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UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL: General Debate of the High Level week 8 July 2015

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(Check against delivery)

Thank you Mr. President.

Australia and has appreciated hearing different perspectives over the past week at the High Level Political Forum, and welcomes the discussion on follow up and review. A coherent system and efficient follow up and review mechanism will be critical to successfully delivering on the ambition of the post-2015 development agenda.

Today, we would like to raise a few points reflecting on the discussion thus far.

Firstly, we agree that the HLPF should be the apex of the global review system, and that a thematic approach is the best way of organising its work. A thematic approach would allow us to capture cross cutting issues, examine the links between different goal areas and reflect on the integrated nature of the post-2015 agenda.

But to have impact, the work of the HLPF must also be accessible and relevant to policymakers and development partners alike. In this regard, we would welcome more variety in HLPF sessions, including through interactive discussion and informal exchanges. We would welcome further discussion on how existing thematic reviews, such as those produced by the World Bank and UNDP's Human Development Report, could usefully inform

global discussions at the HLPF. We have found some of the analysis in this year's prototype *Global Sustainable Development Report*, which maps links between the goals and analyses the coverage of existing thematic reviews against the 17 proposed goals, a useful step towards delivering on the Rio+20 pledge to 'bring together dispersed information and assessments'.

Secondly, in considering arrangements at the regional level, **we believe that recognition of regional and sub-regional diversity is essential.**

Regions need space to establish mechanisms appropriate to their unique circumstances — mechanisms that increase regional understanding and cooperation, and facilitate the sharing of lessons. There are many existing processes that have demonstrated success and that we can build on. Indeed, just last week, we heard from Ambassador Otto about the Pacific Island Forum Peer Review Process which is a useful mechanism relevant to the Pacific.

Thirdly, and as suggested by others, **we believe that there should be flexibility for countries to undertake meaningful national reviews that are contextually appropriate.**

Naturally, these processes will take time to bed down — particularly in the early years of implementation — and should focus on generating information required to improve national policymaking, rather than trying to re-cast analysis into consistent formats for comparison. National reviews should go beyond data generation to help countries identify progress, gaps and lessons learned.

Mr President, we have only just begun to flesh out the follow up and review system for the post-2015 development agenda. There are important details which still need to be worked through. **We are open to where these discussions should take place — in ECOSOC, Second Committee or some other forum — but we should avoid duplication. We should also not rush to bed down all the details now but allow the system to evolve and innovate over time,** including by amplifying the successful aspects and discontinuing those less so.

Australia offers these points in the spirit of open collaboration and optimism that follow up and review — done right — can become a critical part of realising our shared ambitions for the post-2015 agenda.