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**H.E. Ambassador Inga Rhonda King
President of the Economic and Social Council**

**2019 ECOSOC Partnership Forum
New York, 11 April 2019**

Opening Statement

673 words

Your Excellency, Mr. Ghassan Hasbani, Deputy Prime Minister of Lebanon,

Your Excellency, Mr. Péter Szijjártó,

Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Hungary,

Deputy Secretary-General Ms. Amina Mohammed,

Under-Secretary-General Mr. Liu Zhenmin,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to open the 2019 Partnership Forum of the Economic and Social Council. The theme of this year's Partnership Forum - ***“Partnerships***

driving inclusive implementation of the SDGs” – is very timely and I am pleased that it has gathered such a diverse and engaged audience.

Excellencies,

Today’s world is facing an increasing number of formidable challenges. These include climate change, growing refugee flows and growing inequalities both within and between countries, to name just a few.

At the same time, new frontier technologies, while holding immense potential to improve people’s lives everywhere, are also dramatically changing the development landscape and the way our societies function at large.

In the midst of these upheavals, the collaborative global momentum that resulted in the adoption of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs is increasingly under pressure.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Amidst such sombre realities there are still stories of success to celebrate. The 2019 Partnership Forum will be an opportunity to pinpoint such positive

developments, and to hear about others towards which we should gear more efforts together.

Today we will hear directly from partnership practitioners who are working to support the Sustainable Development Goals which will be reviewed at the High-level Political Forum in July, namely SDGs 4 (quality education), 8 (inclusive economic growth and decent work for all), 10 (reducing inequalities), 13 (combatting climate change), and 16 (promoting peaceful and inclusive societies).

All these Goals are closely intertwined with, and directly relevant to, the inclusion agenda that cuts across all the 17 SDGs.

In addition, we will learn how inclusive multi-stakeholder partnership frameworks and platforms that are led by governments can effectively drive the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the national level. Discussion will focus on illustrating how inclusion can help harness the strength of all development actors and generate better results for all.

Finally, we will explore how to raise the ambition for partnerships that involve United Nations entities so they could be more coherent, accountable and results-based, in line with the ongoing reform of the United Nations development system.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Economic and Social Council has a key role to play in building and galvanizing partnerships. The Council engages non-governmental actors, including civil society and the private sector, in the work of the United Nations and coordinates the activities of the United Nations development system. As such, the Partnership Forum of the Economic and Social Council is uniquely positioned to review issues related partnerships in support of the 2030 Agenda.

Partnerships, especially those that engage with the United Nations, must be transparent and accountable. UN-associated partnerships should be coherent with the values and standards of the United Nations. Follow-up and review mechanisms for such partnerships are important to ensure that they deliver the expected results. ECOSOC Partnership forum is also well placed to discuss normative guidance.

The outcome of today's deliberations will be an important contribution to the high-level meetings convened by the Economic and Social Council – including next week's Forum on Financing for Development; the Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation to be held in mid-May; and the July session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

I look forward to hearing your views and ideas on how we can advance our partnership strategies to help boost the inclusive implementation of the SDGs. I hope that today's Partnership Forum will result in concrete recommendations that all of us can bring to practice in our work.

I wish you all productive and fruitful discussions.

Thank you.

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