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Opening remarks
2016 High-level Political Forum

New York, 11 July 2016

Your Excellency Ambassador Oh, President of the Economic and Social Council,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I join the President of ECOSOC in warmly welcoming you to the 2016 session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development - the first since the adoption of the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the President of ECOSOC, the Bureau, the United Nations system, Major Groups and other Stakeholders, and indeed, you the Member States, for your remarkable engagement in the HLPF.

Thanks to you, we have before us a rich and inspiring programme – including 22 voluntary national reviews; some 100 speakers; over 100 side events; close to 170 inputs; and more than 1,500 stakeholders registered to participate.

Excellencies,

The 2030 Agenda, with its 17 goals and 169 targets, is an action plan for people, planet, peace and prosperity, to be implemented through global partnership.

Its core message - to leave no one behind - is the theme of this HLPF.

It cannot be better timed.

Scanning the global horizon, we see rising tensions and economic uncertainties.

We witness degradation of our ecosystems in hot spots, increasing impacts of climate change, and rising inequalities.

We must tackle these challenges together to build inclusive societies and a sustainable planet for all.

Our performance should be assessed on the wellbeing of the most vulnerable groups – down to the individual.

In my view, this lies at the heart of the 2016 session of the HLPF.

Excellencies,

Our common challenge now is to implement the 2030 Agenda.

I am really encouraged by what I have learned from the preparatory process.

From the voluntary national reviews, from the inputs of intergovernmental bodies, including the regional ones, and from the submissions of stakeholders, I have learned six important points and emerging trends:

First, leadership is key.

Political leadership by Heads of State and Government drives implementation.

An increasing number of Governments are integrating SDGs into national laws and plans.

Second, institutions matter.

Many member States have put in place high-level commissions, councils and coordination bodies for the 2030 Agenda, by either creating new ones or re-mandating the existing ones.

Many national parliaments are engaged.

Third, inter-linkages count; so does coherence in action.

While country circumstances vary and the SDGs are to be implemented in an integral manner, many of you are taking action to implement the SDGs mindful of their inter-linkages, and of the need for coherence in action.

The SDGs will be more impactful if implementation builds upon their inherent synergies.

Fourth, monitoring benefits all.

Many of you are putting in place dedicated monitoring mechanisms at the national level, not just to strengthen accountability, but also to draw lessons along the way.

Let us share these lessons and learn from each other.

Fifth, all stakeholders – governments, business, civil society – have a role.

It is an agenda for all and all should contribute.

Sixth, international development cooperation is shaping up to respond to the transformative Agenda.

The 2030 Agenda promises to enhance the global partnership for sustainable development.

Development partners are following up in that direction.

Excellencies,

The 2030 Agenda gives this Forum a clear mandate to be a central global platform for review and monitoring.

Its review must be robust, voluntary, effective, participatory, transparent and integrated with other follow-up and review activities.

Its success depends on you, on our cooperation and collective efforts, and on our capacity to harness synergies.

Our work just gets started. It is only the beginning of an exciting and transformative journey.

We are committed to stay along your side every step of the way.
I look forward to our fruitful and productive discussions.

Thank you.
