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Remarks by H.E. Peter Thomson at China Roundtable on Sustainable Development Goals Implementation

H.E. Mr. Li Keqiang, Premier of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Secretary General, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin by expressing my thanks to the Premier and to the Government of China, for their warm hospitality during my recent visit.

I would also like to welcome the recent news that China has ratified the Paris Climate Agreement.

I assure you I will be encouraging other Member States who have not yet done so, to follow China's lead. I'm very pleased to note that my own country, Fiji, was the first to ratify the agreement.

I wish to thank Premier Li for sharing today the news of China's progress and perspectives on the SDGs.

This time last year, we were celebrating the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

But one year on, it is clear that far more needs to be done to turn this masterplan for saving people and planet into concrete action and meaningful change.

It may be a big Agenda, but the ramifications of our inaction are even bigger.

That is why, I have made the principle objective of my Presidency of the 71st General Assembly, to oversee a universal push to transform our world and to see meaningful progress in implementing all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

I intend to work closely with Member States, UN agencies, and other partners over the course of the year, in this endeavor. This includes:

- Pushing partners to work on expanding global awareness of the SDGs, so that its existence is known by those who stand to benefit the most from it;
- Encouraging States to consider their social, economic, financial and environmental policies in light of the 2030 Agenda, in order to ensure they support the transformations needed, and that development gains reach all people;

– Encouraging States to review their national development plans, laws and frameworks, to ensure that they support effective implementation.

On this, I commend China for its National Plan on Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and welcome the adoption of the G20 Green Finance Action Plan, accomplished under China's bold leadership; and I also plan to engage with Member States, UN agencies, international financial institutions, the private sector, civil society and other relevant stakeholders in seeking to identify new and innovating SDG financing options, to increase dedicated resources towards SDG's implementation.

Current estimates are that financing the SDGs will require annual investments of US\$ 5-7 trillion dollars. The role of green finance has a logical place in the sustainability of the world's financial system.

Clearly, the UN must also fulfil its critical role in supporting implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

As a first step, it is vital that the UN System work coherently, effectively, and efficiently together, including by overcoming longstanding silos within and across Departments, Agencies, Funds and Programmes – both at UN Headquarters, and in the field.

More broadly, the international community must also work in an integrated, coherent, efficient, and innovative manner, building on each other's comparative advantages, and focusing on delivering real added value.

Collaboration and strategic partnerships must also be strengthened, and inclusive models of engagement encouraged.

Events like today's Roundtable, which bring together key stakeholders at the highest levels, are invaluable to strengthening dialogue and collaboration; identifying new opportunities; and encouraging innovative approaches.

So, thank you Premier Li for organizing today's symposium and for allowing me to speak. You are already aware I will be calling on your good advice throughout the 71st session, in my effort to undertake a universal push to transform our world and that ensure no one is left behind.

Thank you.