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VERBATIM STATEMENT

BY

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DURING
**THE DISCUSSIONS ON THE ECOSOC DIALOGUES OF THE LONG TERM
POSITIONING OF THE UN-DEVELOPMENT SYSTEM IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NEW
AGENDA**

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Ambassador, thank you very much for convening us for this very important part of the follow up of the implementation of the 2030 agenda on the Sustainable Development Goals. Ambassador, this delegation would like to align itself with the statement just given by the G77 and China, and begin by agreeing with you that indeed the UN development system is at an inflection point or tipping point. This is something that we have to take very seriously moving forward.

We believe that the point has come after 70 years of development assistance for the UN to become deeply introspective in assessing its continued relevance, and its continued credibility in the face of the new agenda, and how it wishes to position itself in that regard. We believe the time has come for the UN to pivot to the SDG's, and to the 2030 Agenda and that, that pivoting will require a number of strategic, institutional, policy, and leadership changes to reflect that pivot.

This delegation would like to begin by pointing out that in discussing this long-term position, we would like to get a sense of what exactly is the time-frame of this long-term positioning? Is it a two-year time frame? Is it a five-year time frame? Is it a 15-year time frame? Exactly how long is this long-term positioning going to take? Will there be a time frame with clear deliverables that we can hold ourselves accountable for in the transformation we wish to see, as we pivot the UN and its institutions to the 2030 Agenda; and the demands therein.

This delegation would also like to make the point that we believe that business as usual is simply not credible. It is not credible because as I said earlier, the world is a very different place than it was 20, 30, 40, or 70 years ago, and the demands for development and support and assistance are radically different to what they were in those past years. The question that arises is, Is the UN fit for purpose? The purpose being of course the 2030 agenda. That is the fundamental question that we must answer.

However, we must answer that question with a view to helping this great organization and its institutions to make the necessary pivot to the 2030 agenda and the attainment of the SDG's. So the question then arises, does the UN and its organizations fundamentally accept that the purpose of its repositioning is to pivot to the 2030 agenda? This is a question that I think we need to answer. The second one being, does the UN and its organizations and entities have the political, institutional and leadership will? We always point to countries saying that we need the political will of countries to be able to attain development outcomes and these are legitimate questions to ask country leaders. Do they have the will? I think that we too are in a position to ask a legitimate question, does the UN and its organizations and entities have the political, institutional and leadership will to pivot to the demands of the 2030 Agenda. I think this is a question that we have to answer in trying to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Now, to help answer these questions I have posed, I would like to reinforce what has just been said by our colleague from Thailand in her statement. Indeed we as member states want to see an open, and consultative process of drawing the roadmap on the second phase of the dialogue, and that we want to be able to express our views in a manner that will be constructive and balanced between regions and between states. We recognize that there is indeed an urgent need to reinvigorate the UN development system. The question is how long do we want to take doing this, seeing as the business is not to spend our lives reinvigorating the system, but to ensure that the system is delivering on the demands that are out there, that are urgently needed by many developing countries that seek the assistance of the UN development system.

We have heard statements that we are now dealing with four agenda's; Sendai, Addis, The 2030 and the Paris. This delegation would like to differ with that view. We believe we have one agenda, not four agenda's. We have one agenda, an omnibus agenda around which there are subsidiary components which are integrated, supportive and integral to the 2030 Agenda. The reason Ambassador, we think this is important is because, one of the dire consequences of the past 50 odd years of development

assistance through the UN development system, has been, its fragmentation and the reason we, as member states have clamored to promote delivery as one is precisely, to try to limit this fragmentation. Therefore, we continue to worry that if we begin to propose that we are dealing with four agenda's, we shall encourage further fragmentation as institutions and agencies rally around their favorite agenda, and in the process, create confusion and further fragmentation in the implementation of what is one, omnibus 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda that has been signed by all, our heads of state.

Furthermore Ambassador, if indeed we do take that position of a fragmented approach, we shall increase what is already a very high transactional cost or delivery cost of UN business at the country level. It has been said that 20%, maybe even sometimes 40%, we've heard higher figures. I don't mean to sound like Trump, but we've heard higher figures are spent on transactional costs and out of every dollar, only 60 cents sometimes less gets to the development assistance that we wish to see in the countries. If we continue not to focus on this issue we shall be in a difficult position.

Furthermore, we believe that we will have to ask some very fundamental questions on policies. I know this might be misunderstood, but we need to be brave enough to face up to it, on policies and even mandates. It will be very difficult for us to continue to legitimize mandates that were set 20, 30, 40, 70 years ago in a world that has changed so radically. In the corporate world for example, entire global organizations and institutions disappear because their relevance has evaporated in the face of the reality of change, so the question is how is it that we never see the same phenomena at the UN, with UN organizations and with UN agencies? It seems that they are perennial. The question is will the 2030 Agenda require us to seriously consider some fundamental issues concerning policy and management?

I would like to support what the G77 and China has said around the issue of poverty, which is a fundamental challenge for many developing countries both middle income and least developed, but I think the time has come to ask ourselves in light of what we have

learned in the process of developing the SDG's and the 2030 Agenda, whether in fact this issue of multi-dimensional poverty does not send a powerful signal to all of us. We need to fundamentally rethink, the long-term positioning of the UN development system; in order that it can respond to a deeper analysis of the multi-dimensional aspects of poverty, and related in particular, to issues of productive capacity being seen as the fundamental challenge of under-development. How can we create greater productive capacity in developing countries in order that they might be empowered to fight and eradicate poverty?

Mr. Ambassador,

I would also like to support the G77 and China by saying that, as we move forward there should be an enhanced coherence on integrated support to the UN development system, as already spelt out in paragraph 88 on the 2030 agenda. The reason why we have to stick to that paragraph as we move forward is because, that is the paragraph that spells out the ambition and the vision that we have all agreed as being the desirable way forward in transforming this great organization and its great institutions.

Ambassador, we are in agreement that ECOSOC hopefully, under your guidance should undertake a comprehensive mapping exercise to assess the existing functions vis a vis, the mandates of the arms and the legs, the institutions and the organizations of the UN development system, and as I said before, the issue of delivery while it has real problems at country level, it must be understood as a touchstone trying to limit fragmentation, and duplication, and high delivery transactional costs at country level. As has already been said, we as member states want the documents to be produced by the Independent Advisory Group to be made available to us in good time because some of these issues are of fundamental importance to our countries, but also to the United Nations.

This delegation would like to express its continued support to you and to ECOSOC, and we remain committed to seeing the changes that we aspire to that they will be achieved,

and that this long-term positioning will not end up being too long because, we need the UN to change expeditiously. As I said here the other day, we only have 15 years to implement this agenda, and we cannot spend too much of that time, fiddling with repositioning of the United Nations and its organizations.

I thank you.