

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**MR. WU HONGBO**  
**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**  
**SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON**  
**FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT**

**Opening Remarks**  
**at**  
**High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of the Economic**  
**and Social Council**

**To be delivered by Mr. Thomas Gass, Assistant-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and**  
**Inter-agency Affairs**

**Friday 26 June 2015 – 10:10 am**  
**Trusteeship Council Chamber**

Excellencies,

President of the Economic and Social Council, Mr. Martin Sajdik,

Federal Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of Austria,

H.E. Mr. Rudolf Hundstorfer

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Colleagues and friends,

**[Opening]**

It is my great pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of Mr. Wu Hongbo, United Nations Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, who unfortunately could not be here today.

I warmly welcome you to this 2015 session of the High Level Political Forum on sustainable development which meets for the second time under the auspices of the ECOSOC.

We are at a rare moment in history. A moment that can be a turning point for the future of people and planet. As the President said, our legacy can be that we shaped an ambitious common vision and rallied around a systematic effort to put the world on a path to eradicate poverty and develop sustainably.

### [An Agenda for transforming the world]

Excellencies,

The post-2015 development agenda, which is taking shape in the ongoing negotiations, is the work of all Governments. It is also owned by important parts of civil society. Since the Rio+20 conference on sustainable development, the negotiations have been characterised by an overwhelming and enthusiastic engagement of a broad range of actors.

There is sometimes the fear that inclusiveness may lead to lowering ambitions to the lowest common denominator. This has not been the case. With the proposed Sustainable Development Goals alone, we have an agenda that aims at no less than transforming economies and societies.

Once implemented, this agenda will reverberate in every part of the world and in everything we do.

First, this new agenda will be universal. Instilling the change we want will require reviewing policies, including – but also way beyond – those related to development cooperation. We need to learn how to carry this through in all countries, including the developed ones.

Second, a motto of the agenda will be to “Leave no one behind”. This, too, has major implications for the way policies and actions are designed,

implemented and reviewed. We have much to learn about how to achieve inclusive growth and industrialization, inclusive societies, social protection for all and disaggregated data.

Third, this agenda will be about not only social but also economic and environmental policies. It is about ensuring that all policies, taken together, improve the fate of people and the state of the environment. This too is a huge endeavour.

We are meeting in between two sessions of the negotiations on the post 2015 development agenda. So this 2015 high-level political forum is a moment to pause, reflect, and ensure we are on the right track to adopt such a transformative agenda and launch its implementation.

Distinguished Delegates,

### **[An agenda for overhauling our institutions]**

The high ambitions of the new agenda must be matched by equally transformative and principled institutions. SDG 16 aims to make institutions “effective, accountable and inclusive”. This applies not only to the national level, but also to the international level.

Rio+20 began a reconsideration and reform of international institutions for the advancement of sustainable development. It called for injecting sustainable development into the General Assembly, strengthening ECOSOC, and creating a UN Environment Assembly. The establishment of this high-level political forum was at the heart of this reform.

Its mandate is highly relevant: Implementing the new development agenda will demand political leadership. It will require regular exchange of experience and guidance on how to promote integrated, transformative and inclusive policies. And it will require effective follow up and review of progress.

The HLPF is also to promote the science-policy interface, engage major groups and other stakeholders, and keep the focus on SIDS and other countries in special situation.

In the post-2015 negotiations, there has been a concern not to overburden the HLPF. Yet the HLPF will also build on the work of the various bodies and platforms within and outside the UN system. This will apply, in particular, to its reviews of implementation at country level and on specific themes.

The Forum will benefit from the work and guidance from the General Assembly and ECOSOC. It can also, in turn, stir and support their consideration of sustainable development.

The HLPF will also, critically, promote mutual support and adequate means of implementation. We expect the Addis conference to agree on a solid framework and concrete measures for financing for sustainable development goals.

Excellencies,

[\[Expectations for this year's HLPF\]](#)

In just three months, we will need to start implementing the new development agenda. In just one year, the HLPF will begin to promote and review implementation. As the apex of the review architecture of the emerging Post-2015 Agenda, the HLPF would need to be supported by a well-functioning system of intergovernmental commissions, fora and committees, such as the ECOSOC and its subsidiary commissions. In turn, the energy and vision embodied in the HLPF and the new Agenda need to strengthen the authority and purpose of ECOSOC.

The Summit in September will most probably give some broad indications on the principles and structure of the review architecture and the work of the HLPF. But there will be a need to further detail how the HLPF should work to deliver on its functions.

Your discussions during the coming eight days will be essential to prepare these measures and shape the 2016 HLPF session. We would like to hear your views, ideas and recommendations. How can the HLPF most effectively spur and review implementation? How can it best support the efforts of your respective countries and constituencies?

At the same time, we will need to keep in mind the broader picture and situate the HLPF within the broader range of challenges and the architecture within and outside the UN.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

[Closing]

The post-2015 development agenda must be a beacon of what countries and people can achieve together when there is a strong will to improve the fate of humanity.

Let us use this HLPF session to continue to bring our institutions on par with this agenda for transforming the world.

Let us make the HLPF a model platform to review progress and help transform our shared principles and objectives into tangible actions.

Thank you.

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