



Statement of Lebanon

by

**Mr. Hassan Abbas
Counsellor**

**at the 2016 session of the
Economic and Social Council**

“Integration Segment”

New York, May 2, 2016

Check Against Delivery

*Permanent Mission of Lebanon to the United Nations
866 United Nations Plaza, Suite 531, New York, NY 10017*

Mr. Vice-President,

Allow me at the outset to thank you for organizing this year's ECOSOC Integration Segment, and to appreciate the efforts you have exerted at bringing in this wide range of expertise to discuss the essentiality of Policy Innovation and Integration for the implementation of Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. We were particularly pleased to hear the Keynote Address by H.E. the Prime Minister of Estonia earlier this morning, and will be looking forward for the remaining panel discussions in the next couple of days.

Mr. Vice-President,

My statement this afternoon will focus on the efforts currently undertaken at the Lebanese national level to adopt a Lebanese National Sustainable Development Plan. The efforts to draft the plan had started back in 2014, more than one year before the adoption of Agenda 2030. The aim was to develop a national sustainable economic model that would permit Lebanon to address the complex challenges facing the country in an increasingly unstable regional political environment. After Agenda 2030's adoption last year, efforts have increasingly focused on aligning the national plan with Agenda 2030's SDG's and targets, while also introducing our country-specific targets. With the help and advice of ESCWA, and building on a matrix that ESCWA had developed, the draft plan is being aligned, wherever possible, with our national policies, programs and reforms touching on each and every one of the 17 SDG's.

The Plan is divided according to sectors, and it covers public services such as electricity, water, water treatment, renewable energy, and transportation, in addition to the country's major economic sectors, particularly industry, agriculture, finance and banking, capital markets, tourism, special economic zones, transit, education, and capacity and human resources development. In each chapter we have tried to take stock of the existing planned reforms and programs, analyze their shortcomings or inefficiencies and present alternatives, where needed.

The last part of the Plan will include a set of draft Laws and Decrees that ought to be passed by the Cabinet and by the Parliament in order to put each of the required reforms into effect.

All 17 SDG's will be covered in the Plan, with more attention given to those which are more urgent in the national context than others, and those have been identified. Consultations are currently being led by the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, and they have involved all relevant ministries, each providing inputs related to its area of specialty. The completed draft will be presented first to all public sector stakeholders for comment. The resulting text will then be introduced to a national forum to which the private sector and civil society will be closely associated, in order to ensure that all relevant stakeholders can claim ownership of this Plan and actively support its implementation.

As for financing, the Plan envisages a creative structure involving public-private partnerships (PPP's), privatization, domestic and international private sector investment, concessional financing from multilateral development institutions, and of course domestic public spending wherever possible.

In this context, we believe that the role of the UNDS will be crucial in building national capacities and facilitating technology transfer, to support adequate implementation and follow-up.

A whole chapter in the Plan will be dedicated to data collection and analysis, particularly on how to strengthen the national statistical institution. The World Bank has already financed a national study to this effect.

Finally, Mr. Vice-President,

The Plan will also dedicate a whole chapter that will address the complex challenge of the mass displacement crisis that has engulfed Lebanon and its economy in the past few years. We continue to believe that addressing such a complex challenge cannot be undertaken by Lebanon and its institutions alone. It needs to be addressed through a collective international effort, which would provide both short term humanitarian assistance and longer term development financing on concessional terms. Failure to do so will no doubt hinder the proper implementation of Agenda 2030 and Lebanon's National Sustainable Development Plan in the years to come.

Thank you.