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MR. WU HONGBO
UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS

ECOSOC FORMAL SESSION

*Closing of ECOSOC Dialogue on the longer-term positioning of the UN development system
in the context of the 2030 Agenda*

New York, 7 July 2016

*Delivered by Mr. Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General,
Department of Economic and Social Affairs*

H.E. Mr. Hector Alejandro Palma Cerna, Vice-President of ECOSOC
Mr. Amir Abdulla, Vice-Chair, UNDG and Deputy Executive Director, WFP
Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to read this statement on behalf of Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary
–General for Economic and Social Affairs.

I thank you for the opportunity to address the final meeting of the ECOSOC Dialogue on
the longer-term positioning of the UN development system in the context of the 2030 Agenda.

I would like to begin by congratulating you, Ambassador Palma Cerna, for the dynamic
manner in which you have conducted the second phase of the ECOSOC Dialogue. My
department is pleased to have had the opportunity to support you and the Council. I would also
like to thank my colleagues from the UNDS, especially the Chair of the UNDG, Ms. Clark, for
the outstanding support that they have extended to DESA. It has truly been a collective effort.
Through this collaboration, the dialogue has benefited from extensive analytical work by DESA,
the UNDS, and most recently by the Independent Team of Advisors. I am particularly grateful to
the Co-Chairs and Members of ITA for their important contribution. These inputs have truly
enriched the discussions.

Mr. Vice-President,

This ECOSOC Dialogue process could not be more-timely, following the adoption of the
2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change,
which will mark a significant change in the nature and overall direction of international
cooperation for development.

We know that the 2030 Agenda will pose very different demands on the UN development system and that we must rise to the challenge that it sets.

It is clear that the new development Agenda can only be addressed through collective action. This requires the system to step up its leadership, develop tailor-made solutions, adopt multi-stakeholder approaches and cut across vertical lines to move towards horizontal accountability and collective results.

Through this ECOSOC Dialogue, Member States have built a shared understanding that the UN development system needs to reform itself, building on its unique and comparative advantages. This means primarily redefining or refining the functions it will be delivering in different country contexts for the next fifteen years.

Excellencies,

I would like to capture some of the key messages that we have heard during the dialogue.

First, the system has to focus on results on the ground. It has to support governments in ensuring that no one is left behind. This must happen universally and in an integrated manner.

Second, the system needs to bring some fundamental changes in the way it plans, operates, and cooperates at the country and regional levels.

Third, there is a clear recognition that the system has already started to move in this direction. But it is still faced with the systemic challenges of fragmentation, duplication and competition.

Fourth, change needs to happen at all levels, national, regional and global. Reforms at the country-level have been significant and changes at headquarters are needed in order to maximise results on the ground. It should begin by shifting away from a silo'ed MDG mind set to one of universality, collaboration and integration - a true SDG mind set.

Fifth, Governments themselves must change the way they fund and govern the system. A more integrated and better coordinated approach is needed

Sixth, the interlinkages, between functions, funding, governance, organizational arrangement, capacity and partnership approaches have to be addressed in a comprehensive and strategic manner. The governance structure needs to be aligned with the new realities.

Seventh, these changes will not happen overnight. They will require time and perseverance. They may also require more investment in making the system fit for purpose.

Eighth, the QCPR can lay the foundation for these changes to take place, by becoming a more strategic instrument for system-wide guidance. Furthermore, ECOSOC should have a more active role in ensuring the implementation of the QCPR.

Lastly, this is a once in a generation opportunity to align the whole system behind the Sustainable Development Goals. If we do it right, then the UNDS will play a key role in supporting Member States in achieving the agenda by 2030.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is clear that we know *what* we need to do.

The task at hand now is *how* we will do it.

In that regard, the coming QCPR cycle will be a critical moment for Member States to better position the system in the context of the changed development landscape. You will need to provide the kind of strategic guidance that will set us on our way to collective outcomes in support of Member States' commitment for prosperity, people and planet that leaves no one behind.

In support of your deliberations, DESA is currently finalizing the update of the Secretary-General's report on the QCPR, in consultation with the UN system's entities. We expect the update to be made available to Member States in an advance, unedited version in the month of August. This update, along with the earlier Secretary-General's report, and a number of substantive analyses produced in the course of the past year will serve as background documents for the upcoming QCPR negotiations.

Before I end, on behalf of DESA, I would like to express once again the deep and sincere appreciation of the department for the close cooperation with the UNDG

I wish a productive meeting and a highly successful outcome of the QCPR.

Thank you.
