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**Draft Welcoming Remarks by
His Excellency Martin Sajdik
President of the Economic and Social Council
ECOSOC Special Event on Partnerships
United Nations Headquarters, New York
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Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is indeed a pleasure to welcome you to this ECOSOC Special Event on “Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships: Making them work for the Post-2015 Development Agenda”. This meeting is intended as a contribution to the implementation of this new agenda.

Multi-stakeholder partnerships, comprising Government, the private sector and philanthropic community, civil society, and academia, will be central for implementation of the new development agenda. The Council has, for a number of years, placed increased emphasis on ways in which to mobilize such partnerships in support of the international development agenda.

We must continue to expand this important collaboration as we transition to a new set of development goals. It will be important to consider how best to channel the valuable contributions and expertise of stakeholders in advancing the implementation of the new sustainable development goals and the outcome of future conferences and summits.

Distinguished participants,

The last two decades have seen a mushrooming of multi-stakeholder partnerships. They have increasingly become an integral part of the UN's work. These partnerships are voluntary by nature. They are rarely the same. They can have different structures and characteristics and employ different monitoring and review mechanisms. Some have reporting requirements while others do not. As we look for new and innovative ways in which to harness the potential benefits of multi-stakeholder partnerships, we have to ask ourselves how such partnerships should look like and how to best link them to the Post-2015 development agenda.

Partnerships are important on a global level, but it can be vital making them work on a national level. For, what really counts and what is noticed by the citizens happens on the national level.

Let me point out that we need review mechanisms, which have to be set up in a voluntary way. The lack of review mechanisms can make it difficult to assess if partnerships are indeed delivering results. Creating a platform for review could provide governments and the wider international community with the opportunity to take stock of the role, trends, innovations and financing of voluntary multi-stakeholder partnerships and their contribution to advancing international development. We shall therefore strive for putting into place mechanisms that will help to assess the progress made, at which the main focus of such review mechanisms should be the national level.

However, let me also point out that in order to make things work, it is crucial to avoid that too many different implementation and review mechanisms are put into place, which would result in a loss of oversight and therefore turn out counterproductive. Only if we succeed here, will it be possible to have a wide range of stakeholders on board for the 15 years that lie ahead of us.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have here with us today distinguished panelists who I am sure will provide us with valuable insights and perspectives into many of the issues that I have mentioned so far. Our first discussion will focus on ways to align multi-stakeholder partnerships with the Post-2015 Development Agenda, and where they should be reviewed. In the second panel, we will hear representatives describe a variety of partnership models that have worked, including ways in which they have been reviewed and evaluated. The lessons learned could provide us with possible approaches for partnership review after 2015, including elements that could be considered for a possible framework.

Our Moderator for the first panel is Mr. Michael Shank, Director of Media Strategy at Climate Nexus. He is a former columnist for the Washington Post and currently a columnist for US News and World Report. I now give him the floor to commence the first panel discussion on “Aligning partnerships with the Post-2015 Development Agenda: how should it be done and where could they be reviewed?”

Mr. Shank, you have the floor.