

**United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development**  
**Interactive Dialogue**  
**with Executive Heads of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination**  
**(CEB)**

**United Nations System: Together for the Future We Want**

Friday, 22 June 2012, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.  
RioCentro, Temporary Pavilion, Room T-2

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Opening Remarks by the United Nations Secretary-General

[Transcription]

Thank you Ms. Bárcena, and I thank all our distinguished leaders of the UN system who joined me this morning. It is a great honour to be part of this event.

This is a very important occasion where the distinguished leaders of the UN system can discuss with you how the UN can mobilize the necessary support and political will, resources and tools; how we can showcase our capacity to deliver, not only the Rio +20 recommendations, but all the challenges which we are facing.

We are living in an era of uncertainty, in terms of political and financial issues, in an era where leaders are tasked to come out and dedicate themselves to address all the challenges.

I am very happy and encouraged by what leaders have shown here in Rio.

This afternoon, leaders are going to adopt the Rio+20 outcome document. Whatever some people might say, I think it is only fair to say that leaders have shown their strong political leadership, here in Rio. The Brazilian government has shown extraordinary diplomatic skills to reconcile all the different ideas, here in Rio.

As you must have been very closely following up - such a long and difficult process of negotiations - one source of consolation and encouragement to me is that during the many months of a very difficult negotiation process, Member States and Major Groups have never shown any acrimony towards each other, like in some cases. They have always shown optimism, good spirit in working for a common purpose, addressing common challenges.

This is going to be the outcome document and I believe, as Secretary-General, that this provides a very solid foundation to put all of us and all our succeeding generations on a path towards greater sustainability.

But it is not the end, it is just the beginning of a long journey.

We have to address and agree on Sustainable Development Goals, on the High-Level Forum to monitor and oversee the implementation of these recommendations, strengthen UNEP with a universal membership, strengthen its financial and political support. There are many other issues where we have to do more – water, food, climate change, and gender empowerment, liveable cities, urbanization, transportation – in all 26 areas.

All have shown an extraordinary sense of commitment. We have received almost 700 voluntary commitments – this is, again, extraordinary. This is something which we have to be very grateful for, very proud of.

Twenty years ago, there were only a couple of business leaders participating. This time, we have 1,500 companies and CEOs pledging to work together with the UN for the common good, common prosperity of our world. I greatly appreciate it.

Civil society has also been making a great contribution. I met nine Major Groups yesterday. I met civil society representatives today. You should remember that when the general [zero] draft was released, 80% of this general [zero] draft was reflecting the recommendations and voices of civil society and business communities, and 20% of governments.

It would be fair to say that we made great strides, great commitments. Now the important thing is implementation, action now. This is why we are having this meeting. Action will be taken and will be mobilized by all our distinguished UN system [organizations]. This is not only the Secretariat, but specialized agencies, World Bank and IMF - the whole UN system family. We will be mobilizing our efforts, resources, and capacity. Let's see how our leaders will do.

We will have the social protection floor [initiative] implemented and [other] key activities under the CEB - Every Women, Every Child will be our continuing priority, and the Hunger challenge will again continue to be a priority.

I participated in a very important meeting yesterday. Gender empowerment, gender equality will be our top priority again. I am emphasizing my priority on these issues.

Again, we are here with civil society, governments, and business community representatives. You can count on the UN. The UN is your UN, we are just [its] representatives. We are serving you, serving the people. Please count on us and work together with us.