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Business and Industry Major Group (B&I MG) Intervention

2021 UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF)

“Vision and priorities of civil society, the private sector and other major groups and stakeholders: realizing the SDGs during the COVID-19 recovery “

I am Norine Kennedy, United States Council for International Business (USCIB), speaking for the B&I MG to the UN in New York.

Business has been a steadfast partner to advance SDGs and to build back better. We bring innovation, expertise, technology, finance, investment, fresh ideas, and diverse solutions. SDG action and an inclusive resilient recovery go hand in hand, and entail a stronger than ever commitment to enhance business engagement and partnership in support of the multilateral system.

As previous speakers have said, we cannot underscore enough the necessity of inclusive multilateralism to tackle healthcare, environmental, economic and governance challenges. For business, one particular focus continues to be strengthening the science/policy/business/society interface to co-create solutions, as we saw in the U.S. with Project Warp speed and in so many other instances across every business sector and around the world, including via COVAX.

In response to UN-wide openness to partner with business on pandemic response and recovery, many businesses did step forward, but more needs to be done. Imagine what we could accomplish if all multilateral institutions followed this leadership example and similarly engaged every sector of business on other urgent challenges.

Transparent inclusive collaborative structures, such as at the OECD, ILO and others, accord business a recognized distinct role, not only to observe, but to engage substantively and transparently. We recognize member states, UN bodies such as UNEP, MEAs such as the UNFCCC and CBD, and of course, UN DESA for their efforts to involve all constituencies in innovative ways.

To the 3rd discussion question, the collective commitment we regard as indispensable to achieve the 2030 targets and realize the vision of UN75 is: to engage all societal actors to develop and deploy solutions together, and in that context to include and crowd in private sector innovation, knowhow and investment so that it reaches the people who need it most.