Introduction of the Report of the Secretary-General on “Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector”
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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, it is my great pleasure to introduce the Report of the Secretary-General on “Enhanced cooperation between the United Nations and all relevant partners, in particular the private sector”, under item 26 “Towards Global Partnerships”. As requested by Member States in A/RES/66/223, I would like to provide you with a brief introduction to the Report, prepared by the UN Global Compact Office.

This Report reflects the progress made by the United Nations in achieving organizational and development goals through collaboration with the private sector.

As requested, this Report focuses on two main areas: progress on integrity measures and the implementation of the Guidelines for Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector; and strengthening of Global Compact Local Networks.

There has been good progress on integrity. The updated Guidelines on Cooperation between the United Nations and the Business Sector provide practical advice for developing more effective partnerships, while ensuring integrity. The majority of agencies, funds and programmes have used these guidelines as a baseline in designing their own integrity measures. In addition, the annual United Nations System Private Sector Focal Points Meeting remains an important forum for staff to share experiences, innovations and lessons learned.

However, the Report presents four recommendations that should be considered in order to overcome the challenges associated with ensuring integrity with a view to fostering more effective collaboration, while respecting the normative standards of the United Nations, especially relevant to UN entities which have the mandate and capacities to engage in business partnerships at country level.

1. **Improve further integrity standards across all relevant activities.**
2. **Shift from a risk-averse to a risk-managed approach while ensuring the integrity of the Organization.**
3. **Ensure capacity, skills and objectivity of staff to conduct due diligence and develop more effective knowledge management systems to document experiences and reduce transaction costs and risks.**
4. **Promote and improve transparency through more effective internal and external communication and by disclosing successes and failures.**

The second area of focus of the Report is the progress of Global Compact Local Networks. These are business-led networks of companies and other stakeholders who
advance the Global Compact's universal principles within their country and encourage business action in support of United Nations goals. Now found in 101 countries, and comprised of local and foreign companies as well as a range of non-business stakeholders, these networks help to advance corporate responsibility through learning, dialogue and partnerships that tackle issues specific to the local context, language and culture.

- Global Compact Local Networks have made considerable progress in their growth and expansion and in sharing best practices. The Report provides recommendations in order to better equip Local Networks for advancing the UN Global Compact and acting as facilitators of United Nations-business collaboration worldwide.
  1. **Promote more diversified participation and reach.**
  2. **Further embed the Global Compact’s principles and partnerships locally.**
  3. **Stimulate greater activity and impact.**
  4. **Facilitate additional knowledge-sharing between Local Networks.**
  5. **Facilitate additional partnerships between the United Nations and the private sector.**

- This is an exciting time for the UN Global Compact. Since the launch of the initiative 13 years ago, significant progress has been made. Now, with over 11,000 participants from over 140 countries, the UN Global Compact is the largest voluntary corporate sustainability initiative in the world. Through dialogue, learning and partnerships, the UNGC has now built strong support across all regions of the world.

- The UN Global Compact has also convened several significant events to help advance United Nations priorities among the private sector. For example, a Corporate Sustainability Forum was convened on the sidelines of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in Rio de Janeiro in June 2012 with over 2,700 stakeholders. This event strengthened the business contribution to sustainable development in many ways.

- More recently, the UN Global Compact Leaders Summit, held in September 2013, gathered over 1,000 leaders from business, Government and civil society. The Summit unveiled a new global architecture for aligning business with global development priorities linked to the Millennium Development Goals and beginning a process of engaging companies and key stakeholders to 2015 and beyond. As part of the Summit, the UN Private Sector Forum: Africa was organized to bring private sector and Government leaders together on the unique opportunities and challenges in Africa. This led to a number of new commitments to action and the UN Global Compact is currently finalizing a new strategy in support of responsible African entrepreneurship.

- We are very grateful to the numerous Governments who have provided support to the UN Global Compact. As a voluntary initiative, the UN Global Compact will also in future complement Government priorities and seek to mainstream responsible business practices everywhere.
• Thank you.