



**Remarks**

**by**

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**President of the 68<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations**

**General Assembly**

**Opening of the High-Level Segment of the 2014 Session of the Economic  
and Social Council and Ministerial Meeting of the High-Level Political  
Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development**

**New York**

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Distinguished Ministers,  
President of the Economic and Social Council,  
Secretary-General,  
Under-Secretary-General for the Department of Economic and Social Affairs,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning.

I am pleased to be able to address this opening of the High-level segment of the Economic and Social Council and the Ministerial Segment of the High Level Political Forum.

As we contemplate a new agenda for development, one that is universal and brings together the overarching objectives of poverty eradication and sustainable development, system-wide collaboration between the various decision-making bodies of our UN becomes even more relevant and important. The inaugural meeting of the High-level Political Forum held last September under the auspices of the General Assembly and the present meeting under the auspices of the ECOSOC are concrete steps to promote and ultimately implement a balanced and integrated sustainable development agenda.

These meetings afford us an opportunity to begin the process of creating a more effective, responsive mechanism for mainstreaming sustainable development; they are the initial steps toward a credible umbrella under which all stakeholders can assemble and work collaboratively toward a world of dignity for all and a life of poverty for none.

Excellencies,

The deliberations at this session of the Forum will be critical to advancing our thinking on the post 2015 development agenda. The Forum is expected to provide leadership and decisive action for a robust sustainable development agenda; it therefore must remain nimble in function and be able to act quickly. This is particularly necessary as the Forum will address new and emerging challenges. As an example, we can look to the rapidity and depth of contagion of the recent financial crisis, which clearly proved the need for the international

community to be able to anticipate and respond to challenges that are likely to have a global impact.

Tasked with fostering implementation and ensuring oversight, the Forum will be a vital component of any post 2015 architecture. However, effective and comprehensive implementation cannot be achieved unless the Forum has strong relationships and partnerships with UN system agencies, civil society and other international organisations. National structures must also be simultaneously strengthened for effective delivery and implementation.

This session of the Forum provides an opportunity to take stock of a number of global sustainability issues in advance of adopting the new agenda. For the Ministerial session, your programme provides an opportunity to look at a range of relevant issues including what kind of macro-economic climate would be most supportive to implementing the new agenda; and how a universal agenda could be implemented in different countries and regions that are at different levels of development.

The session is also an opportunity to continue defining the role the Forum will play in terms of monitoring and accountability. As the guardian of sustainability in the UN system, what kind of strategic contribution can the HLPF make toward reviewing progress on the post 2015 development agenda?

We look to this Ministerial segment to activate political momentum that the Forum will be enabled/equipped to achieve the functions in its mandate. Not only must it engender a smooth transition to the post-2015 development agenda, we need the Forum to provide guidance on how to accelerate efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

A number of critical milestones, both current and future, are shaping the contours of the development landscape. These include the issuance of the reports on the Sustainable Development Goals, on Sustainable Development Financing, on the technology facilitation mechanism, as well as the anticipated outcomes from the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States and next year's Third International Conference on Financing for Development. These processes have complementary roles and their interlinkages should

be enhanced. The Forum has an important role in making this happen and I encourage sending clear messages to ensure we maintain a steady track to September 2015 and beyond.

Distinguished Guests,

As you are aware, under the banner of “Setting the Stage,” I have encouraged the global community to work toward building consensus and elaborating concrete action for the implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. To that end I have organized a number of High-level events and thematic debates in the past few months. Each of these debates was geared towards providing results-oriented outcomes, which aim to contribute to the ongoing discussions here in the Council, as well as in the General Assembly. Each addressed a critical issue of the post 2015 development agenda – from human rights and stable and peaceful societies to development cooperation and partnerships. Each aimed to build understanding and agreement. I also organized an event on accountability to start the process of reflection on an accountability framework for the new agenda.

On September 8 and 9, I will convene a stocktaking event to assess the outcomes from various processes that have occurred during the 68<sup>th</sup> session and enable all stakeholders to identify possible inputs to our Secretary General’s synthesis report. I hope that this event provides another useful contribution to the elaboration of the post 2015 development agenda.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The task of building an effective, ambitious, universal development agenda is complex and challenging. And yet we must act decisively to carry it through successfully. This will require an unprecedented level of mobilization of the means of implementation of all constituencies in society, beginning with our governments; as well as mobilization of concrete actions to advance sustainable development. Each member and sector of society has a role in making this transition possible.

This session of the HLPF is yet another step in fulfilling a principal outcome of the Rio+20 Conference. The crafting of new structures for sustainable development presents us with both a challenge and opportunity to ensure that the Forum achieves its mandate. I call on all of you to summon the will, commitment and determination to contribute to our common agenda and

vision. By so doing, we can ensure that the September 2015 Summit to adopt the post-2015 Development Agenda becomes a defining moment in history and the turning point toward a more sustainable path for all people and our planet.

I wish you successful deliberations at this important session.

Thank you.

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