

- Distinguished members of the PFD, Mr. Balbis, co-chair representing the Civil Society Organizations and Mr. Bah, representing the co-chair of the Local Authorities. Dear friends.
- Let us congratulate ourselves for yet another highly engaging and stimulating Policy Forum on Development. Thanks to your contributions and active participation. The Commission's understanding of what it will take to realise the commitments of the 2030 Agenda has truly been broadened. The issues raised have been sometimes controversial but always salient, ensuring that we are better prepared to take on the challenges that lie ahead.
- If the Commission wants to take a leading role in global matters, this kind of honest and vibrant exchange of ideas is critical. Opportunities to engage across a range of stakeholder groups ensures that we do not remain tied to one perspective or one way of doing things, but can explore – in a spirit of real partnership – a variety of possibilities which may bear fruit in the advancement of the 2030 Agenda.

- Let us now look at what have been the key issues discussed over the past 2.5 days.
- It is clear that we need to continue going “beyond business as usual”. The results of the Cotonou Partnership Agreement should be evaluated according to benefits achieved, with a focus on future challenges rather than an assessment of the past.
- Regardless of whether the new partnership is on the basis of a new legal agreement, the content of the new partnership should reflect current global issues, including climate change, migration pressures, economic development, and the SDGs and ensure the expansion of opportunities for political dialogue with stakeholders that have an essential role in national processes.
- The SDGs cannot be achieved without active multi-stakeholder participation at the local level.
- When discussing **Habitat III**, we looked at how we can go beyond a political agenda to practical actions, in particular for the realisation of existing commitments. We considered the role of social organizations - which are at the forefront of the main problems faced in cities and how international cooperation in

general and, the Commission in particular, can support Habitat III. The importance of credible indicators to be used by all parties for the monitoring of progress and to ensure positive change was particularly underlined. Whilst we were cautioned to not neglect financing, both public and private.

- The Global Partnership, as a multi-actor space is an example to many other development actors on the importance of real dialogue and participation for shared development goals. The issue of inclusiveness in the Global partnership cannot be only nominal but has to be achieved through real involvement of all, strengthening the continuity and quality of the process. There are expectations in a number of areas during the upcoming High Level Meeting, including: joint programming, better aid coordination and the use of country systems; increased transparency in both the governance and the progress of the partnership. Improving these areas, with clear timelines, financing and a strong monitoring system, should enhance the effectiveness, quality and impact of aid and, at the same time, help us achieve the SDGs.

- Enabling environment will remain a focus of future PFDs and we commit to stay engaged with you in how can we support better the role of CSOs and LAs in the implementation of the SDGs.
- We hear from the country researchers on their initial findings (The Netherlands and Indonesia) and we will continue to bring case studies to the PFD dialogue.
- The forum stressed the universality of the SDGs. In the new agenda there is consensus about the need to have internal and external coherence.
- We are looking into both local and global examples of multi stakeholder partnership to be more effective in achieving the goals.
- Some participants talked about the focus in the SDGs on the development - security nexus. Fragility needs to be addressed otherwise development does not work.
- We were also reminded that neither of them work without human rights.

- Our forum does not end here; it continues with multiple initiatives throughout the year. In July we will have our multi-stakeholder meeting in Guatemala or Colombia to be followed by the Africa regional PFD. Additional space for debating and engaging in the numerous issues we have jointly identified and where the forum can make a difference. Later in the year, the preliminary findings of the country research will be finalized and shared and surely help to get a much clearer understanding of the level of engagement and commitment in the implementation of the SDGs at national level.
- For those of you staying over for the Civil Society Forum, I look forward to continue debating. For those of you who are returning to your home countries, I wish you a safe trip back, I look forward to seeing you in the next PFD.
- We strive to make the PFD an even better one and, undoubtedly, the ongoing review will help us in achieving this. In addition, I thank you in advance for filling in the evaluation sheets. Please do not forget about Capacity4Development. Let us make it the

depository of the PFD and a truly interactive platform. It has vast potential still to be untapped.

- Work is ongoing to improve it and make it more user friendly.
- I would like to end by thanking all of you for your active participation, our Task Team for their continuous guidance and Sara and her team for their technical support. I truly think we all deserve a round of applause.