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ECOSOC
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Statement on the occasion of the 70th Anniversary of ECOSOC

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(Check against delivery)

Commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of ECOSOC: draft intervention

Mr President, on behalf of Canada and Australia, I would like to join my colleagues in congratulating ECOSOC on reaching this significant milestone.

When ECOSOC was established in 1946, it was identified as the principal United Nations body for coordination, policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on economic, social and environmental issues, as well as for implementation of the internationally agreed development goals.

Today on its 70th anniversary we can reflect on ECOSOC's ongoing relationship with the UN system. The 70th anniversary of a marriage is celebrated by the metal platinum, and we think there is some useful symbolism in this.

Platinum as a metal is highly valued, rare and endures well in difficult environments. It also retains a useful malleability to make it easy to work with – whether as a valuable symbol or in more technical settings.

ECOSOC, in its platinum year, is an enduring, legitimate and relevant organ of the UN and never has its mandate been more critical than it is today.

As we consider ECOSOC's considerable success, this is also a timely opportunity to reflect on the critical body of work that lies ahead for ECOSOC, and for the suite of commissions and forums which lie within its remit.

Following the agreement last year by all member states to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, 2016 marks the beginning of a 15-year process of implementation.

Consistent with its mandate, ECOSOC will take a lead role in the follow up and review process.

ECOSOC is well-placed to take up this role. It has historically provided a space for technical assessment, expert discussion and collective consideration of key economic and social issues by a wide range of stakeholders.

We look forward to the 2016 High Level Political Forum, to be held under the auspices of ECOSOC, as an opportunity to build strong foundations for implementation and as the first step toward crafting the HLPF as a dynamic and engaging forum that genuinely contributes to driving effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Similarly, the Financing for Development Forum will provide the ideal venue for technical informed discussions of the policies and approaches which will drive sustainable and inclusive growth to promote sustained results on the ground.

We would like to see ECOSOC draw on its technical expertise, strategic perspective and broad ranging partnerships to ensure that the forum is not just a place to tick the boxes on follow up and review, but somewhere to build partnerships, showcase innovation, and share successes and lessons learnt.

We look forward to the discussions within each functional commission as they contemplate what contribution they can make to follow up and review and specifically to the HLPF. The functional commissions are an invaluable part of the ECOSOC family. They provide opportunities for focused discussions, engaging experts and civil society and reflecting on the issues within their mandates. The Commission on the Status of Women, for example, is the preeminent fora for international dialogue on women's rights and gender equality and is uniquely placed to support gender-sensitive review of the sustainable development goals, a role we hope will accelerate the implementation of international gender equality commitments and the realisation of women's and girls' human rights.

We appreciate that ECOSOC also faces significant challenges as the UN system turns its attention to the need for reform and coherence. Business as usual is not an option if we are to achieve the high level of ambition set by the 2030 agenda. The need to reduce duplication and overlap between fora, meetings and reporting cannot be overstated. We need to build on what is already in place, but also be willing to reform or let go of those practices which no longer serve us well. We look forward to discussions both inside ECOSOC and beyond that would help hone the purpose, focus and contribution of each part of the UN system.

We look forward to working through ECOSOC to pursue these important agendas in the months and years ahead **and make this a platinum year that we can all be proud of.**