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Chair: Mr. Jürgenson (Estonia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10:05 a.m.

**Agenda item 26: Towards global partnerships
(A/72/310)**

1. **Ms. Kingo** (Executive Director of the United Nations Global Compact), introducing the report of the Secretary-General (A/72/310) entitled “Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector”, said that only 5,000 days remained to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Secretary-General’s report offered a practical, resource-effective way for the United Nations to unlock the full potential of collaboration with the private sector and other partners with a view towards reaching that milestone.

2. The overall consensus reflected in the report was that it would be vital to scale up alliances and partnerships, but that the Organization would need to make a significant effort to achieve that. While the report contained a number of examples of specific partnerships that showed potential for scale, it would be imperative to pivot towards partnerships that leveraged business resources and expertise even more effectively.

3. The United Nations had a tremendous opportunity to play a strong, catalytic role in sparking a new wave of financing and innovation to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through partnership with the private sector. The aim should be to move from “funding” to “financing”, a critical transformation that would shift the focus from mobilizing philanthropic resources to putting the markets to work for sustainable development through innovative financing.

4. In that regard, the report made a number of concrete recommendations designed to more fully integrate the notion of partnerships into the Organization as a whole. For example, United Nations entities should be encouraged to embed multi-stakeholder partnerships in their core business models, which would help reinvigorate the global leadership role of the United Nations as a convener and facilitator of collaboration. The United Nations should also prioritize investing in talent development among both partnership practitioners and its own staff to address current skill set gaps. It would also be important to build support for increased risk tolerance and to create safe spaces to learn from failure. To reward best practices and cultivate strong partnership advocates at all levels of the Organization, partnerships and related metrics should be integrated into the performance management criteria of relevant United Nations management and staff.

5. To safeguard the reputation of the Organization, companies in partnership with the United Nations

should, at a minimum, make a public commitment to the ten principles of the United Nations Global Compact. At the country level, Global Compact Local Networks and the local United Nations system should strengthen their collaboration by having resident coordinators and other United Nations country team leaders engage both local networks and the business community to advance national sustainable development priorities.

6. In the current period of reform and renewal, the Global Compact Office hoped that its report would serve as a kind of connective tissue for the partnerships agenda by offering specific, pragmatic options that could help implement change by taking partnerships to the next level.

7. **Ms. Zahir** (Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) and referring to Sustainable Development Goal 17, said that partnerships were an important component of the means of implementation of the Goals. Partnerships among States, United Nations entities, civil society and the private sector would be critical for leveraging and sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources. Nonetheless, official development assistance (ODA) remained the core mechanism for development funding.

8. For small island developing States, partnerships were a necessity. But partnerships must not exist only on paper. They needed to produce results and to operate within a framework that gave preference to national priorities. Because commitments made through partnerships often required time to grow and achieve scale, they needed to provide space for reflection and improvement and often required support to adapt to changing circumstances and new information.

9. One example of the importance of partnerships for small island developing States was the Small Island Developing States Partnership Framework, which the Alliance had created in 2014 through the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway) with the express aim of monitoring partnerships, identifying new partnership opportunities and ensuring full implementation of commitments undertaken.

10. At the same time, many small island developing States were taking part in other initiatives organized by the United Nations and the international community. A good example was the SIDS Global Business Network, an online platform for sharing best practices and enhancing connections among regional private sector organizations, as well as for improving interregional business partnerships for small island developing States.

11. As communication was key to effective operation, it would be vital going forward for the various United Nations entities engaged in promoting partnerships to improve coherence and coordination across different platforms and groups. That would require increased support and capacity for entities organizing partnerships and an in-depth understanding of the full scope of various programmes, in particular those relating to sustainable development, in order to optimize results and prevent overlap or gaps.

12. The Alliance of Small Island States encouraged all partners to strengthen existing partnerships with small island developing States and to identify new opportunities in support of both the 2030 Agenda and the Samoa Pathway.

13. **Mr. Yaakob** (Malaysia), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) said that, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report, the 2030 Agenda presented a valuable opportunity for the United Nations to expand the scope of private sector collaborations through, inter alia, the United Nations-Business Action Hub and the United Nations Global Compact. It would be vital for the United Nations system to recognize that ASEAN was composed of countries in special situations, namely, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and middle-income countries, all of which faced specific challenges. For that reason, customized incentives and frameworks should be developed to promote partnerships based on individual country needs and characteristics.

14. The collaboration of the private sector was fundamental to the vision of the ASEAN Economic Community Blueprint 2025. Public-private partnerships were a tool for strengthening economic and social development and would be invaluable in promoting the infrastructure initiatives that had been recommended as part of the framework adopted at the Twenty-fifth ASEAN Summit in 2014. The ASEAN Business Advisory Council, the nine ASEAN+1 business councils and 66 businesses were actively involved with ASEAN sectoral bodies in their respective areas of cooperation.

15. ASEAN reaffirmed its support for the central role of the United Nations in coordinating and promoting the 2030 Agenda. While revitalized partnerships would be essential for successful implementation of all goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, official development assistance would remain critical for advancing the development of countries in special situations. The Association urged developed countries to scale up their official development assistance commitments, particularly to countries most in need.

16. Lastly, invoking the 2017 ASEAN theme, "Partnering for Change, Engaging the World", he expressed the hope that global partnerships would create the synergy required for the successful achievement of both the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals.

17. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that partnerships were key to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals, and public policy at the global, regional and national levels was also vital to achieving the Goals and advancing sustainable development. Governments needed to play a central role in promoting responsible business practices by, inter alia, establishing the requisite legal norms and regulations. Governments should also ensure that all such initiatives were implemented in accordance with national laws and development priorities and that, wherever possible, they supported United Nations efforts to partner with the private sector.

18. CELAC strongly supported a revitalized global partnership for development, with all countries taking action in accordance with their respective capabilities, and the transfer of financial and technological resources through, inter alia, North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation based on the outcomes of Monterrey, Doha, Addis Ababa and Rio de Janeiro and other outcomes that formed the basis for the current development agenda.

19. The private sector could play a decisive role through partnerships and by promoting decent work and investment, developing new technologies and making them accessible, providing technical training and stimulating sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth, taking into account the importance of non-discrimination, gender equality and the empowerment of women. Such activities should fully respect the principle of national ownership of development strategies.

20. The 2030 Agenda rightly underscored the importance of official development assistance as a pillar for financing development in developing countries as well as a means for facilitating achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. CELAC urged developed countries to fulfil their ODA commitments, which included meeting the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income. It also wished to stress the need to employ methodologies based on indicators that went beyond per capita income, in particular with respect to middle-income countries, which faced significant development challenges and could benefit greatly from

international support, including official development assistance.

21. CELAC encouraged the United Nations funds and programmes to continue their active collaboration with civil society, the private sector and foundations in order to diversify their resources, especially core resources, for operational activities for development. It attached particular importance to new forms of interaction between Governments, academia and the productive sector in promoting the development of science, technology and innovation, as well as technology transfer under favourable, and even concessionary and preferential, conditions. Public-private partnerships should accelerate inclusive development in all sectors of the economy in accordance with the needs of priorities of each country. A responsible approach must be taken to partnerships with the United Nations, in particular with respect to the participation of the private sector, philanthropic entities and civil society. Transparency, coherence, intergovernmental oversight by Member States, impact studies, evaluation and accountability would be crucial to that end.

22. All activities conducted within the framework of the global partnership for sustainable development should fully respect the intergovernmental character of the Organization, the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the priorities of the United Nations for the biennium, as outlined in the General Assembly resolution on the proposed programme budget outline. Moreover, all partnership activities should derive from a higher principle, namely, the need to provide assistance for development, with full respect for national priorities, as part of a process led by Member States.

23. **Mrs. Schmid-Luebbert** (Germany), speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States, said that the private sector could meaningfully apply its creativity and innovation to addressing sustainable development challenges while exercising responsible business practices, protecting labour rights and observing internationally recognized environmental and health standards, as advocated by the United Nations Global Compact.

24. While the United Nations development system was already engaged in a number of multi-stakeholder partnerships, it would be important to ensure that such alliances adhered to key principles and values, including transparency and accountability, and that they included mechanisms for effective monitoring and review. The European Union attached great importance to enabling partnerships that contributed to the implementation of

the 2030 Agenda while also protecting the integrity of the United Nations.

25. The role of partnerships in the context of the United Nations development system had been a topic of great interest during the previous year's negotiations on resolution 71/243 on the quadrennial comprehensive policy review. The European Union believed that the draft resolution on partnerships should be postponed to allow for further discussion and development in the context of that ongoing process. Multi-stakeholder involvement, transparency and accountability, the role of the United Nations Global Compact and a common and system-wide approach to partnerships were among the issues that needed to be addressed. The European Union planned to introduce a formal decision the following week to keep the item on the agenda for the seventy-third session of the General Assembly and looked forward to continued fruitful discussion with all Member States and other stakeholders in order to develop a more substantive draft resolution.

26. **Ms. Zhuang Yu** (China) said that in relation to Sustainable Development Goal 17, strengthening global partnerships for development was the ethical responsibility of the international community and would improve the overall level of development around the world. Her Government advocated more equitable and balanced partnerships to form a global development arrangement centred around the United Nations, with North-South cooperation as the main channel for development aid and South-South cooperation as a complement. Developed countries should fulfil their ODA commitments and increase support to developing countries, particularly African and least developed countries.

27. On the basis of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, developing countries should further enhance South-South cooperation and promote triangular cooperation, sharing their experiences in sustainable development to achieve self-strengthening through common endeavours. Partnerships among the public and private sectors and civil society should be reinforced with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

28. China had consistently promoted international development cooperation, and that position had been supported in practice through many initiatives at the highest levels, including the establishment in 2015 of funds, programmes and institutes dedicated to peaceful development and South-South cooperation. China had also taken other important measures, such as forgiving interest-free intergovernmental loans to least developed

countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States falling due in 2015.

29. As the host of the 2016 Summit of the Group of 20, China had worked to spur global development partnerships involving Governments, the public sector and civil society towards the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

30. Earlier in the year, her Government had announced new financing for South-South cooperation, thus providing a fresh impetus for developing countries in their development efforts. China would continue to work with the international community on development cooperation.

31. **Mr. Al-Marri** (Qatar) said that the experience of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) had shown that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would require enhanced global partnerships. That would include private-public sector cooperation, with important roles for civil society, young people and academia. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's recommendation that United Nations entities should be encouraged to embed multi-stakeholder partnerships into their core business models.

32. Qatar's foreign policy was based on the principle of cooperation and partnership to address development challenges. It paid special attention to South-South cooperation. In addition to meeting its ODA pledges, Qatar was becoming an increasingly important donor to countries facing natural disasters and economic and humanitarian crises. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would depend on comprehensive and balanced implementation in a spirit of global partnership that respected national priorities and took into account different circumstances, capacities and levels of development.

33. **Ms. Zahir** (Maldives) said that the rapid economic growth experienced by Maldives over the past 40 years owed largely to strong partnerships with the private sector, other countries and international organizations — most importantly, the United Nations. It was thus heartening that the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda both included partnerships as one of the key strategies for achieving sustainable development.

34. Countries must move from donor-driven relationships to more genuine partnerships based on mutual respect and understanding, and driven by national priorities. There was a need for more innovation-based partnerships that would propel inclusive economic growth, and for multi-stakeholder partnerships, particularly those that promoted gender empowerment.

35. The United Nations had a pivotal role to play in facilitating such partnerships, particularly development financing and innovation partnerships for small island developing States. However, the appropriate United Nations agencies must first be adequately resourced and funded. Maldives had shown how partnerships could help countries to transform, and it was ready to share its experience of forging meaningful partnerships.

36. **Mr. Dzonzi** (Malawi) said that the world was increasingly interconnected, a trend which was not expected to slow down in view of the pace of technological progress. Multisectoral engagement that simultaneously promoted economic, political and social development was essential. In that regard, Malawi was proud to be a member of the Southern African Development Community, the Tripartite Free Trade Area and the African Union, through which it hoped to contribute to Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want and the 2030 Agenda.

37. Business had a major role to play in the success of the 2030 Agenda; his delegation was pleased that the need for greater engagement with the private sector was recognized in the report. People and partnerships would be critical to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

38. **Mr. Smiti** (Thailand) said that in order to accelerate the pace of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, revitalized and scaled-up partnerships at all levels were critical. All stakeholders must do their part to adequately and effectively finance sustainable development. In that regard, official development assistance, domestic resource mobilization and public-private partnerships were vital. Thailand commended the ongoing work of the United Nations Global Compact in promoting private sector engagement in global sustainable development efforts, based on its ten principles for responsible business, which should be mainstreamed at the national level through the establishment of Global Compact Local Networks. The Global Compact Network Thailand had been helping Thai companies to advance sustainable development through the sharing of best practices and training.

39. Local communities, which often had innovative solutions to local problems, should have a greater role in sustainable development. In that connection, Thailand welcomed the Equator Prize initiative of the United Nations Development Programme, which celebrated local communities' development work across the world. It congratulated all Equator Prize winners, including the winner from Thailand, whose work had promoted biodiversity in the country's coastal areas. It also called on all Member States and the United Nations

to further empower local communities, and to promote partnerships and the sharing of experiences between local communities around the world.

40. New and innovative ways of strengthening partnerships were needed. Thailand valued the contributions of South-South and triangular cooperation to sustainable development, and would continue to provide technical cooperation and share its own development approach, based on the sufficiency economy philosophy, with countries in the Asia-Pacific area and Africa. Thailand appreciated the work of the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation in facilitating exchanges of best practice. Greater support from Member States and the United Nations system was required in order to effectively scale up South-South and triangular cooperation.

41. The role of the United Nations as a facilitator of collaboration needed to be strengthened. Thailand therefore welcomed the Secretary-General's initiatives to reform the United Nations system, which should make it an effective platform for partnerships. The United Nations should also enhance partnerships with regional and subregional organizations. In that regard, Thailand looked forward to strengthened cooperation between ASEAN and the United Nations, particularly in the area of development, building on the complementarities between ASEAN 2025: Forging Ahead Together and the 2030 Agenda.

42. **Ms. Song Mi Young** (Republic of Korea) said that an inclusive environment would be necessary to encourage the participation of all stakeholders in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 would cost an estimated \$6 trillion per year, and would require greater private sector involvement. However, partnerships should go beyond financing and investment to involve the sharing of knowledge, expertise and experiences.

43. The United Nations system should aim to improve its capacity to facilitate and manage diverse kinds of partnerships and its inter-agency collaboration on partnerships. As stated in General Assembly resolution [71/243](#), the United Nations development system must increase its capacity to engage in results-oriented, innovative partnerships at all levels. Existing partnerships must be effectively aligned with each other and with the 2030 Agenda.

44. The international community must proactively use existing forums, such as the partnership forum of the Economic and Social Council, to continue discussions on bolstering partnerships. Her delegation looked forward to continued dialogue on the effective

monitoring and review of progress made by partnerships.

45. **Mr. Chanthaphim** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that it was critical for developed countries to fulfil their ODA commitments in order to help developing countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Funding should not be earmarked, so that it could be used for the most urgent work, as nationally determined. South-South and triangular cooperation were important, but they were a complement to, rather than a substitute for, North-South cooperation.

46. United Nations specialized agencies played a significant role in helping his country address education, health, environmental, unexploded ordnance (UXO) and other challenges. He urged donor countries to provide sufficient, predictable and non-earmarked funding, especially core-budget funding, to support the operation of those agencies, which enabled them to support host countries' achievement of national development priorities and global development goals. He stressed the importance of creating a favourable environment for business and to promote private sector investment, including through public-private partnerships, but cautioned that the private sector should share the responsibility towards people and the planet.

47. His Government had established a round table process in order to build effective partnerships for development. The round table was a forum at which development partners, including donor countries and the United Nations development system, were invited to participate in discussions on and review the national socioeconomic development plan, and to align their development assistance with the country's priorities. In addition, the Vientiane Declaration on Aid Effectiveness had been adopted to ensure that funding was used effectively and efficiently.

48. **Ms. Hamdouni** (Morocco) said that public and private partnerships at the national and international levels must be revitalized in order to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 17. The private sector should take responsibility for determining how to mobilize the investment needed to achieve all the Sustainable Development Goals, while operating in a responsible and sustainable manner. It should act to transform the global economy, achieving sustainable economic growth with the right balance between the three pillars of sustainable development.

49. In Morocco, public-private partnerships were a key tool and an innovative mechanism for increasing investment in infrastructure and economic and social services. Thanks to public-private partnerships, various

projects had been carried out in vital sectors in support of the national policy for development of the infrastructure sector. Infrastructure contributed to the fight against poverty by facilitating access to employment and basic social services such as education, health care and sanitation.

50. South-South cooperation was critical for accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Morocco shared its expertise with other African countries, seeking to usher in a new, mutually beneficial paradigm for South-South cooperation that incorporated public-private partnerships and triangular cooperation. The Moroccan private sector was investing in strategic sectors throughout Africa, including agrifood, finance, banking, telecommunications, mining, tourism, irrigation and affordable housing.

51. She called on donor countries to honour their commitments to provide ODA, which remained critical to addressing global challenges. Solidarity and dynamism were needed to help developing countries confront those challenges. Innovative financing was an important component of any new vision for achieving the 2030 Agenda. Morocco remained committed to fruitful cooperation in support of people's well-being, as part of a strengthened global partnership based on common responsibility, equity and solidarity.

52. **Ms. Kantrow** (Observer for the International Chamber of Commerce) said that since 1946, the International Chamber of Commerce had participated in and led meetings, conferences and events at the United Nations to contribute to capacity-building on trade, investments and vital global issues, with a focus on supporting developing countries, and had been working closely with the United Nations Global Compact since its launch in 2000.

53. The report's acknowledgement that new partnerships would be critical to achieving the 2030 Agenda, and recognition that the private sector was one of the most critical partners, were heartening. The five critical routes for accelerating the impact of partnerships with business described in the report were logical, since businesses sought long-term, strategic partnerships on projects that were aligned with their corporate values, competencies and technologies, and sustainability objectives. One partnership that encompassed all five elements mentioned in the report was the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation, which supported effective implementation of the World Trade Organization's Trade Facilitation Agreement, a public-private platform focused on helping developing countries and least developed countries.

54. The International Chamber of Commerce was grateful for the opportunity newly accorded it as a permanent observer to enhance the participation of the private sector at the United Nations and in United Nations-led projects with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. With a membership of over 6 million businesses in 120 countries, the International Chamber of Commerce had the capacity and reach to empower the work of the Organization.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.