



Remarks

by

H.E. Ambassador John W. Ashe

President of the 68th session of the United Nations

General Assembly

New York

22 September 2013

A Dialogue with Major Groups and other Stakeholders

Please check against delivery

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to this interactive dialogue.

Let me begin by sharing with you my ideas for the 68th session of the General Assembly, and then pose some questions for discussion and exchange of views.

The international community is about to embark on exercise that is in part aimed at overhauling the development agenda as we currently know it. This exercise, defining and subsequently implementing a post-2015 development agenda, is intended to harness the dramatic global changes that have led to unprecedented and increasingly complex socio-economic and environmental threats and challenges. This in turn will require a collective change in “business as usual” that may very well be both dramatic and profound. Embarking on the post 2015 development agenda will require levels of collaboration among all stakeholders, the likes of which we have not seen before.

How can we achieve this? I am suggesting that we need change in all quarters; we will need to embed sustainability into the way we plan, live, do business and seek recreation. Sustainability must be integrated into governments’ policies and programming, as well as the way in which the private sector relates to other stakeholders, generate profits and create competitive advantage. This is the great challenge we face: how to get absolutely everyone on board for the way in which we define, approach and implement the post-2015 development agenda.

Because of both the urgency and the sheer magnitude of this task, I have chosen “The Post 2015 Development Agenda: Setting the Stage!” as the theme for this session of the General Assembly. To that end, I will convene 3 high level events and 3 thematic debates, focused on areas that I strongly believe deserve consideration in any agenda we adopt. With that in mind, I’d like to present the themes for these six events by asking you to consider the following questions, each of which will be the focus of one of our events.

- 1) What role should women, the young and civil society play in a new development agenda?
- 2) How can we incorporate human rights and encourage the rule of law?
- 3) How do we maximize the benefits of South-South, Triangular cooperation and ICT for development?
- 4) How can we strengthen new and existing partnerships for better development outcomes?
- 5) How do we promote stable and peaceful societies so that all people can benefit from development gains without living in fear?
- 6) How do we address the persistent challenges of water, sanitation and sustainable energy?

Please feel free to openly share what's on your mind, as I am very much looking forward to hearing your ideas. Thank you.