

**STATEMENT OF MS. RIMA KHALAF, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA (ESCWA)**

AS RAPPORTEUR TO

THE MINISTERIAL SEGMENT OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

6 July 2015

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to be here with you today. Over the past months, you have spared no effort to chart an ambitious new development agenda that is far-reaching and promises to leave no one behind. Around the world, the poor and undernourished, children, young people and women, indeed everyone, hopes that the new agenda will open broad new horizons. The world's refugees, people in countries devastated by conflict, and people under foreign occupation, hope that it will bring an end to their suffering. To keep our promises, we will all have to deliver.

This High-level Political Forum will be crucial in providing the necessary global guidance to effectively and coherently implement the post-2015 agenda. National ownership is and should always be the starting point and foundation for action. As has been pointed out repeatedly by Member States at this Forum, the regional dimension is the vital link between the national and global levels. That was reiterated by the Chairs of the regional forums on sustainable development in preparation for this session of the Forum.

Over the past days, we have heard that a transformative and universal post-2015 development agenda will require the balanced integration of all dimensions of sustainable development, in addition to institutions that work well, adequate means of implementation, transparent follow-up and review, and strengthened global partnership.

My fellow rapporteurs, the Permanent Representative of Switzerland and the Permanent Representative of Jamaica, have already shared with you some views, particularly with regard to follow-up and review, and the need for enhanced capacity-building and knowledge-sharing.

I will focus on the different dimensions of integration. The post-2015 development agenda requires integration at many levels -- geographic, institutional and sectoral -- and across a wide range of actors and in various spheres of activity. Equally, the 17 SDGs are indivisible in nature and must be

applied to specific national and regional realities. Integration is also a matter of policy coherence, inclusion and participation.

At last week's session, it was highlighted that integration is equally about creating an adequate interface between the local, national, regional and global levels. We heard from local authorities, such as the Mayor of Santiago de Chile and the former Mayor of Kigali, how adequate funding and capacity-building will be indispensable to achieving the SDGs in those cities.

Implementation, follow-up and review cannot be considered separately. It is through the leveraging and deployment of adequate means of implementation, including financial resources and technology transfer, that progress will be made. It is through inclusive and participatory approaches that no one will be left behind; and it is through adequate institutional mechanisms and capabilities that follow-up and review will occur. Throughout the sessions of last week, participants emphasized the crucial role of data collection and analysis for planning, implementation and enhancement of evidence-based decision-making.

Participants have also underlined the importance of the regional dimension, and the reports from the regional forums on sustainable development clearly point to how that dimension can bring countries and peoples together for coordinated action. That will require making the most of partnerships, financial and otherwise, in support of national implementation, and effective monitoring, review and learning.

Member States have stressed the need to build on existing mechanisms and platforms, such as those provided by the United Nations Regional Commissions and their subsidiary bodies.

Given their multi-disciplinary expertise and capacity for cross-sectoral analysis, the Commissions can suggest ways of adopting an integrated approach to sustainable development issues, provide policy advice to adapt the SDGs to national plans and programmes, and help to leverage the means of implementation, and support follow-up and review of the agenda.

Mr. President, this Forum will require input from multiple sources at various levels to provide the needed political guidance, anchored in regional and national realities. The United Nations development system, including the Regional Commissions, stands ready to support Member States to deliver on the agenda.

Thank you.