



**Opening Statement by H.E. Mr. Néstor Osorio  
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**2013 8<sup>th</sup> Planet Workshops' Global Conference  
Opening Plenary Session, "Has the transition been set in motion?"**

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Excellences,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to address the opening of the Eighth Edition of the Planet Workshops' Global Conference. Thank you for this opportunity to participate in a fruitful discussion to promote the collective action of the international community to help build a more prosperous path towards achieving global sustainability.

We are entering a period of transition, where the need for wide spread participation of all stakeholders is essential to transform the landscape of sustainable development in the foreseeable future.

The Economic and Social Council is the principal organ of the United Nations responsible for economic and social issues and the main coordinating mechanism for overseeing the implementation of the UN Development Agenda. As acknowledged at Rio+20, the Council also has

an important role in achieving a balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

The Council is therefore taking leadership in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development. On May 13<sup>th</sup>, for example, the Economic and Social Council hosted an Integration Meeting on “Achieving Sustainable Development”, that brought together representatives from the private sector, civil society and various UN organizations to engage in an exchange of ideas on how to integrate policy actions and initiatives to scale up sustainable development. The outcome of the roundtable discussions produced an overarching agreement from all participants on the inherent need to increase system-wide coherence and coordination to forge consensus building around critical policy decisions, and identify an institutional framework to encourage the implementation of multi-sector commitments at the local, national and international levels.

The Rio +20 outcome document – “The Future We Want” – underlined the need for cross-sector engagement to advance the integration of social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and stressed the need to renew our global commitment to combat the emerging challenges that continue to prohibit the flourishing of sustainability worldwide.

It is critical to encourage the representation of all key stakeholders at relevant deliberations to reinforce the active

participation and due diligence of individuals, businesses, and government officials in their responsibilities to adhere to the joint obligations and collaborative efforts set forth, in order to create a common vision for the Post-2015 development agenda.

Providing a platform for dialogue amongst various key stakeholders is necessary to produce uniform, concrete and effective solutions on development initiatives to strengthen the equal diffusion of sustainable innovations in both rural and urban centers. As the only United Nations body with a formal framework for NGO participation, the Economic and Social Council currently has 3,735 NGOs in consultative status and continues to explore ways to enhance the engagement of non-state actors in the work of the United Nations.

Since 2008, the Council has held a special annual event on partnerships as part of its preparations for the Annual Ministerial Review to broaden its range of stakeholders and promote concrete initiatives. The most recent Economic and Social Council Partnerships Forum on “Partnering for Innovative Solutions for Sustainable Development” held on 24 April attracted over 350 senior representatives from the private sector and foundations, as well as representatives from NGOs and academia. This year’s Forum had two distinct features. Firstly, policy dialogues that focused on how partnerships could facilitate the process of leveraging science, technology and innovation for addressing sustainable development challenges. Secondly, the Forum for the first time organized

“partnership clinics” focused on neglected tropical diseases, maternal health, poverty reduction and education, in particular in Africa.

More needs to be done to increase the engagement of the private sector in the work of the United Nations. In this regard, efforts to strengthen the Economic and Social Council include proposals to make ECOSOC the hub of the UN system in discussing, nurturing and strengthening partnerships. It is proposed, for example, that the Council’s annual Partnerships Forum, which brings together senior private sector and foundation representatives, be upgraded, becoming a space for in-depth discussion on the future role of partnerships, for the development of new partnerships in priority policy areas, and for mobilizing action at operational level.

It is evident that the current challenges to sustainable development, such as rapid urbanization and environmental degradation, must be approached in an integrated manner through means of strengthening the global partnership and through constructing attainable and comprehensive development goals. However, participation remains disaggregated across multiple sectors and existing implementation gaps between public-private partnerships continue to detract from the realization of sustainable development.

Approaching the vertical and horizontal constraints of institutional networks is necessary to gauge political willingness and corporate leadership to overcome such barriers to intensify the nexus

between the three dimensions of sustainability. The private sector should lead adhering to practices of corporate social responsibility and allow access to science, technology, and innovations in rural communities. In this regard, the mobilization of local community members, such as entrepreneurs and farmers, will stimulate advancement opportunities in energy and agricultural sectors and mitigate potential risk which deters corporations from performing sustainably.

The development of accountability mechanisms is key to reinforce political commitments and clarify the responsibilities of decision makers when implementing appropriate development frameworks.

The process of defining a new transformational development agenda provides an excellent opportunity to align the interests of the business community with UN goals so that we have a unified vision of how to proceed beyond 2015. The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda stressed the need for an open, transparent and inclusive process, and for a renewed Global Partnership that encourages partnerships at all levels, throughout all development processes. While we continue to elaborate on the sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, we must strive for a single, universal, coherent post-2015 development agenda that integrates economic growth, social inclusion and environmental sustainability.

The Rio+20 has provided us with fresh ideas and a roadmap for action. The follow up and implementation process at the national, regional and global levels are forged by the threads of policy coherence, shared technical and expert knowledge and the political will to mobilize for effective implementation. But for there to be an effective and balanced implementation, all stakeholders must share in the follow up process together. The partnerships, led by national governments, must include civil society, the private sector, academia and community-based organizations all working together and guided by a common agenda and aspiration that links the three dimensions of sustainable development.

I commend you on your continuous efforts to harmonize multi-stakeholder participation to achieve our sustainable development goals and I look forward to following the deliberations and conclusions of the session.

Thank you.