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**Opening statement by
H.E. MR. MARTIN SAJDIK
PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
TO THE DCF REPUBLIC OF KOREA HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM**

Incheon, 9 April 2015

Development cooperation for people and planet: What will it take?

Honorable Vice Minister Shin,
Under-Secretary-General Wu,
Ambassador Talbot,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank you, Vice Minister Shin, and the Government of Korea, for hosting this High-level Symposium, the first in our preparations for the 2016 Development Cooperation Forum.

Your country's historic leap to become one of the world's most thriving economies – and active partners in international development cooperation – truly inspires us all. Songdo is thus a most fitting place for this policy debate, on the future of development cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A unique, unparalleled in history, path forward is taking shape, with the crafting of a transformative, unified and universal post-2015 development agenda, focused on poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Some countries are already working to align their own national development plans and strategies with the proposed sustainable development goals. In the spirit of universality, this will involve all countries.

There is broad consensus that the agenda's successful implementation will depend on a comprehensive financing framework for sustainable development. This framework must be relevant to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in all regions and for all income groups, and should seek coherence and maximize synergies with other financing streams.

The success of the post-2015 development agenda will also hinge upon the effective review of progress on substantive goals and follow-up to commitments made, especially on the full spectrum of means of implementation. This requires a flexible, multi-layered global framework. It must build on existing mechanisms at all levels.

The preparations for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the intergovernmental post-2015 negotiations are at a critical juncture. Crucial meetings lie ahead of us in the coming two weeks.

On April 20th and 21st we will also have in New York the traditional ECOSOC dialogue with the Bretton Woods Institutions, WTO and UNCTAD. The interest of these institutions and organizations in sounding out and testing the present prevailing spirit in New York is huge. There will be a good number of High Level representatives of these institutions in New York, ready for a genuine dialogue.

Strengthening the global partnership for development will be most vital in this regard. It will underpin implementation of the agenda, not only to mobilize resources, but also to facilitate engagement of stakeholders and address systemic issues. For this, all key aspects of the means of implementation of the SDGs should be addressed in the negotiations for and in Addis Ababa in July.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Economic and Social Council is the principal body within the UN system for coordination and policy review on economic and social affairs.

Since at least 1995, the Council has worked to advance a coordinated and integrated, approach to the review and follow-up of UN conferences and summits, focused on the various dimensions of poverty and sustainable development.

The Council, and its functional and regional commissions, expert bodies, and the UN funds and programmes, have clear distinctive roles and division of labour. They have accumulated extensive policy experience, from the review of implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, to the follow-up to global commitments from Monterrey and Rio and beyond.

2014 was the first year that ECOSOC convened its newest platforms, including the High-level Political Forum and the Integration Segment. And it followed a calendar that enables structured engagement of experts and practitioners in dedicated segments and sessions throughout the year, around a common annual theme.

This year, the narrative emanating from different segments – including also the operational activities segment and Youth Forum – has sharpened around the 2015 theme to support the transition from the MDGs to the Sustainable Development Goals.

While it takes time, the Council is well on its way to becoming a truly integrating and unifying platform. My vision for the Council is to show how global policy debate can translate an aspirational debate into effective sharing of knowledge, mutual learning and delivering on promises that stimulate specific actions and lasting results for people.

The Development Cooperation Forum is one of the Council's core functions, contributing to the integration and implementation of sustainable development. Its work informs the Financing for Development process. And the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development takes the ongoing work of the DCF into account.

HLPF could specifically draw on the extensive work and experience of the DCF in the field of monitoring, review and accountability on all levels. This question will be at the core of the upcoming HLPF at the end of June, beginning of July in New York.

The DCF serves as the United Nations focal point to carry out the holistic consideration of issues related to international development cooperation, with the participation of all relevant stakeholders. It is driven by substance. It provides a truly essential space for decision makers and experts to openly deliberate and generate recommendations on key, and often sensitive, issues.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This DCF Symposium in Songdo is focused on one of the most critical pieces of the puzzle.

How to gain wider recognition and mobilize more and more effective development cooperation as an integrating force for sustainable development?

Development cooperation embraces practices that involve both financial and non-financial means of implementation. It has to be more at the center of a coherent narrative, vision and concerted action for the realization of the new agenda.

Cooperating on issues of development is vital for the broader global partnership for sustainable development needed to bring about systemic policy changes to leave no one behind, to tackle common global problems and take up opportunities to put the world on a firm path toward sustainable development for all.

While I have laid out some of the wider context, let us focus here in Songdo on the practical arrangements governments and other stakeholders will have to make to be ready for development cooperation in a post-2015 setting.

I am confident our deliberations here will identify some concrete policy advice to support preparations for the third International Conference on Financing for Development and the post-2015 deliberations.

I look forward to a frank, constructive and policy-oriented dialogue.
