

UNITED NATIONS



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**Closing statement**

**President of the Economic and Social Council**

**H.E. Ambassador Martin Sajdik**

**High-level political forum under the auspices of ECOSOC**

**9 July 2014**

We have reached the end of this first high-level political forum under the auspices of ECOSOC.

We had intense discussions during the past days. We heard many Ministers, Members of Parliaments, local authorities and other high level officials. We interacted with representatives of Major Groups of civil society including the business sector. We exchanged experiences and ideas.

Speaker after speaker, I heard a similar story being told. The story of a world in which billions of people still live in poverty and where mothers, infants and children continue to die from preventable causes. The story of a world where a few still own and consume a large share of the wealth, where natural resources are being depleted at an accelerated rate and also where the impact of climate change is increasingly felt and threatens to wipe out years of development achievements. This is also a world in which - as shown by the prototype Global Sustainable Development Report - the well-being of young people and future generations appears to be increasingly at risk.

I also heard many reasons for optimism. There is unprecedented awareness of the need to change our development models and a possibility to end extreme poverty by 2030. There is also a broad acceptance that consumption and production must become more sustainable. The dialogues showed that many countries are already putting in place innovative policies to pursue sustainable development. The business sector and other stakeholders are committed to play their part.

I also heard a strong commitment to elaborate ambitious sustainable development goals that will serve as milestones for our progress towards sustainable development. I sensed that there is a broad

agreement around the draft goals and targets being discussed at the United Nations (*in this very moment*). The broad contours of the post 2015 development agenda are emerging.

I will not try to go through all the points you made in the course of the discussions. We have taken careful notes of them and of the many initiatives and concrete proposals you shared. Let me just share a few highlights from the discussions:

- We should think of economic growth as a way to enhance the wellbeing of all people. The future agenda should be about the people and should ensure prosperity for all. Growth should be inclusive, sustainable and create employment.
- Creating decent jobs, especially for the youth, is a critical policy objective. Green economy can be an important tool for productive job creation.
- We should continue to pursue economic policies to address volatility and bolster growth in, especially the least developed countries.
- Development must also be pursued through effective policies to build resilience.
- We cannot continue measuring progress through income and GDP alone. The use of natural resources and aspects related to the quality of life and wellbeing must be taken into account. .
- Achieving the MDGs remains the utmost priority for the international community. Efforts should be accelerated to meet all goals and targets.

- Clearly, poverty eradication will remain at the centre of the agenda. At the same time, the agenda must address economic, social and environmental dimensions in a balanced way.
- Inequality needs to be addressed. It has several dimensions including gender equality and the rights of youth. No one must be left behind.
- Climate is threatening the very survival of some of us and that of future generations.
- Production and consumption patterns must become sustainable. All countries should strive to get to the point where human wellbeing is achieved with a low ecological footprint.
- We heard as well how the session of the UN Environmental Assembly advanced the reflection on environmental dimensions of the post 2015 development agenda.
- Addressing the energy, food and water crises must also top our agenda.
- Citizens around the world must be able to trust their governments. Rule of law and justice for all are crucial for the advancement of sustainable development. Peace and security are also essential to promote sustainable development.
- A renewed global partnership for development will be a pillar of the post 2015 agenda. The role of the business sector and other non-state stakeholders must be recognized. As should be, the role of South-South cooperation.

- Implementing the post 2015 development agenda will require enhanced means of implementation. All available resources must be mobilized, public and private, domestic and international. We must move beyond the traditional North/South relationship while still meeting commitments made in the past, as aid continues to be essential for the poorest countries.
- The post 2015 development agenda should create conditions for countries in special situations to catch up, including notably LDCs and countries involved in or emerging from conflict.
- There is a strong commitment to establish and operate the high-level political forum as a strong platform to review the post-2015 development agenda and promote sustainable development.
- The forum should identify new sustainable development challenges, provide policy guidance and recommendations, and spread good practices. It should look towards the long term. The Global Sustainable Development Report can help it to carry out these responsibilities.
- Situated under the auspices of the General Assembly and ECOSOC, the forum must keep its focus on integrating three dimensions of sustainable development and aim to bring together actors from all walks of life.
- Regional Commissions also have important contributions to make. Regional HLPFs made useful contributions to the forum's meeting.
- We need to continue the conversation on how to put in place an effective accountability framework to bolster implementation of the agenda.

- Solid data and monitoring systems are needed to bolster policies and review progress.
- The meeting we are closing today has already demonstrated the great potential of the forum. I believe that its outcome and discussions will contribute to the negotiations on the post 2015 development agenda that will start very soon.

The coming 18 months will be critical for the future of the planet. Achieving the MDGs, progress on the SDGs, on financing and on climate change should come together. Their success is essential for ensuring that we elaborate on an ambitious post 2015 development agenda that can transform our economies and societies.

I welcome that we have adopted a ministerial declaration.

It is with a sense of achievement that I now close this high-level political forum.

I wish you all a safe trip back home.

Thank you.

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