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**Opening remarks by
HIS EXCELLENCY NÉSTOR OSORIO
PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL
TO THE DCF SWITZERLAND HIGH-LEVEL SYMPOSIUM**

“Development cooperation in a post-2015 era: sustainable development for all”

Montreux, Switzerland, 24 October 2013

Your Excellency Mr. Dahinden,
Mr. Assistant-Secretary-General Thomas Gass,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to join all of you in Montreux, in this beautiful historic setting.

Let me extend our deep appreciation to our kind host, the Government of Switzerland, and our thanks also to their co-organizers, the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

We gather here for the next two days to discuss openly some of the most pressing issues of our time. As the world is reaching environmental and social tipping points, the need for transformative action is both urgent and intensive.

The framework for development cooperation provided by the Millennium Development Goals is in its final stage. While much progress has been made, much remains to be done.

The post-2015 development agenda will have to both complete any unfinished business of the MDGs and address new challenges – from inequality and youth unemployment to migration and environmental degradation – that have impeded development progress.

It is widely recognized that sustainable development with its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – will have to be at the centre of any post-2015 development agenda. Yet, there is also consensus that the eradication of poverty in all its dimensions must remain of paramount priority.

While this should allow for a fully integrated approach, we know that, in practice, and with some exceptions, approaches to international development cooperation have evolved largely in isolation from sustainable development concepts.

Under the theme, “Development cooperation in a post-2015 era: sustainable development for all”, this symposium aims at removing the proverbial silos built around the deeply interlinked development and environment realms.

For the next two days we will explore together how development cooperation and financing will have to evolve to enable the practical pursuit of a truly transformative post-2015 development agenda.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Be assured, the messages that emerge from this symposium will be carried far beyond these lakeshores. They will be fed directly into the ongoing post-2015 discussions through the UN-led processes. And they will form a critical input to the preparations for the 2014 ministerial-level meeting of the Development Cooperation Forum of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, to take place in New York in July 2014.

The 2014 DCF aims to make a significant substantive and concrete contribution to the global dialogue on the future of development cooperation in the post-2015 period.

Looking into this room today, assures me that this is possible. We are gathered here, true to the DCF’s multi-stakeholder tradition, in a most diverse group of stakeholders of high-level officials and experts in development cooperation and development finance, from governments, parliaments, multilateral and civil society organizations, private philanthropic organizations and the private sector.

In the end, it is this variety of extremely qualified and knowledgeable stakeholders who bring their distinctive and valuable perspectives to the forum that makes the DCF what it is: a forum for exchange on the most pressing issues of development cooperation and a vehicle for change. For that, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you and I am looking forward to the interesting discussions of the next two days.