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**Closing statement by
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PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
TO THE DCF REPUBLIC OF KOREA HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM**

Incheon, 10 April 2015

Development cooperation for people and planet: What will it take?

Honorable Deputy Minister Shin,
Under-Secretary-General Wu,
Minister Peterson,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

What a journey to the closing of this DCF Republic of Korea High-level Symposium!

Let me first extend my deep appreciation to our excellent host, the Government of the Republic of Korea.

I would also like to express my special thanks to the team at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and to Under-Secretary-General Wu, Navid Hanif, Zina Mounla and the whole DCF team, and the colleagues from the Financing for Development Office, for your support and tireless efforts.

A big “thank you” also goes to our wonderful moderators and panelists. You have so ably steered us through what was quite a challenging course. Your guidance and thought-provoking ideas pointed us in the right directions. We are particularly grateful for not having lost your sense of humor what has been rather difficult given our sometimes utterly technical remarks and interventions.

I learned a lot from all of you. You openly shared country-level experiences to ground our debate. This is so important for the Council to provide meaningful policy guidance.

I am convinced that the Financing for Development and post-2015 deliberations, as well as preparations for post-2015 implementation, will greatly benefit from the reality check and recommendations coming out of Songdo.

Your deliberations made a strong case for closely aligning the different approaches to means of implementation, coming out of the Monterrey and Rio processes, and climate change financing, to support implementation of an integrated, unified post-2015

development agenda. You helped to clarify the main political, conceptual and practical obstacles, both at the global and national levels, and how to address them.

Sharpening this narrative on “cooperating for development” will be particularly relevant, both in the FFD and post-2015 negotiations.

Whatever your entry points into the various negotiations and efforts, I urge all of you to keep in mind, and echo and advance, what you have heard here these past three days.

Without attempting to summarize our discussion, allow me to highlight some personal observations:

First, 2015 could be a watershed year for development cooperation. There is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to lean back and reflect whether the moment has come for a new and – hopefully - common vision for development cooperation, at the heart of a new global development agenda. If yes, rapid coordinated action will be vital.

Second, in all its forms and facets, development cooperation will need to provide essential support to the implementation of the post-2015 development agenda for the next fifteen years.

Third, development cooperation is more than just a toolbox or series of technical debates. Also with the renewed global partnership for sustainable development behind it, development cooperation will provide vital normative and operational guidance needed in different contexts. It will continue to bring together the right actors to solve specific problems.

Fourth, the role of different development cooperation modalities and instruments will continue to change, as the geography of poverty shifts and demand for support evolves to address different challenges. Reviewing all relevant commitments and lessons learned in a more coherent way will therefore be critical to ensure integrated follow-up and smart adjustments to policy and practice.

This symposium has shown yet again the importance of the unique global platform the Development Cooperation Forum provides. The High-level Political Forum, under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, could greatly benefit from this work.

The upcoming HLPF in the end of June, beginning of July will be before the Addis conference and at a time when – most likely – the negotiations on the Post 2015-Agenda have not been concluded. It will concentrate its work on its future core functions, i.e. reviewing the implementation of the Post 2015-Agenda and giving guidance and recommendations to MS on future steps and actions to safeguard the Agenda’s successful implementation. The HLPF will not be a statistical institution for the 17 goals and 169 targets, supported by a gigantic secretariat of simple box ticking clerks and human incarnations of indicators. It will be a political body, the political body for the Post 2015-Agenda, under the auspices of ECOSOC, as things stand now. The HLPF will take the

work of the DCF into account. And the ECOSOC will serve as the unifying platform on issues of implementation of the Post 2015-Agenda.

The DCF must therefore remain an inclusive policy space to discuss the implications of a unified and universal agenda for development cooperation. Post-2015, the Forum should continue to advocate for development cooperation, making sure it remains at the heart of the global partnership for sustainable development.

How this will all work in practice, next year for the first time, will be the task of the next ECOSOC-Bureau with my dear, distinguished and highly skillful colleague and friend, Ambassador OH Joon, the Permanent Representative of the Rep of Korea, at its helm. We have been and are laying the ground for this institutional set up to operate, but the reality check is due from January 1, 2016 onwards when we all have to implement what our heads of state and government will decide in the General Assembly at the end of September.

I look forward to your continued engagement in the DCF, the work of ECOSOC and the High-level Political Forum.

I wish you all a safe journey home, all the best!
Auf Wiedersehen and the traditional Austrian Servus!