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71st session of the General Assembly

**Opening remarks by H.E. Peter Thomson,
Pathways to Zero Hunger**

Mr. Secretary-General,
Honorable Ministers,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join you all this afternoon.

Let me begin by commending the organizers – the Secretary-General, FAO, IFAD, WFP, Governments, private sector, and others for convening this event. The task of reaching Zero Hunger is a daunting one, but with a solid partnership like this one, it is eminently achievable.

Let me also commend in particular the Secretary-General who in Rio four years ago showed strong leadership in launching the Zero Hunger Challenge, with the aim of achieving the MDGs related to hunger, food security and malnutrition. That initiative laid the foundation for what is now SDG 2.

Excellencies,

As many of you will know, I am fully committed to driving meaningful progress across all 17 SDGs during the General Assembly's 71st session.

By 2030, we must succeed in transforming our agriculture, forestry, and fisheries to generate a decent income and nutritious food for all.

And we must do this while reversing the cycle of decline into which we have placed our land, freshwater, oceans, and forests.

To do so, we need awareness, ingenuity, and leadership.

Awareness: because people everywhere need to see the SDGs as both their individual rights and responsibilities. In order to raise awareness, I will work towards the inclusion of the SDGs in the curriculum of every school around the world.

Ingenuity: because while the resources, technology, and knowledge exist to make this transformation happen; we need smart, committed minds to develop the tools to put all of this to productive use for the

SDGs; to mobilize and appropriately channel the USD\$5-USD\$7 trillion that reliable estimates say we needed to finance the transform.

And finally, leadership: because words are not enough. Commitments must lead to action, and action must lead to results that benefit our people and our planet.

That is exactly what we have in the Pathways to Zero Hunger – a series of multi-stakeholder, action-oriented and integrated opportunities to improve food systems.

And a unique platform for better coordination in the use of national and international resources.

Today, I encourage you to build on your current efforts, and move forward with implementation that delivers for our environment; farmers; rural households; and regular consumers.

And I assure you, that for the duration of the 71st session, I stand ready to support you to deliver a universal push for Zero Hunger: an end to poverty and all of the SDGs.

Thank you.