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## Opening remarks SDG Business Forum

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Excellencies,  
Distinguished Colleagues,  
Business Leaders,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to join you at the 2nd SDG Business Forum.

Today, the High-Level Political Forum offers this space to the business sector to share information, experience and lessons learned in advancing the 2030 Agenda.

The fact that we moved the venue to the General Assembly Hall, signifies the surge of business interest in the SDGs.

I hope that this interest will translate into more commitments and more actions.

I want to thank our co-hosts, the International Chamber of Commerce and the Global Compact, for their tireless work in organizing this Forum.

Distinguished participants,

It bears repeating that the 2030 Agenda and its 17 interlinked SDGs, cannot be achieved without the active participation of all sectors of society, including business and industry.

Business is our indispensable partner. You are at the frontline of action.

Yesterday, at the Partnership Exchange, held in this same Hall, we heard several inspiring examples. We heard how multi-stakeholder partnerships, including business partnerships, can spur the implementation of the SDGs.

Today we will learn from business leaders about how they are catalyzing innovation and connecting the SDGs with business strategies and actions.

Indeed, you are making a business case for the SDGs.

We will hear how business can serve as an engine of economic growth and employment and how investment by business in the SDGs can help fill the large investment gap.

We will also learn about the important role that reporting progress towards the SDGs plays in scaling up corporate sustainability efforts.

Allow me to take this opportunity to share our expectations for business and industry in implementation, and how you can engage more.

First, we hope businesses can show the way on how better to integrate the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Many have a tradition of innovative thinking and practices. We hope this capacity to think outside the box will be harnessed to advance the SDGs.

Second, as major producers and users of resources, we hope businesses will be the leaders in sustainable consumption and production. Being at the frontline, you also have major responsibilities toward our planet and our society.

The past 20 years have shown, indeed, that businesses do well by doing good. Your action counts.

Third, the SDGs are about coherence, linkages, and integration. Their successful implementation calls for re-thinking of the way we do business.

Once again, we hope businesses can show the way – on how to coordinate, be coherent, and integrate in synergy rather than work in silos.

Last, but not least, the SDGs are about leaving no one behind.

Some may argue that this belongs to the domain of public policy – to let governments sort it out.

But I think that is what leadership is about. Caring for the vulnerable and ensuring that women, youth, and children are empowered – is not only our moral obligation but also smart business strategy.

The discussion at the HLPF shows that investing in poverty reduction is investing in long-term growth and job creation. I invite business leaders to work in partnership with trade union and civil society groups in this undertaking.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The 2030 Agenda starts with 5 Ps and I want to conclude my remarks by reiterating them.

The SDGs are about People.

Let us work together to ensure that all human beings can fulfil their potential in dignity and equality, and in a healthy environment.

The SDGs are about Planet.

Let us work together to protect the planet from further degradation, so that it can support the needs of the present and future generations.

The SDGs are about Prosperity.

Let us work together to ensure that all human beings can enjoy prosperous and fulfilling lives.

The SDGs are about Peace.

Let us work together to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies free from fear and violence.

The SDGs are about Partnership.

Let us work together to mobilize the means required to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Less than two years ago it was in this very Hall that world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda and SDGs.

I hope today's Forum will showcase SDGs in action.

I wish you all an engaging and successful event. Thank you.