

**OPENING REMARKS BY AMBASSADOR ALBERT R CHIMBINDI,  
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ZIMBABWE TO THE UNITED  
NATIONS AND VICE PRESIDENT OF ECOSOC RESPONSIBLE FOR  
THE 2023 OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT  
SEGMENT**

Ambassador Brian Wallace, Vice President of the General Assembly,  
Mr. Li Junhua, Under-Secretary-General for Economic Affairs,  
Honourable Frederick M. Shava, Minister of Foreign Affairs and  
International Trade of the Republic of Zimbabwe,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to welcome you all to the 2023 Operational Activities for Development Segment of ECOSOC.

We meet at this Segment, to take stock and discuss progress made by the UN development system (UNDS) on the implementation of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review (QCPR), and to provide guidance to the UNDS in supporting efforts of countries to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and their national development plans.

This Segment is taking place during one of the most challenging times in history. With the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic still being felt worldwide, new conflicts having ignited new crises, disrupting energy markets, and exacerbating food insecurity and malnutrition in many developing countries. High inflation has hit the income of many households, and the rising cost-of-living crisis has pushed millions into poverty and economic hardship.

At the same time, the climate crisis, and natural disasters continue to impose massive economic damages, generating humanitarian crises in many countries.

These complex challenges are interconnected, transcend borders and all other divides, and can only be addressed by collective integrated and well-designed policies with multiplier effects within and across countries.

In a world in crisis, rescuing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is more important than ever. It is concerning that most of the SDGs are moving backwards due to the accumulation of the crises that we are facing. To rescue and turbocharge the SDGs must be our highest common priority, and that is where the UNDS comes in. I wish to recognize and acknowledge the determined efforts of the UN Secretary-General towards tailoring the UN Development System to help in rescuing and accelerating the implementation of the SDGs.

### **Excellencies,**

The 2023 OAS is of particular importance. In addition to discussing progress on the implementation of the QCPR, it is, also, an opportunity for Member States to look ahead to the next QCPR, guided by the need to have a responsive system that can better support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

I, also, warmly welcome the Secretary General who will join us later on, the Deputy Secretary General, UN development system senior managers and the Resident Coordinators from the field.

I am pleased to extend a special welcome to Honourable Frederick M. Shava, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of the Republic of Zimbabwe, who graciously accepted my invitation to come and address this

august gathering and share Zimbabwe's experiences, in working with the repositioned UNDS. Welcome back to New York Honourable Minister.

**Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

This year's Segment will bring diverse voices from host Governments, Resident Coordinators, UN country teams, and UN Development System entities. The draft programme before us has been designed with a view to optimizing interactive dialogue between Member States and the UNDS. The overarching objective is to facilitate the sharing of best practices and experiences.

It is my belief that guided by the theme for the Segment, **"Guiding United Nations Development System's support in response to interlinked crises and to accelerate progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals"**, our discussions will see us achieve our objective.

Over the next three days, we will consider the evidence presented in the Secretary-General's report on the implementation of the Quadrennial Review and the annual report of the UNSDG Chair on the Development Coordination Office, including their annexes.

In recognition of the importance of our dialogue in the next three days, we have, before us, a programme that has been structured in such a way that there is a dedicated session for each of the mandates provided in the 2020 QCPR and other Resolutions of the General Assembly. We will begin with a dialogue with Secretary-General Guterres, on his report on the implementation of the QCPR and vision for the continuation of his reform agenda. This will be followed by a discussion with the Chair of the UNSDG on her report of the UNSDG on the Development Coordination Office and the Resident Coordinator System. We will then have a session on Financing

the SDGs, looking at how we can work better with financial institutions. The session on Dialogue with host Governments, RCs, and UN Country teams will look at ways the UNDS can better support programme countries. We will, also, have our annual dialogue with the Executive Heads of the UNDS to hear about how they are responding to the measures under way.

We will, also, take stock of how the UNDS is tailoring support to different country contexts, aligning their policies and practices to the mandates of the QCPR, and using strategic foresight, data and digital transformation for countries to achieve the structural transformation required to accelerate progress towards sustainable development.

During this Segment, we will review progress on the regional repositioning of the UN development system, and the implementation of the Funding Compact.

Our last session for the Segment will look into ways to strengthen the accountability on system wide performance and results.

Further, we have deliberately and consciously designed the programme to ensure a real conversation between the System and the Member States. This is aimed at ensuring that the perspectives and feedback of Member States are fully included in the conversation, while the system communicates with Member States the status of implementation of reforms and actual developments on the ground. An honest identification of both the successes and the challenges, is critical in shaping the way forward, including as an input with the discussions of the next QCPR scheduled for 2024.

In this regard, I wish to specifically thank our distinguished speakers, presenters, other moderators and panelists for their availability.

Let me hasten to remind all that the basis of the discussions we are going to have should go beyond the UN jargon and technicalities, as these issues are about making a reality of our 2015 pledge of leaving no one behind, through effective multilateralism, with the UNDS at the centre. We have to deliver results for the people we represent, and ultimately to improve their overall well-being.

### **Excellencies,**

The UN Development System has been undergoing a stress test in the last few years. As we pass the mid-way point towards 2030, we are losing hard-earned progress on the SDGs. Against this emergency, the UNDS, through its reforms, has laid an increasingly firm foundation to help meet these complex development challenges in line with the 2020 QCPR. Despite facing funding challenges, the strengthened RC system is bringing UN Country Teams closer together to support the 2030 Agenda. New Cooperation Frameworks are effectively locking in place upgraded UN Country Teams to be well placed to mobilise collaboration, partnerships and financing.

At the same time, the reports we are going to consider clearly state that the UN Development system is generating significant efficiencies.

I believe that the valuable experience gained in this state of emergency, should provide a solid basis for the permanent amplification of the effectiveness of the UN Development system and its partnership with governments, other international organizations, and development actors.

In view of this, the 2023 ECOSOC OAS has assumed even more significance, as the main accountability platform for the System, to enhance the

acceleration of system-wide performance and results in support of the 2030 Agenda, as endorsed and strengthened by the General Assembly.

As noted by the Secretary-General in his report, there are some notable achievements but, also, the challenges and remaining weaknesses in the reform of the UNDS. The challenges ahead, however, are significant. More than ever, we will need the system to come to the fore, if most developing countries are to regain the decade of development gains that has been wiped out.

I hope this Segment helps to pave the way for the integrated support on which many programme countries will heavily rely during the hardships occasioned by the polycrises we are facing. It goes without saying that this will, also, require the participation of everyone, including governments, the private sector, civil society organizations and all the people around the world.

In this sense, I encourage all participants, both from the Member States and the UN Development System, to have a forward-looking vision. Let us keep in mind that the next QCPR will have a central role in the recovery process as we strive to get the SDGs back on track. The decisions we are going to adopt starting with this Segment, and in the upcoming months will impact millions of lives around the world and will shape the future of the 2030 Agenda for years to come.

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I am confident that the discussions during the Segment will lead to a meaningful outcome, including through informing a substantive ECOSOC Resolution this year, as we go into the High-level Political Forum in July and the SDG Summit in September. We look forward to your active participation to ensure a successful OAS and the adoption of a substantive ECOSOC Resolution.

**Excellencies,**

This morning, we will hear from the Secretary-General when he presents his report on the system-wide implementation of the Quadrennial Comprehensive Policy Review of Operational Activities for Development.

Before that, and without further ado I invite the Vice President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Brian Wallace to make his remarks.

Ambassador, you have the floor.