

**Opening Remarks by H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf  
at the 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the High-Level Panel on a Post-2015 Global Development Agenda  
United Nations, New York  
Tuesday, May 14, 2013**

Mr. Prime Minister,  
Fellow Panel Members:

I am delighted to be here today, among friends, at this final meeting of the High-Level Panel on a Post-2015 Development Agenda. We have come a long way these past eight months, and looking back we can say that we've made much progress towards fulfilling the mandate assigned to us by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. I have no doubt that we will complete this task in a manner that will make us all proud of the work we have accomplished.

Also during these past months, we have held consultations and meetings that took us to far-flung places, as we debated issues and listened to stakeholders from across our one world. Having done all that, and come so far, we must now reach a conclusion on how we want to frame a new development agenda that will feed into the Secretary-General's report for a new global, inclusive and sustainable agenda. Allow me, here, to extend our collective gratitude to Mr. Homi Kharas and Ms. Amina Mohammed for steering this series of meetings and consultations, and to our respective teams for their valuable insights and contributions.

Fellow Panelists: This final meeting is one of opportunity and challenge. We have the opportunity to agree on what is essential for the good of humanity after many months of deliberating and consulting. The challenge, of course, is for each of us to agree that not every policy agenda we bring to the table will find its way into the final document. Today, tomorrow and over the next days – we no longer have weeks and months – we must reach a consensus that will form the basis for a new transformational agenda. This Panel's work must be completed in the coming days – without abandoning our hard beliefs and policies – in order to reach a consensus that will put our world on the path of sustainability, equity and common well-being.

We not only have the responsibility to change things for the better, but also the capacity to find solutions to the problems that confront us as one world, with one common destiny. Never before has humanity had so much capacity, and never before today have we faced the existential issue of collective survival. We are talking about a universal agenda, because every problem confronting any one nation affects many others around the world.

From New York to London to Monrovia and Bali, we reached decisive conclusions. Gathered here in New York once more, for this final and interim meeting, we must concretize our findings and go further. We must capitalize upon this last, crucial opportunity to hammer out the most challenging issues facing the new global development agenda.

We understand that you made much progress yesterday, and we look forward to hearing the summary of the discussions from the Panel members who chaired sessions on the various outstanding issues. Universality, sustainable production and consumption, building strong institutions, and peace and conflict – these are all crucial matters on which we must reach a consensus over the next two days. We must ensure that by the time we leave these premises, we will have given Homi and his team the guidance to produce a report that is of the highest quality – a report that is bold, ambitious and compelling, but also

grounded in the geo-political realities of our times. We are confident we can achieve this, if we are willing to take daring steps, as well as make compromises.

The Report we are endeavoring to put together must not and cannot be an amalgam of every problem in the world and the agenda items of every government, civil society organization or private sector. Rather it must reflect the denominator of our common and greatest ambition for a better, more inclusive and fairer world. Having listened to the world, we must come up with a document that is grounded in our reality, springing from one of the most open, transparent and global consultative processes in recent history.

Ending extreme poverty in a generation, securing a prosperous future for all, and protecting our environment are achievable objectives in our time. We have the historic responsibility to provide a road map to the UN Secretary-General that will provide him with the instruments to set a concrete agenda that will bring about a new global partnership where no one is left behind, a world where fundamental economic transformation will eradicate extreme poverty, a world where a new global compact based on true partnership and shared responsibilities will end inequalities and protect our environment. We can and must realize all this.

There are many challenges ahead, but we are confident that this Panel will identify the most pressing ones and, drawing on our technical know-how and the political expertise, we will identify ways to overcome them. Together we will find innovative solutions and cooperative measures to ensure that by 2030, no person, community or nation has been left behind, and everyone can enjoy the prospect of a prosperous and sustainable future.

Let me now open the floor, and ask those who chaired sessions yesterday to brief us on where we stand, not only on issues but on the process in general. This is our last meeting, our last chance to get it right and getting it right we must.

We will first listen to John Podesta, followed by Patricia Espinoza and the others. At the end of this and tomorrow's meeting, I am sure we will have given to Homi enough material to complete the drafting process.

I thank you.