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**REMARKS
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SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE 2012 UN CONFERENCE
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (RIO+20)**

**Open Interactive Dialogue with Executive Heads of the UN System Chief Executives
Board for Coordination (CEB)
United Nations System: Together for the Future We Want**

Riocentro, room T-2, Rio de Janeiro, 22 June 2012, 11:00 am – 12:30 p.m.

Mr. Secretary-General,
Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,

[INTRODUCTION]

I deeply appreciate the opportunity to make some concluding remarks.

Let me start by thanking all of you for your insightful reflections on the outcomes of the Conference, and on the important tasks that await us.

I will certainly keep these in mind as we undertake an assessment of various aspects of the Conference, its preparatory process, as well as the inter-agency aspects.

I am pleased to say that the UN system, through the flexible ECESA Plus arrangements, has worked together... creating extraordinary momentum to bring Rio + 20 to a successful conclusion.

Your support and collaboration have proved indispensable.

Among other actions, you have provided financial support, seconded staff, and shared valuable intellectual inputs. Many of you organized preparatory meetings and events for Rio+20.

For all of these, I thank you, both as a colleague, and as Conference Secretary-General.

We have been through a two-year preparatory process which, in some ways, has been quite complicated. I am sure that in routine collaborations, glitches emerged. I seek your understanding, and hope we will be able to draw out lessons and further improve the inter-agency process.

[RIO+20 FOLLOW-UP]

Dear Colleagues, allow me to turn briefly to the outcomes.

In this regard, I have one simple message: we have come a long way, but the hard work has just begun in follow-up and implementation.

Let's first look at what we have achieved.

Rio+20 was convened to renew political commitment for sustainable development, and we have done just that.

The impressive number of Heads of State and Government, civil society and heads of UN agencies, funds and programmes and other entities

gathered here in Rio is a significant symbol of broad commitment and participation.

The text to be adopted is a strong demonstration of our commitment.

We agreed that Sustainable Development Goals should form part of an integrated, coherent agenda that addresses how we move forward in the post-2015 period.

We agreed on a path-breaking chapter on the green economy, as one of the important tools for achieving sustainable development.

We established a high-level political forum, which will energize the follow-up of Rio+20.

We agreed to strengthen UNEP.

We agreed to enhance the engagement of the private sector and partnerships - for example, by inviting the private sector to make ‘corporate sustainability reporting’ a part of their practice.

We adopted a 10-year framework on sustainable consumption and production.

We made significant advances in sectoral and cross-sectoral issues, including in energy, oceans and many other areas.

We created an impressively large registry of voluntary commitments.

In implementing all these decisions, the UN system will play a critical part.

The outcome document sets forth both general provisions – which I call soft guidance... as well as specific mandates – which I describe as “hard mandate” for the UN system.

Because of the time constraint, I will not go into details. I have asked DESA staff to provide a detailed analysis of these in the coming week and will share the analysis with all colleagues.

Suffice to say here that the UN system is entrusted with numerous actions and follow-up measures:

- **in the sections on green economy,**
- **on institutional framework for sustainable development,**
- **on the framework for action and follow-up, which covers priority sector and cross-sectoral issues,**
- **and on SDGs and Means of Implementation,**

[MOVING FORWARD]

We must now ensure effective and comprehensive follow-up.

Member States are the rightful owners of the Outcome Document. They will take it forward at the national level.

Civil society, including the private sector, also has an important role – implementing many concrete commitments.

But we, in the UN system, will be a critical catalyst - ensuring that the Outcome Document is translated into action on the ground... and that commitments are kept.

Every entity of the UN system has a stake in the follow-up of the Conference.

[UN COORIDINATION]

During the Conference we repeatedly heard that business-as-usual will not get us to the “Future We Want”.

And that means us, as much as anyone else.

A UN system that sticks to the same way of doing things risks impeding, rather than accelerating, progress.

Each member of the UN system has its specialized expertise, knowledge and comparative advantages. If we work as one family, the whole is stronger than the sum of its parts. We *can* make a difference.

Under the leadership of the Secretary-General, the CEB has become an increasingly effective instrument for coordination and cooperation.

Member States are watching us closely. They want to see how the UN integrates sustainable development into its policies, programmes and operations on the ground.

The Outcome document adds new areas of work, for example the SDGs and Green Economy, and provides political guidance on a range of priority areas.

As the heads of UN system entities, it is incumbent upon us to consider how we ensure an effective and sustained follow-up process.

Each entity has its unique strengths and specific mandates, which will determine in detail what actions are taken.

However, we also need to address issues of coordination. What actions can be taken through the CEB to ensure a coordinated follow-up?

In this regard, it may be worthwhile to review past experience, including experience of the Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) and the more recent practices of UN-Energy, UN-Water, and UN-Oceans, among others.

[CONCLUSION]

Dear Colleagues,

As you know, I will soon be leaving the UN. It has been a tremendous honour and pleasure working with all of you. It has been an experience enriched by interactions with you.

I will be thinking of you as you take the sustainable development agenda forward.

I know we are on the right path. And even if this path becomes difficult at times, we will stay true to it.

We care too deeply for it to be any other way.

Finally, on a personal note, I wish to say, frankly, that I am passionate about my responsibilities. I am driven by a wish to fulfil my duties to the best of my abilities, I have been, on occasion a bit emotional, and I may have been too outspoken.

But I meant no disrespect and I seek your understanding.

Many of my colleagues here will continue servicing the United Nations in your respective capacities and I wish you all the best.

Thank you.
