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Opening Statement by H.E. Mr. Dalius Šekėvičius, President of the Economic and Social Council

High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council

Geneva, 2 July 2007

Mr. Secretary-General,
Madam President of the General Assembly,
Your Excellency Madame President of the Confederation,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Representatives,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to welcome you to the opening of the first High Level Segment of a strengthened ECOSOC. I would like to extend my warm welcome to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, President of the General Assembly Sheikha Haya Rashed Al Khalifa, Madame President Micheline Calmy-Rey, the Prime Ministers, Ministers and senior representatives from Member States and the United Nations system.

At the beginning of the Millennium, our leaders adopted a shared agenda for development, based on a set of common goals and targets to be achieved by 2015. Midway to this date, we are witnessing the encouraging signs of a global decline in poverty in most parts of the world. And yet, many countries remain off track to meeting the Millennium Development Goals, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

We can only succeed in fulfilling the promise of the Millennium Declaration to the people there - and across the globe - if we work in a true global partnership, with all parties firmly determined to implement fully their development commitments.

Meeting the Goals requires multi - sectoral approaches and combined efforts across the board. While there is no single blueprint which could be adopted by all countries, success stories, such as the ones presented in the recently released 2007 Millennium Development Goals report, indicate the existence of certain key factors for success.

This should give us renewed hope that if we take up and apply the lessons learned and successful practices on a broader scale, attaining the Goals could still be within our reach. In the run-up to 2015, the

international community should therefore focus on helping to identify those key factors for success and make them common knowledge, transferable and adaptable locally to meet the challenges at hand.

Ladies and gentlemen,

