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MESSAGE

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**UNRISD Stakeholder Consultation**

**Geneva, Switzerland - 1 September 2014**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I regret that I am unable to join you in person today. However, given the importance of this meeting—which will help set the stage for a new strategic plan for the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development – I want to highlight some of the key messages which I had the opportunity to deliver at the April board meeting.

For five decades, UNRISD has produced outstanding and forward-thinking research and analysis on social development issues that are at the core of the United Nations development agenda. UNRISD has over the years, proactively contributed to strengthening the normative and analytical work of the United Nations and helped to shape its social development agenda.

The collaboration between UNRISD and DESA has supported Member States in their efforts to realize the commitments agreed to at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development. In particular, UNRISD's research and related activities have been essential in informing DESA's analytical work and the policy recommendations that we submit to the Commission for Social Development and the General Assembly.

While much success has been achieved towards social development goals, in particular to eradicate extreme poverty, we continue to confront acute and evolving challenges such as high levels of unemployment and rising inequality.

One of the strengths of UNRISD is its capacity to recognize the changing nature of the development landscape to which social policy must adapt: the shifting geography and profile of poverty; growing inequalities; the accelerating pace of globalization; and expanding risks associated with climate change and environmental degradation. This strength is a crucial resource that can help the UN system become more agile and responsive.

As the post-2015 development agenda takes shape, the research and ideas produced by UNRISD will continue to be pivotal to UN system-wide support to Member States and to strengthening the social pillar of sustainable development.

Just over the past year, my Department has benefited from collaborating with UNRISD in examining the emerging issue of the latest session of the Commission for Social Development, “the social drivers of sustainable development”; in launching the 2013 edition of the flagship *Report on the World Social Situation* on inequality; and in promoting the Social and Solidarity Economy.

I look forward to further opportunities for joint work, particularly in elaborating the priority theme selected by the Commission for its next two sessions, “Rethinking and strengthening social development in the contemporary world”. In this context, UNRISD’s new project, “New Directions in Social Policy”, will surely be a key resource.

Thank you again for the opportunity to address this important consultation. I am eager to follow its outcomes.

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