



# AUSTRALIA



AUSTRALIAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Economic and Social Council**  
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## **Operational Activities Segment** **Statement by Australia, Canada, and New Zealand**

**Statement by H.E. Gillian Bird**  
**Ambassador and Permanent Representative**  
**Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations**

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Mr President

I am making this statement today on behalf of the Governments of Canada and New Zealand and my own country, Australia.

I would like to convey our congratulations and support to Amina Mohammed in her new role as Deputy Secretary General, and like everyone in this room, we applaud her drive, passion and analysis of what needs to happen to implement our shared agenda.

In lending our strong support to the Executive Office we would make the following points.

**First: we have the political guidance and the mandates that we require to make UN reform a reality.**

We have agreed to a plan of reform in Addis, Sendai, New York, Paris, Istanbul and Quito.

We have agreed to reform in the development system, in the humanitarian system, in the name of sustaining peace, in the name of Secretariat and ECOSOC reform, and in the name of General Assembly alignment.

At this juncture, what we need most is strong leadership to make our proposed reforms a reality.

**Second: in undertaking reform we must remember our roots.**

The UN was founded to create an environment where all states, and all peoples may thrive. Development and the recognition of human rights are at the heart of this history. Any reform to the UN system must be based on a fundamental respect for the sanctity of human life and a recognition of the importance of giving each person the opportunities and capacities to make that life their own.

This is why “last mile” programming, and a focus on gender, disability, small island developing states, and least developed countries and landlocked countries is so important – and it is how we ensure our agenda reaches everyone.

**Third: in undertaking reform we must remember the ambition in our shared goals.**

The 2030 Agenda and its message of eradicating poverty, achieving sustainable development and leaving no one behind is about changing the world in which we currently live. It cannot be achieved by using an aid mentality, or an MDG mentality. It is about transforming economies, providing social safety nets, harnessing finance, innovation and technology, and partnerships. It is also about looking beyond borders and beyond conversations within the UN and thinking about how to provide solutions to our citizens – solutions that link prosperity to sustainability and resilience to peace.

**Finally: in reform we must be ruthless in maximizing the contribution the UN plays in our shared agenda.**

The UN and the UN development and humanitarian systems have a unique comparative and collaborative advantage. The UN is a globally trusted partner, global convenor and global actor in thought leadership, strategic policy development, normative development and results on the ground.

However, the UN cannot deliver on its mandates alone. It needs partners to deliver on the ambitious intergovernmental agendas its members have agreed at scale. In reforming its systems and operations, we therefore need to ensure that the UN harnesses the

capacity of governments, the private sector, international and national development banks, philanthropics, civil society, parliamentarians, and citizens to deliver on a shared, global agenda.

Reforms must be based on strongly and collaboratively led organisations that are premised on sophisticated financing and learning systems built on visionary leadership and empowered people.

We have a shared dream of a world whose time has come.

Australia, New Zealand and Canada look forward to playing our part in supporting reform to make this shared dream possible.

Thank you.