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THE PRESIDENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL  
H.E. AMBASSADOR MARTIN SAJDIK

REMARKS  
UNF/GLOBAL COMPACT LUNCHEON  
“THE POST-2015 BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT ARCHITECTURE”  
UN SOUTH DELEGATES DINING ROOM, 10 APRIL 2014

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me, in my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council, to address all of you here today. Over the years, both the United Nations Foundation and the Global Compact have been great friends and supporters of the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council, and the annual Partnerships Forum. We value your unwavering support and commitment, and I thank you for the kind offer to me to be here today.

Since 2008, the annual ECOSOC Partnerships Forum has brought together business representatives and UN Member States, as well as philanthropists, civil society organizations and academia, to generate and discuss concrete solutions on how multi-stakeholder partnerships can progress mutually beneficial goals across a variety of sectors, including health, education, science, technology and innovation. We have gathered here at United Nations headquarters to discuss the critical role that partnerships can and are playing in the final push towards the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of future development goals.

At today’s luncheon, I wish to briefly highlight the importance of partnerships with business in advancing a sustainable development agenda, and the opportunities and benefits for Member States when partnering with business.

Partnering with business is an essential tool that has made a significant contribution in the final push to achieving the Millennium Development Goals. At both yesterday's and this morning's sessions, we heard specific examples of how multi-stakeholder partnerships have played an important role in progressing sustainable development and we have begun to explore how these could contribute to the implementation of future development goals.

As has been alluded throughout the discussions so far, partnerships can be positive for both the business sector and governments. For businesses, sustainable development is essential for creating an enabling environment to flourish. For governments, partnerships with the private sector can mobilise finance, technology, innovation, research and human resources for sustainable development gains. Business can enable economic growth where governments have limited capacity. Business can create jobs, which are essential for reducing poverty. Through a partnership, the private sector can share knowledge, information and transfer skills with government and local community organisations.

Business can mobilise resources, develop capacity, build infrastructure, grow new markets to reach marginalised groups, and take on risky behaviour to develop innovative solutions to development problems.

While there are challenges to executing a successful, effective and mutually beneficial partnership between business and government, these challenges can be addressed. One of these challenges is to create and maintain an enabling environment conducive to business and based on good governance and the rule of law. Another challenge is to ensure that the priority needs of the people for which the partnerships are created are the key drivers. After all, partnerships will only be successful if they provide an innovation that is relevant and fulfils the needs of local communities.

Sustainable development is an ambitious agenda that entails simultaneously advancing inclusive economic growth, social development and environmental sustainability. Achieving such an agenda inevitably requires cooperation and partnership with all stakeholders, including the business community.

The level of ambition of a post-2015 agenda and the commitment to advancing sustainable development will largely depend on the level of commitment from all stakeholders. We need to strengthen the global partnership for development not only as an essential tool for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, but also to provide greater credibility for the formulation of the post-2015 development agenda.

As we move towards future development goals and a sustainable development agenda, we must take into account the lessons learned and leverage the partnership opportunities available.

In closing, I would like to reiterate the Council's position as a gateway and springboard for establishing and nurturing partnerships. It should also be a platform for sharing information on best practices and lessons learned from prior and existing partnerships.

Once again, my thanks to the organizers of this luncheon for their kind invitation for me to speak, and I look forward to our discussion.