

**Opening remarks at the Expert Group Meeting on the role of the high-level political forum on sustainable development in post-2015 development framework**

**By**

**Thomas Gass, Assistant Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Inter-Agency Affairs**

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Mr. President, Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to be here at the opening of this expert group meeting. I believe that such meetings are very useful. They provide a platform to discuss important issues in an informal way and under Chatham House rules.

The High-level political forum is – so to say – “the new kid on the block”. At the same time, it is building on the 20-year experience of the Commission on Sustainable Development. It is also grounded in a number of important conferences and landmark documents. It has its origins in many years of efforts at all levels to advance sustainable development.

We have come a long way. Yes, more could have been done. We learn from the past, but we look to the future. These are exciting times as we work to define our common post-2015 development agenda for the Future We Want. The high-level political forum was established at the Rio+20 Conference to be the very platform to support efforts in this direction.

We are all engaged, in one way or another, in the processes launched at Rio+20. We all want to see how best they will feed into the post-2015 development agenda. Once this agenda is adopted with sustainable development goals at its core, the Forum will take the lead in promoting and reviewing implementation as mandated by its founding resolution.

This is why this expert group meeting is so timely and relevant.

The Forum needs to provide a dedicated platform for advancing sustainable development and the integration of its three dimensions.

And here, a number of questions come to mind.

- How do we make the HLPF relevant to the burning issues of the day, to those which will impact on future generations?
- How do we ensure that its work impacts on sustainable development implementation at all levels?
- How do we make sure it defines approaches that truly integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions?
- And how do we engage *all* relevant actors, state and non-state as well as other parts of the UN system and other relevant international organizations?

I am sure you will address these and many more in your discussions today and tomorrow. I am truly sorry that I cannot be with you as I have other pressing engagements.

I wish you an excellent meeting. Thank you once again for coming. I look forward to the outcome of your discussions. I am sure it will be interesting background reading for all participants at the upcoming second meeting of the Forum and beyond.