

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**STATEMENT AT CLOSING OF RIO+20
UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
Rio de Janeiro, 22 June 2012**

Your Excellency President Dilma Rousseff,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Your Excellency Foreign Minister Antonio Patriota,
Your Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, President of the General Assembly
Ministers and Heads of Delegation,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The speeches are over. Now the work begins.

It has been a successful conference.

You – the Member States – the leaders of the world – have renewed your commitment to sustainable development.

I thank President Rousseff for her personal dedication to Rio+20 – to the future we want.

The outcome document provides a firm foundation for social, economic and environmental well-being.

It is now our responsibility to build on it.

Rio+20 has affirmed fundamental principles -- renewed essential commitments – and given us new direction.

Here in Rio you have agreed to establish universal sustainable development goals – to create a stronger international architecture to support sustainable development.

You have affirmed the importance of gender empowerment – the right to water and food – and the need to address poverty.

You have adopted a 10-year framework on sustainable consumption and production and acknowledged the potential for greening economies.

You have reached out to civil society and the private sector to partner with you.

And they have responded.

Nearly 700 commitments worth hundreds of billions of dollars have been publicly announced here in Rio by governments, multilateral development banks, the private sector and civil society.

These huge numbers give a sense of the scale and growth of investment going into sustainable development.

They are part of a growing global movement for change.

Our job now is to create a critical mass. An irresistible momentum.

Because the road ahead is long and hard.

Too many people remain poor, hungry and vulnerable to easily preventable disease.

And the environmental base that will improve their opportunities for prosperity is under unprecedented threat.

No longer can we afford to recklessly consume scarce resources.

No longer can we carelessly pollute fragile ecosystems.

No longer can we mortgage our future for our short-term needs.

Earlier this week a youth representative, Ms. Brittany Trilford, reminded us that the clock is ticking, and the future lies in your hands.

Here in Rio you have recognized the challenges.

And you have renewed your commitment to meet them – for the benefit of all humanity – now and in the future.

I commend you and thank you.

But now the work really begins.

Rio+20 has given us a solid platform to build on.

And it has given us the tools to build with.

The work starts now.