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**Workshop on the rollout of the Zimbabwe National Development Strategy 1
(NDS1, 2021-2025) – Integrating the 2030 Agenda**

Victoria Falls, 8 November 2021

Opening Remarks

Mr. Simon Masanga, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare,

Mr. Anderson Chiraya, Chief Director, Office of the President and Cabinet,
Mr. Charles Mujajati, Director, Ministry of Finance and Economic Development,
Dr. Alex Gasasira, UN Resident Coordinator, a.i, WHO Representative,
Excellencies, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I'm pleased to be with you at the opening of this important workshop and honored to have had the opportunity to cooperate with Office of the President and Cabinet and the Ministries of Finance and Economic Development and of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare in its organization.

I would like to thank the Resident Coordinator Office and Zimbabwe's tripartite partners, the UN Country Team, the African Development Bank and World Bank for all the preparatory meetings we have had since last year as we jointly put together the agenda for this workshop. The UNCT, led by the Resident Coordinator Office, has been jointly supporting the development of the National Development Strategy (NDS1), in collaboration with the World Bank and the African Development Bank to ensure system-wide coherence. During our discussions, we made sure that we had the presence of the OPC and Ministries of Finance and Economic Development, and Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare.

Although we had planned to have this workshop in Kariba in June last year, we had to postpone the workshop following the outbreak of the second COVID-19 wave. Therefore, it feels wonderful that we are all finally gathered here today.

The UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, known as DESA and based at UN Headquarters in New York, supports UN Member States in their intergovernmental efforts to advance sustainable development for all, including through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. DESA serves as home to the Agenda's 17 Sustainable Development Goals, and further supports the work of Member States to review and implement them.

The 2030 Agenda is transformative, aiming to end poverty and hunger everywhere, foster peace, safeguard the rights of all, and protect the planet. Responding to growing inequalities within and across countries, at the heart of the Agenda is the promise to "leave no one behind," and indeed, to reach those furthest behind first.

To be successful, the Agenda's vision must be translated into national and local solutions, and result in real changes in the lived experiences of people. DESA therefore also works directly with governments, at their invitation, to support implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national level and its localization at sub-national level. DESA also supports countries to implement their national development strategies. In the case of Zimbabwe, we are pleased to join hands with the Government as the country embarks on implementing the National Development Strategy 1 (2021-2025) as well as the African Union Agenda 2063.

We are also pleased to have signed the UNSDCF 2022-2026 for Zimbabwe as a non-resident entity given our growing programmatic involvement in the country.

One key issue we should all come to a common understanding when we leave this workshop is policy coherence for achieving the NDS1, Agenda 2030 and Agenda 2063.

The 2030 Agenda states that the Sustainable Development Goals are integrated and indivisible, and should balance the three pillars of sustainable development, viz; economic, social and environmental dimensions. To achieve this balance, the Agenda includes SDG Target 17.14 to enhance policy coherence for sustainable development as an essential means of implementation for all the Goals. By nature, policy coherence for sustainable development is a political choice made by governments. It entails breaking out of institutional and policy silos to fully realize the benefits of synergistic actions, identifying unintended negative consequences of policies and strategies, and effectively minimizing trade-offs across the Sustainable Development Goals.

Hence, successful policy coherence requires well-coordinated institutional structures, connected processes, shared information and data, working methods and a collaborative administrative culture.

Hence, national planning instruments, such as development plans, provide critical opportunities for governments to ensure policy coherence and to detail national and local priorities and responses to the SDGs. Integrating the 2030 Agenda into such plans also facilitates systematic monitoring and reporting on both SDGs and other development priorities.

In Zimbabwe, national development goals have been set out in the Vision 2030, currently being implemented through National Development Strategy 1. In its 2021 Voluntary National Review, the Government underscored that NDS1 “is aimed at attaining the objectives of Vision 2030 and at the same time addressing the global aspirations of the SDGs and the African Union Agenda 2063.”

We have now a week before us to consider how this can best be achieved in Zimbabwe. We will have the opportunity to explore in depth both international and national frameworks, experiences from other countries, data needs, integrated planning and reporting, means of implementation, monitoring and evaluation and more.

But beyond this workshop, there are ongoing discussions on various capacity building activities, including organizing a study tour, M&E, voluntary local reviews, micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, and investment plans in line with the government’s devolution and decentralization policy and on the macro-economic framework to strengthen capacity of the national statistics agency, forecasting and modelling, and better linking the NDS with annual budget process including strengthening program-based budgeting. DESA stands ready to join and build on the ongoing work by the UNCT.

I very much look forward to engaging with you all this week, as we work towards the shared goal of inclusive and sustainable development for all.

- Thank you -