

Statement by

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To the United Nations**

Before

The General Debate of

**The Ministerial Meeting of the High-Level Political Forum on
Sustainable Development**

and the ECOSOC High-Level segment

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Mr. President,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank you for all your efforts in organizing the 2015 ministerial meeting of High-level Political Forum and to thank the Secretary General for his reports. I would like to associate my comments with the statement delivered by the distinguished Permanent Representative of South Africa on behalf of G77 and China.

This meeting acquires its crucial importance, because it takes place at a very critical juncture, where the international community is in the process of defining its path to a sustainable future, and identify the means to achieve sustainable development.

Mr. President,

The adoption of the MDGs marked a crucial step in international development efforts and in raising the visibility of the United Nations development agenda. The goals represented an important global shift to an approach that places human development at the center of international development efforts and that focuses on results, underpinned by targets and indicators for measuring progress

The recognition of poverty with an emphasis on human development in the MDGs served a valuable purpose. However, it was not enough because not much was said about the necessary strategies to meet the challenges of development.

The emphasis on concessional development assistance, attributable to a donor-centric worldview, dominates the development discourse so far. Yes, the international community needs to do better at this unfinished business, but far more needs to be done. For developing countries, access to markets in trade, and access to technology for development are far more important than foreign aid. Redressing the unfair rules of the contemporary world economy that encroach upon the limited policy space available for developing countries is a must.

We should set a framework that should alter the parameters of the international economic system in support of development. We should aim at creating an enabling international environment to allow each and every country to pursue developmental objectives according to their own priorities with policies of their own choice. This should be the strategic objective of the post-2015 development agenda including the SDGs. This should be the transformational change we are aiming at producing: creating an international enabling environment for development, by addressing the questions of trade, reform of the international financial system, global governance, debt, repatriation of illicit funds, cooperation in the fields of finance and technology, in order to support the efforts of developing countries to achieve sustainable development.

Partnerships need to be revitalized, especially public-private partnerships, making them more effective in advancing the sustainable development agenda. International action for systemic reforms should be formulated as explicit commitments within the G 7, G8, and G20 with appropriate time frames, going well beyond the generalities of Goal 8 of the MDGs. No country should be a safe haven for illicit funds. No country should be prevented from implementing its debt rescheduling commitments, and restructuring. Governments should assume their common but differentiated responsibilities. Outsourcing these responsibilities to the private sector or the civil society is not enough. Without this, global partnership for development would remain an empty rhetoric.

Mr. President,

Our meeting should give guidance to the elaboration of the future agenda and set the stage for a robust platform after 2015. Expectations are high and we need to live up to these aspirations. It is important that the Forum continues to attract high-level participation from all three areas of sustainable development. Its agenda should be central to promoting a more integrated discussion of the three dimensions of sustainable development.

The first two years of the HLPF were challenging, in particular in view of the level of uncertainty due to the ongoing multiple negotiations, which did not conclude yet. The scope and complexity of these negotiations, which, unprecedentedly, are all taking place at same time were overwhelming. This situation was foreseen during the negotiation of the resolution 67/290, which established the HLPF. Thus, GA decided in the resolution to conduct a review of the format and organizational aspects of the forum at the 73rd session of the GA, after that all parts of the development system we are working on fall in place.

We therefore, support developing a road map from now till the 2018 review of the HLPF, in order to ensure that the forum will rely on solid foundation, and will be adequately equipped to undertake all its functions, in particular: (i) provide leadership, guidance and recommendations; (ii) follow up and review progress of implementation; (iii) enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a holistic and cross-sectoral manner at all levels; (iv) provide a dynamic platform for regular dialogue and for stocktaking and agenda-setting to advance sustainable development; (v) strengthen the science-policy interface.

While we acknowledge the importance and crucial role of follow up and review in ensuring the implementation of sustainable development goals and the post-2015 development agenda, the forum should be empowered to perform all its functions, and not only the follow up and review. We would like to stress in this regard that the reason for establishing the HLPF has always been to replace and improve the CSD, not to replace the AMR.

We acknowledge the important role of the Global Sustainable Development Report. We believe the scope of the report should be global. The content should cover both, natural and social sciences. It should evaluate progress in eradicating poverty and promoting sustainable development. It should also provide analytical input with regard to fulfilling the commitments related to means of implementation. The report should identify opportunities and challenges for implementation and potential areas for policy actions and recommendations. It is important that we highlight that for the report to best serve its purpose and objective it should not be used as a monitoring tool.

Major Groups and civil society have been playing an important role in sustainable development. Their bold and innovative ideas were at the origin of many useful initiatives. The Forum should carry on the best traditions of the CSD in terms of inclusiveness and participation. We must now ensure the continued participation of the civil society in the work of the United Nations on sustainable development and the post 2015-development agenda. A proper review of the role of multi-stakeholder partnerships should be at least carried out in parallel to the review functions of the Forum, if not integrated in them.

Finally, I would like to stress the importance of that the Forum fulfills its mandate to produce a negotiated ministerial declaration, which addresses the sustainable development realities and challenges of the current world, and provides guidance and recommendations, in accordance with GA resolution 67/290.

Thank you for your attention.