

Remarks

**Launching Event of Projects “Strengthening National Capacities for Enhancing Micro-, Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (MSME) Resilience and Building Forward Better to Accelerate the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Developing Countries” and “Strengthened MSME resilience in Africa and Asia”
in Ethiopia**

Resident Coordinator a.i. United Nations, Ethiopia

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Large Briefing Room, UN ECA Conference Center

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Mr. Hassan Mohammed, State Minister, Ministry of Industry Mr. Amson Sibanda, Chief, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Micro-, and Small Entrepreneurs,

I am pleased to join you today at the launching event of two important projects:

The project “Strengthening national capacities for enhancing micro-, small and

medium-sized enterprise (MSME) resilience and building forward better to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in developing countries”, funded by the United Nations Peace and Development Fund. And the project “Strengthened MSME resilience in Africa and Asia”, funded by the United Nations Development Account. I am glad to note that, through the successful collaboration between the Ministry of Industry and the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Ethiopia has become a pilot country for both projects.

Micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) contribute to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by driving inclusive economic growth, fostering innovations and sustainability. MSMEs possess the significant potential of facilitating economic structural transformation, creating employment opportunities, ending poverty, reducing inequality and promoting the empowerment of women, youth and groups in vulnerable situations.

In Ethiopia, with coherent and targeted policy support, MSMEs can play crucial roles in realizing major development objectives in line with national needs and circumstances as spelled out in the Industrial Development Road Map (2013 -2025) and the “Ethiopia 2030: The Pathway to Prosperity Ten Years Perspective

Development Plan (2021 – 2030)”. Appreciating their vital contributions in the pursuance for SDGs in Ethiopia, the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (2020-2025) emphasizes the ambition of the UN development system to systematically strengthen an enabling ecosystem for MSMEs, boost the prospects of MSMEs as the critical means to achieve progress towards the promising outcome, where all people in Ethiopia benefit from an inclusive, resilient and sustainable economy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we speak today, the world is standing at a critical juncture. While we are halfway through the deadline of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, only 12 percent of SDG targets are on track, with over 30 per cent SDGs stalled or regressed below the 2015 baseline. This is not what we aspired for when world leaders endorsed the 2030 Agenda in 2015. In the Special Edition of the Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report launched in this April, the Secretary-General emphasized the urgent need to create policy space supporting MSMEs with coherent industrial and investment measures. The Secretary-General further emphasized MSMEs as *“the economic lifeblood of communities around the world,*

with the potential of rescuing SDGs and building a more prosperous and just world for all”.

Unfortunately, MSMEs, especially those owned by women and youth entrepreneurs, bear the brunt of the negative socioeconomic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Their contributions to accelerating progress towards SDGs are further inhibited by economic shocks and uncertainties derived from conflicts, rising inflations and interrupted supply chains.

For this reason, strengthening MSMEs resilience in Ethiopia remains urgent and crucial to protecting jobs and livelihoods, particularly for women, youth and groups in vulnerable situations, whose livelihoods heavily depend on the MSME sector. Indeed, supporting MSMEs is vital for building forward better from the Covid-19 pandemic and accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels.

It is in this context that the assistance through both projects is very timely and appreciated. Their focuses on elevating capacities of policymakers and MSME entrepreneurs for the resilience, growth and formalization of the MSME sector is designed and will be delivered in accordance with demands of Ethiopian policymakers and MSME entrepreneurs. Together with the Ministry of Industry and

as a part of the United Nations in Ethiopia, the two projects will start with assistance that facilitates value chain improvement and expediting digitization, which will be the keys to elevate resilience of these MSMEs and unlock their full potential to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In conclusion, I would like to wish this workshop a smooth success. I hope participating policymakers and entrepreneurs from all parts of the country will engage in productive discussions, but also gain knowledge that will be applied in your real-life circumstance to benefit both yourselves and peers in your communities.

Going forward, let us keep working together to strengthen the MSME sector that is crucial to the inclusive and sustainable growth in Ethiopia. The United Nations in Ethiopia looks forward to continuously supporting the Government of Ethiopia and MSMEs through the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework, 2020-2025.

Thank you!