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## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL Substantive Session 2013

### High-level Segment

**Thematic debate “The contribution of the Economic and Social Council to the elaboration of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, as a principal body for policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development and for the follow up to the MDG”:**

**Specific question: How could accountability and the measurement and tracking of progress be improved in the post-2015 framework at the global, regional and national levels ? How could the ECOSOC Annual Ministerial review and Development Cooperation Forum mechanisms contribute to strengthening accountability?**

Geneva, 4th July 2013

Statement by Switzerland

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Mr. President  
Mr. Under-Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today we are to take part in an important debate that will undoubtedly make a substantial contribution to the setting of the post-2015 development agenda and the reform of ECOSOC, including the future role of the Development Cooperation Forum. We are pleased that this debate is being held in Geneva, the home of the European headquarters of the UN and many of its specialized agencies.

This debate is very timely. Exactly one week ago, UN Member States took their first decision regarding the institutional set-up which will be the home of the future debate on sustainable development. The High Level Political Forum, as the decision states, shall provide political leadership, give guidance and recommendations for sustainable development. Furthermore,

the High Level Political Forum, shall follow-up and review progress in the implementation of sustainable development commitments, as well as enhance the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development in a cross-sectoral manner. Every four years, the Forum will convene under the auspices of the General Assembly, reviewing where the world stands in order to address the challenges, which today are of global nature, and as such require global answers.

Member states have agreed on a hybrid model which allows to effectively link this guidance stemming from the highest political level, with the operational level, home of which is the Economic and Social Council. The ECOSOC remains the principle organ in the integrated and coordinated follow-up of the outcomes of all major UN conferences. There is a recognition for the need to further strengthen the ECOSOC, in order to allow it to assume its key role in ensuring a consistent and coordinated United Nations system as well as the balanced integration of the three pillars of sustainable development, namely economic, environmental and social development.

Some important steps in regards to strengthening the ECOSOC have been taken in the context of the High Level Political Forum decision. The future conduct of voluntary national reviews on the implementation of sustainable development not just in developing but also in developed countries, ultimately replacing the National Voluntary Presentations of the AMR is the expression of the will of member states to make all of us responsible to face global challenges. Said that, an important first step has been made but further reforms will be necessary and the reforms will have to go on.

Switzerland is of the opinion that the following two considerations should be considered with regard to the reform of ECOSOC and its future role in monitoring the post-2015 development agenda:

1. We need to begin by elaborating a shared vision of what we are seeking to achieve with a new development framework. Setting common objectives will allow us to identify what action the UN system needs to take if it is to fulfill its role.
2. The UN system as a whole and its constituent parts will play a key part in implementing this shared vision. We thus should use today's debate as well as the upcoming weeks to carefully analyze and reflect on how the creation of the High-level Political Forum affects the ECOSOC, and what in addition needs to be changed. Most important is, to avoid unnecessary duplications. It is therefore imperative that we collectively define the functions of

the various United Nations bodies involved before we start to define the modalities in which these functions shall be performed.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Switzerland has long supported the reform of the United Nations operational system and has also been committed for many years to bolstering the Economic and Social Council.

The UN operational system of development is already in the midst of a reform process. The Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), which the General Assembly adopted in December 2012, is ambitious. It explicitly defines the concrete actions that are needed to improve the coherence and effectiveness of the United Nations operational system. Of course, with these changes comes the challenge of implementing institutional adjustments in the head offices of UN funds and programmes, as well as on the ground. Perhaps the toughest challenge will be the adoption of a new operating culture that coordinates and harmonizes the efforts of the various bodies involved more effectively.

ECOSOC will play a leading role in monitoring the implementation of the QCPR. In the interests of achieving the stated objectives, ECOSOC must make sure that the UN operational system functions as effectively as possible. For this to happen, specialised agencies must be involved in the reform process even those not formally bound to the QCPR.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As well as illustrating the complexities of reforming ECOSOC, these two points which I have set out underline the fact that the reform must tie into other processes.

It is for this reason that we would like to see discussions on the reform of ECOSOC resulting from the definition of the objectives of the post-2015 agenda.

Regarding the DCF, the report of the Secretary General on the contribution of the ECOSOC to the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda strongly underlines the contribution of the DCF to strengthen mutual accountability. Switzerland will continue supporting the DCF for deepening the dialogue on mutual accountability with the view to enhance reporting on agreed commitments and adapting development cooperation to emerging challenges. The

post 2015 agenda is an opportunity for the DCF also to bring significant substantive contribution to the global dialogue on the future of development cooperation

The next DCF symposium, which will take place in Montreux in October, should already provide important reflections on the future role of development cooperation in supporting sustainable development. It will examine the sources, channels, instruments and major issues of development finance and where they need to be adjusted.

In conclusion, the post 2015 process provides a challenging opportunity to reform the ECOSOC and the DCF towards more efficiency and effectiveness. In doing so, it will be critical to tie the reform process to major decisions that have been taken, like on the High Level Political Forum or to the process implementation of the QCPR. When defining the location of ECOSOC sessions, comparative advantages such as the presence of thematic and technical capacities will have to be considered

Finally, on mutual accountability, the necessary evolution from development aid to development cooperation, redefining the responsibilities of all type of actors, including the private sector, will open new possibilities to promote sustainable development.

Once again, I confirm the Swiss commitment to make progress on all these challenging but promising issues.

Thank you for your attention