

Mr. Liu Zhenmin Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

Opening statement 2018 Partnership Exchange

13 July 2018, New York
Your Excellency, Ms. Chatardová,
President of the Economic and Social Council,
Ms. Amina J. Mohammed,
Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of DESA, I join the DSG and ECOSOC President in welcoming you all to the 2018 Partnership Exchange.

Today's event will showcase important efforts to strengthen multi-stakeholder partnerships in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I thank the President of the Economic and Social Council and the Deputy-Secretary-General for their leadership. I also extend my appreciation to the UN Office for Partnerships and the UN Global Compact for their active collaboration in organizing this important event.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Member States have agreed that partnerships are critical to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The ambition and breadth of the Sustainable Development Goals make them simply unattainable without robust and durable partnerships.

Member States have decided that the High-level political forum, in carrying out its reviews of the 2030 Agenda, shall also provide a platform for partnerships, including through the participation of major groups and other stakeholders. This is extremely befitting.

The UN has a long history of fostering and promoting the work of collaborative arrangements, with the participation of all sectors of society.

Over the years, partnerships and voluntary commitments have been a cornerstone of UN processes related to sustainable development. To track their implementation, DESA, has been collecting these partnerships into an open and accessible online repository – the SDG Partnerships Platform.

This platform currently contains almost 4,000 different partnerships and other initiatives devoted to the implementation of the SDGs, some of which we will hear more about today.

With the aim at improving the transparency, accountability and the sharing of experiences by partnerships and voluntary commitments, DESA, in collaboration with the UN Office for Partnerships and UN Global Compact, have developed the **“Partnership Data for SDGs” initiative**.

The initiative promotes the system-wide use of the established SMART criteria – which means that partnerships or commitments should be Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Resource-based, with clear and Time-based deliverables.

In ensuring that the type of information we collect and showcase is standardized, we are better placed to review the impact, assess gaps, and track progress.

Excellencies,

The 2030 Agenda provides an immense opportunity for all stakeholders to work collaboratively across sectors and thematic areas.

In this regard, it is imperative to examine what it is that makes a partnership successful, sustainable, and **most impactful for its communities and beneficiaries. We need to increase understanding of the “inner workings” of a successful partnership** in order to incentivize the stakeholders to come together with a common purpose.

To this end, the objectives of the 2018 Partnership Exchange are two-fold.

First, to build greater momentum for partnerships and promote a culture of cooperation. Thus **today's** event will examine what conditions are needed to make multi-stakeholder partnerships successful in different contexts.

Second, we will hear presentations by actual partnerships on how they have been working to support SDG 6 on water, SDG 7 on energy, SDG 11 on cities, SDG 12 on sustainable consumption and production, and SDG 15 on biodiversity.

These are the SDGs under in-**depth review at this year's High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.**

To learn from these expert practitioners, we will also hear about the steps they have taken to make their partnership successful, and impactful.

Distinguished guests,

Seeing the impressive line-up of speakers, I am fully assured that we will accomplish our goals and make this meeting the space for genuine exchange and mutual learning. A platform that drives transformation.

Along this line, I would like to inform you that after hard work of DESA colleagues for more than five months and with the generous support of thirty-nine UN entities, we have set up the UN System SDGs Online Database, which was launched on 25 May and is now available on UN sustainable development webpage.

What emerges from the survey is an overall inspiring picture of the UN system's collective and individual commitments to advancing the SDGs.

The database can help the UN system to identify good practices, lessons learned and emerging gaps in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs and overcome silo approaches. DESA is planning to circulate another survey in the Fall to collect updated inputs.

Excellencies,

As the Secretary General noted, “We must act as one, because only together, as united nations, can we fulfil the promise of the Charter and advance human dignity for all.”

DESA and I, personally, are determined to work with you, and to support you on the journey to a sustainable world.

I wish you all an inspiring exchange this afternoon.

I thank you for your attention.