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Closing Remarks by

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2014 ECOSOC HIGH-LEVEL SEGMENT

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Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Representatives of civil society and the business sector,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are now concluding the high-level segment of the 2014 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council. Let me express my sincere appreciation to all of you for making the past week a success.

I would like to especially thank all the panellists, moderators and lead discussants for their stimulating contributions. My sincere gratitude goes to the Major Groups and other stakeholders for their active engagement. Your participation injected fresh perspectives into the debate and helped transform our meetings into truly inclusive dialogues.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This high level week has made significant contribution to our collective efforts to create the foundations for a new global sustainable development agenda.

The first meeting of the High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of ECOSOC was a success in establishing an inclusive platform for dialogue on the pathways towards the Future We Want.

The discussion at the High Level Political Forum emphasised that poverty eradication is key to sustainable development. Only through the integration of its three dimensions it is possible to achieve a life of dignity for all, where no one is left behind and where the needs of the people are at its very core. The forum has showed that we are fully committed to a sustainable future for our planet for present and future generations.

The discussion also contributed to defining the expectations for the Forum beyond 2015, in line with the vision expressed by Heads of State in Rio in 2012. The Forum now needs to prepare for a new phase of development. I look forward to fine tuning the functions of the HLPF, which is one of several mosaic stones of the future development agenda. Its role lies with the implementation of the agenda and specifically the SDGs and with giving political guidance in this respect. We still have to further elaborate on how to fulfil this role in practice.

The High-Level Segment as a whole made important strides in addressing key challenges, such as rising inequality, worsening environmental conditions and persistent unemployment, amongst others.

The High-Level Policy Dialogue, for the first time with the participation of the Executive Heads of UNEP and ILO, examined key features of a coherent and integrated macroeconomic policy framework that would support economic efficiency, social equality and environmental sustainability. The ministerial panel on integrating employment-centric policies into sustainable development demonstrated how the Council can promote a balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The Council will continue to engage in the critical debate on employment-centric sustainable development at its Integration Segment next year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A large number of Ministers from both developing and developed countries participated in this year's Annual Ministerial Review (AMR).

The 2014 Annual Ministerial Review focused on accelerating progress towards the MDGs, the transition to the post-2015 development agenda, a strong monitoring and accountability mechanism to support its implementation, and on key enablers of sustainable development. The role of institutions, the rule of law, socially inclusive participation, and the effective measurement and review of progress emerged not only as critical, but central.

The Ministerial Declaration of the 2014 High-level segment and the High-Level Political Forum under the auspices of the Council, adopted on Wednesday, reaffirmed the need to continue to build on the MDG experience. It stressed that the MDGs must be a critical building block for a strong, inclusive and people-centred post-2015 development agenda.

We also heard ten national voluntary presentations made by the Governments of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Gambia, Georgia, Kuwait, Mexico, Qatar, Sudan, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the State of Palestine. My sincere appreciation goes to these Governments and their Reviewers.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Over the last two days, the Development Cooperation Forum produced a wealth of inputs on the future of development cooperation.

Since its inception in 2007, the Forum has reviewed trends and progress in international development cooperation, including strategies, policies and questions on financing.

The Forum is now uniquely positioned as a global process with full multi-stakeholder buy-in and a clear mandate to examine the "frontiers" of development cooperation, to use the more forward-looking and inspiring concept, offered to us by Professor Chambers, to consider what the future of development cooperation will bring.

How can we make development cooperation a positive and inspiring experience for people? How can we ensure adequate space for all actors in a global dialogue which is shaping up on post-2015 and the Third International Financing for Development Conference?

We need to revive these debates and spark action by providing pressure and incentives through global exchanges. The DCF is the right Forum for driving this agenda forward. The last two years have shown that a systematic preparatory process, with a clear vision for the role of the DCF and the strengths it needs to develop, pays off. And we have to ensure that the DCF is at least as interesting and challenging as its preparatory process.

To maximize development impact, it will be critical to provide adequate incentives for all stakeholders to encourage meaningful contributions and promote coherence across partnerships. Trust, transparency and mutual accountability must be at the heart of those partnerships.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thus far a lot has been achieved.

First, we have established the role of the Council as an inclusive, vibrant, and authoritative platform for policy dialogue and guidance towards balanced and integrated socio-economic and environmentally sound approaches.

Second, we have strengthened the institutional framework for sustainable development and are on the right track to formulate a new monitoring and accountability framework for the implementation of the emerging SDGs and post-2015 development agenda.

Third, the Development Cooperation Forum has opened new vistas for looking at the future of development cooperation for a unified and universal development agenda.

Finally, we have demonstrated through the Youth Forum, Partnerships Forum, the newly created Integration Segment, the operational activities and humanitarian affairs segments, the Coordination and Management Meetings and the HLPF that ECOSOC is a very dynamic and

forward-looking platform. It is the central hub for engaging global actors, the UN system and for mobilizing action on the most pressing challenges of our time.

I also acknowledge that much remains to be done. Yet this should inspire us to continue to strengthen the Council and the HLPF to deliver.

The lead-up to next year will be crucial. Our reflections should focus on what kind of analytical, monitoring and review frameworks will be needed to allow for a rigorous, evidence-based, transparent and comparable evaluation of results in a post-2015 context. Timely, reliable, accessible and comparable data will be essential.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me at the end of this high-level segment week, which united the HLPF, the first ever under the auspices of ECOSOC, the Annual Ministerial Review and the DCF in just 5 days, touch some aspects of the interrelationship of these.

The HLPF is a new arrival in the already densely populated territory of UN bodies, fora, commissions, committees and working groups. As with all new creations, a lot of expectations have arisen in connection with the HLPF. This is understandable. But let's not forget the role the UN member states in their never ending wisdom have allotted to the HLPF: it is to oversee the implementation, review the progress of the Post 2015 Agenda, and specifically of the SDGs and give political guidance.

While many issues of the agenda beyond 2015 are still to be determined, the General Assembly resolution 67/290 defined the relationship of the hybrid HLPF as subordinate to the GA and the ECOSOC. This very fact has also not been disputed by member states in the past days.

Neither have they theorized about an independent secretariat for the HLPF or daydreamed about separate governing structures for this recently born child.

For the benefit of the post-2015 development agenda all the actors, whose dedication to this process is admirable, should see and internalize these realities. We need lean, efficient existing structures that “work as one”.

In the past days we have repeatedly heard that we have to avoid “silos” and always keep the broader, holistic picture in mind. This applies also to the Secretariat, to make it very clear. We don’t need different “silos”, we need “acting as one”.

I am positive that solutions will be found, more quickly than we expect solutions that will lead to an overall “win-win” situation and I kindly invite H.E. Under-Secretary General Mr Wu Hongbo to take the necessary steps.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I look forward to your continued engagement in the work of the Economic and Social Council to achieve the Future We Want. Let me at this point wholeheartedly thank **ALL** the stakeholders for their very active involvement in the last days.

I would like to convey my sincere appreciation to the members of the Bureau for their outstanding work. I am fortunate to have such a competent Bureau.

Last but not least, my thanks to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management for their tireless support.

I would like to end by once again thanking you for your participation, especially to those who travelled from afar. Wish you a safe journey.
