commitment to leave no one behind as we pursue the timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

And now, without further ado, I give the floor to the Under-Secretary-General of DESA, Mr. Wu Hongbo, who will deliver his opening remarks and introduce the Secretary General's SDG Progress report.

Mr. Wu, you have the floor.