



Opening Remarks

by His Excellency Mr. Oh Joon, President of the Economic and Social Council

Commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Economic and Social Council

**ECOSOC Chamber
22 January 2016**

Excellencies,
Dear Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to welcome you to this commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the Economic and Social Council.

I wish to extend a special welcome to our honoured guests. We have with us the Deputy Secretary-General, a very distinguished gathering of former Presidents of the Council, and Mr. Rafeudin Ahmed, former secretary of ECOSOC who have graciously joined us to celebrate ECOSOC's birthday

We also look forward to hearing the perspectives of the special guests on the panel on the vision of the 2030 Agenda for the Sustainable Development and the work of the Council.

Excellencies,

This 70th anniversary of ECOSOC is a historic moment to reflect and build on our collective actions and accomplishments.



In 1945, the United Nations Charter embodied the determination to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

Following the Charter's adoption, the first meeting of ECOSOC was convened from 23 January to 18 February 1946, in London, with Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar of India chairing as its first President.

Since then, ECOSOC has served for the last 70 years as the central platform of the UN to address global economic, social and related issues.

The Council's primary role has been the formulation of policy recommendations for Member States and the coordination of development action by the UN system.

Seventy years on, the United Nations achieved another significant milestone by adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in September last year.

The new Agenda is based on decades of devotion to advancing development. It reflects a remarkable evolution in international development thinking since the United Nations was created in the aftermath of World War II. I believe that the work of this Council has been pivotal to that evolution.

The pursuit of sustainable development has become the shared responsibility of all of us. The 2030 Agenda requires that all countries and stakeholders come together to realize the Sustainable Development Goals.

ECOSOC is central to this process. Our theme for this year: *“Implementing the post-2015 development agenda: moving from commitments to results”*, reflects the Council’s commitment to addressing the critical tasks ahead of us.

The Council and its system as a whole – including segments, forums, functional commissions, regional commissions and expert bodies – are mobilized towards this end. They will serve as a harmonized, coherent and effective platform for delivering concrete results for people and the planet.

The 2030 Agenda and the SDGs require Member States to formulate integrated policies addressing the economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development. For this, we need to ensure synergies across multiple sectors. Promoting policy integration will be a critical area of work for the Council in the years to come.

2016 marks the first year of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and ECOSOC is ready to play its part. The High Level Political Forum, with its central role in follow-up and review, as well as the Segments and meetings of the ECOSOC system, will bring together valuable contributions to advance the achievement of the Agenda.

The new ECOSOC forum on financing for development follow-up, mandated by the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, will be convened for the first time this year. It will be an essential component in our journey from commitments to results.



All stakeholders will also have a role to play in charting the way forward. The Council will support these partners from around the world in advancing the vision and goals of the 2030 Agenda.

We have a rich history in ECOSOC, but the bar has been raised. We must deepen our thrust to work with Member States and other stakeholders to meet the growing expectations for transforming the world for the benefit of mankind.

Distinguished delegates,

Building on its 70 years of experience, the Economic and Social Council stands ready to deliver on the promise of poverty eradication and sustainable development.

We will carry out this historic mandate through coordinated and coherent strategies and guidance at all levels.

The Bureau and I are truly honoured to commemorate this milestone and join all of you in looking forward to an even brighter future.

Thank you.

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