



**H.E. Mr. Martin Sajdik
President of the Economic and Social Council**

**High-level Segment of ECOSOC
and high-level political forum on sustainable
development
Opening remarks**

New York 7 July 2014

H.E. Mr John Ashe, President of the General Assembly,
H.E. Mr. BAN KI-moon, Secretary General of the UN

Distinguished Ministers,
Excellencies,
Dear delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I extend to all of you a warm welcome to the opening of the High-level Segment of ECOSOC and to the opening of the Ministerial Segment of the High-level Political Forum under auspices of the Council.

I thank you all for being here. Your presence attests to your commitment to the important issues that are now before us and to your dedication to advancing sustainable development.

Excellencies,

We are approaching the creation of a new, inclusive and people-centered post-2015 development agenda. This agenda will aim to free mankind from poverty and hunger, and attain sustainable development.

The new agenda will build on the Millennium Development Goals, complete their unfinished business and respond to new challenges.

It will be a universal agenda that is critical for the future of humanity.

In our deliberation on the design of this new agenda, we also must consider how to revamp our approach to development.

In this period of transition, we will need an integrated approach to sustainable development, underpinned by the strengthened framework that the GA, ECOSOC and the HLPF under their respective auspices constitute.

Well placed first and foremost in the ECOSOC but also in the GA architecture, the HLPF will be key for promoting and reviewing the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda and the SDGs.

This meeting should, therefore, set the tone and define the international community's expectations for the forum beyond 2015.

Excellencies,

The HLPF senior officials meeting, concluded last Thursday, had very fruitful discussions. Some of the messages of this meeting are as follows:

- First and foremost: we honor what has been accomplished by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals so far, although some voices of disappointment with its last zero draft could not be overheard. But, it is not up to the HLPF to create parallel streams of negotiations.
- There is a clear sense of opportunity as we reach this final phase in crafting the SDGs and the post 2015 development agenda. This agenda must be people-centered, universal and should build upon the Rio+20 outcome document.
- The unfinished business of the MDGs needs to be completed.
- The agenda should also address today's urgent challenges, notably persistent poverty and inequality. Climate change is a matter of intergenerational solidarity and responsibility.
- Consumption and production patterns must become sustainable. We should explore further how it should be addressed in the SDGs.
- Renewing the global partnership for implementing the post-2015 development agenda will be crucial for its success.
- The business sector has a vital role, Corporate Social Responsibility has gathered momentum - primarily through the Global Compact. But more efforts are needed to engage the business sector for the cause of sustainable development. Creativity and a spirit of mutual trust are necessary to bring us forward.
- Governments continue to play an indispensable role in spurring sustainable development. Political will to implement the new agenda will be critical.
- An effective conversation should occur between scientific communities and decision-makers to ensure evidence-based policy-making. The Global Sustainable Development Report offers an opportunity to support such an interaction.
- Good governance, the rule of law, women empowerment, economic stability and decentralization are essential for building resilience.

- Strengthened review and accountability systems based on transparency and use of indicators are needed to bolster implementation of the post 2015 development agenda.
- Expectations in the agenda are high, especially among the multi-stakeholders. We had intensive dialogues with civil society, academia, business sector, philanthropy, youth and also children. Their role alongside with Parliaments, supreme audit institutions, ombudspersons and local government will indeed be crucial. Their message to us is clear – participation.
- Talking about message – one message I received in the dialogue with the multi-stakeholders I would also like to transmit to this august body: the post 2015 agenda, if we want it to really succeed, should not be presented as a “gloom and doom” - but as a “yes, we can” – message.

Excellencies,

Let me now turn to the High Level Segment of ECOSOC, the Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum:

This high-level segment has established itself as a high-caliber global dialogue platform, with its Annual Ministerial Review and the biennial Development Cooperation Forum.

Evidenced in tomorrow’s ministerial meeting on integrating employment-centric sustainable development into the post-2015 development agenda, the Council will continue its tradition to address new and emerging challenges. Indeed, in May of this year, the focus of the Council’s integration segment on sustainable urbanization was evidence of its capability to innovate, and to address emerging matters of global concern. The ECOSOC Youth Forum has for a number of years reminded us of our responsibilities towards the future. I am glad to acknowledge the presence of Ms Esther Agbarakwe, who will share her perspective with us later this morning.

Furthermore, the experience that we have collectively gained through national voluntary presentations will be helpful in the future, when we

consider a new type of national reviews to monitor implementation of the post-2015 agenda. From that perspective, I am encouraged that 10 national presentations will be made. I proudly commend the Governments of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, Gambia, Georgia, Kuwait, Mexico, Qatar, Sudan, Thailand, the United Kingdom, and the State of Palestine for participating in this year's review. Peer countries have been identified to review these experiences, critically, yet constructively. I am confident we will have extremely interesting discussions on Wednesday.

The fourth high-level meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum will provide an inclusive space for development actors to jointly review trends and progress in development cooperation. We expect concrete suggestions on the design of a global monitoring and accountability framework for development cooperation commitments, building on existing efforts to support implementation.

The DCF programme builds on extensive two-year preparations that included High-level Symposia, co-organized by UNDESA and the Governments of Ethiopia, Switzerland and Germany. Other preparatory events were also held, including the 2012 Vienna Policy Dialogue. By its mandate, the High-level Political Forum will take into account the work of the DCF.

Excellencies,

As you know, we are scheduled for a joint Ministerial Declaration this week. I have no doubt that both this second meeting of the forum - the first one under the auspices of ECOSOC - and the High-level Segment of ECOSOC are the vibrant, insightful, and inclusive leadership platforms they were meant to be. They must result in cutting-edge guidance for this period of transition and reorientation.

I ask you to engage actively, critically, and with full commitment, in once again demonstrating the key role of ECOSOC in the balanced integration of the three aspects of sustainable development. For its part, the HLPF, under the auspices of ECOSOC, must offer guidance on how to move from global commitments to national implementation and sustainable development results.

The post-2015 agenda requires high levels of global commitment and collective action. We should use the Charter authority of ECOSOC in gaining support for collective responses to the challenges of sustainable development.

Thank you.