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Agenda Item 19
Sustainable development

H.E. Mr. Geir O. Pedersen
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Chair,

Today, exactly 500 days have passed since the Rio+20 conference concluded. Since then, we have reached several important milestones for sustainable development:

- The High Level Political Forum on sustainable development has been successfully established;
- The Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals is functional, with a lot of challenges on its agenda for the coming months;
- The Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing has started its important work;
- And we did agree upon a roadmap for the post-2015 development agenda during the special event on MDGs. This roadmap should help ensure coherence and integration between different work streams. It will also help us reach the agreed objective: a unified framework and a single set of universal sustainable development goals for the post-2015 development era.

Nonetheless, important challenges remain:

- We must now accelerate progress towards achieving the MDGs by 2015;
- When continuing the important work on defining the sustainable development goals, we must build on the success of the MDGs. But we must also learn from their shortcomings, and address the challenges of the future. We must carry on the unfinished agenda of the

(Check against delivery)
MDGs, in particular in areas like gender equality and global health. At the same time, we must address areas which were missing in the MDGs, such as sustainable energy for all;
- We have agreed that the SDGs must be universal, concrete and measurable, and that they must balance and integrate the environmental, social and economic dimensions of sustainable development. But we have yet to establish a common understanding of the meanings and practicalities of these principles.

In parallel with our work on defining the sustainable development goals, we need to establish robust follow-up and accountability mechanisms to promote their implementation. In doing so, we must look at lessons learned from existing models. In this regard, we would especially like to congratulate the African Peer Review Mechanism on its recent 10-year anniversary. Africa has set an example - and we should build on this example also in our discussions on a global review mechanism post-2015.

We welcome the High-Level Political Forum as the main arena for SDG implementation and monitoring. It should also be a platform for partnerships between countries, organizations, civil society and the private sector. In short, it should help drive the new sustainable development agenda forward.

Chair,

We have reached important milestones - but it is now time to turn agendas and frameworks into concrete results. We are currently setting the stage for both current and future generations. And we do still have 787 days to go until post-2015.

Thank you, Chair.