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United Nations Economic and Social Council

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

2017 Annual ECOSOC Partnership Forum

“Partnerships for promoting opportunities, increased prosperity and sustainable development for all”

5 April 2017

Opening statement by H.E. Mr. Frederick Musiiwa Makamure Shava President of the Economic and Social Council

Your Excellency, Mr. Peter Thomson, President of the General Assembly,
Mrs. Mary Robinson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2017 annual ECOSOC Partnership Forum. This is once again a unique opportunity for stakeholders to come together here in this Chamber to consider ways to promote sustainable development for us all.

The fight for a world with no poverty, no hunger and no disease; for better lives for all men, women and children and for a healthier planet is a fight that we can only win if we join forces. This is why the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs recognise the catalytic role of partnerships in the implementation of the Agenda.

I believe that all of us here today can contribute to the implementation of our collective development goals. In the same way that we emphasise leaving no one behind in the achievement of the Agenda, I believe the collective effort of all stakeholders will be critical in addressing our greatest challenges. It is only through working together that we will be able to fully face and deal with the complexities of today's development challenges which more often than not transcend borders in both their impacts and their solutions.



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Because of the strength inherent in collective action, impactful multi-stakeholder partnerships are crucial for the global development agenda. Furthermore, in the context of achieving sustainable development, I believe that there is a valid case to be made for infrastructure development and industrialisation, a topic on which I have placed special importance during my term as President. There is wide recognition of the vital role, both physical and social, that infrastructure plays in the economic and social development of cities, regions and nations. There are also ongoing discussions on how efforts to develop resilient infrastructure can benefit from the synergies that grow from public-private initiatives. This morning's discussion will examine these issues, including with a focus on the specific challenges of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), and Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs).

I am also of the view that, if we are to successfully achieve sustainable development for all, we are going to need strategic partnerships that will deliver strong results. For that, transparency and accountability along both spectrums of partnerships will be key. This afternoon's discussion will consider the importance of principles and guidelines for ensuring impactful results, and whether or not what is in place is sufficient for guiding UN-associated initiatives.

Distinguished participants,

This is a very special occasion. Today, in this Chamber, we have a unique gathering of representatives from Government, the private sector, philanthropy, and civil society. Here at the United Nations, we have been long convinced of the need to leverage the contribution of many sources of ideas to help 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.



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The Economic and Social Council, with its multi-stakeholder approach, is an important platform for dialogue among partners and the promotion of partnerships. It is also the body that coordinates the activities of the United Nations development system and provides policy guidance. As such it is uniquely placed to encourage a more systematic, coordinated and innovative approach to multistakeholder partnerships with a greater focus on the impact and sustainability of those partnerships in which the UN system is involved.

I look forward today to a dynamic and honest 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, Amb. Peter Thompson, President of the 71st Session of the General Assembly, to make his opening address.

Your Excellency, you have the floor.



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