

28 June 2012

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser,
President of the 66th Session of the General Assembly,
at the Opening of the General Assembly Informal Plenary on the
United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development**

Your Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to meet you all in this plenary of the General Assembly following last week's successful United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio plus 20, in Brazil, which resulted in the adoption of the historic document, "The Future We Want".

I am glad that once again, we are privileged to have the UN Secretary-General with us today. He will provide a briefing on the outcome of Rio plus 20, as well as share with us his perspectives on the way forward.

It was an honour for me to participate in this historic Rio plus 20 summit. Before I call on the Secretary-General, I wish to take this opportunity to share with you briefly my thoughts and reflections about the outcome of Rio, and about advancing the UN's development agenda.

I believe this conference will go down in history as the moment when the international community renewed its political will and commitment to tackle the challenges of sustainable development.

We were all motivated by a great desire to tackle the enormous challenges that exist across all pillars of sustainable development.

A critical mass of world leaders, civil society and - very impressively - the business community and private sector, have all come to this realization.

It is exciting to see the new, vibrant partnerships that have emerged as a result of this recognition.

It is also very exciting to see the demonstration of a stronger collective will to work together to chart a future that we all want.

In Rio, Member States have agreed to work on defining Sustainable Development Goals, building on the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals, post-2015.

In the Outcome Document, Member States have recognized the importance of their shared responsibility.

A historic international consensus emerged, and agreement was reached in important areas of sustainable development.

I encourage Member States to respect their commitments so that they can guide our future actions. Implementation is imperative if we are to attain the future we want.

Now that the summit is over, the real work begins, and we all have our parts to play for ultimate success.

In moving forward, the General Assembly, as the world's most universal, legitimate and representative body, will continue to play a central role, to help define and establish universal sustainable development goals beyond 2015.

A critical issue related to sustainable development and global prosperity is the state of the world economy.

No country has been completely immune from the global economic and financial crisis that hit the world in 2008.

To tackle this issue successfully, the world needs to come together like never before and act collectively with a sense of urgency.

For this reason, and with your support, I convened a series of meetings in the area of Sustainable Development and Global Prosperity, which is one of the key areas of focus for this session of the General Assembly.

I urge the UN Membership to continue to work in partnership.

It is critical now, more than at any other time in our history, that we strongly renew our commitments, and that we sincerely demonstrate our political will to build the future we want.

Thank you.