United Nations Environment Assembly
Opening of the Sustainable Innovation Expo

Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Acting Director-General of UNON

Monday, 11 March 2019 at approx. 09:00

H.E. Mr. Siim Kiisler, President of the UN Environment Assembly and Minister of Environment of Estonia,
H.E. Mr. Keriako Tobiko, Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Forestry of the Republic of KenyaMs. Joyce Msuya, Acting Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme,

Delegates, invited guests, private sector partners, friends, ladies and gentlemen, a very good morning to you, habari ya asubuhi!

Before I share with you a few remarks *[I wish to join the President of the UN Environment Assembly in expressing] / [I wish to express]***, on behalf of the United Nations Office at Nairobi and UN-Habitat, my deepest condolences and prayers to the people of the Great Nation of Ethiopia and to the families of the passengers and crew members who lost their lives in this tragedy. May the victims of this tragic accident, rest in eternal peace.**

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It is my pleasure to participate in the opening of the Sustainable Innovation Expo here at the United Nations Office at Nairobi, as part of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly.

This Expo is an excellent way to engage the private sector, and to highlight its indispensable role in tackling the environmental challenges facing our world.

The Expo also reminds us that sustainable development requires the involvement of multiple stakeholders. Employing the '4Ps' principle, involving the **public** and **private** sectors; **people** and civil society; and consolidating all of our

work through long-term **partnership** is crucial to implementing urban and human settlement solutions to challenges and crises they are facing.

This UN compound, which hosts over 3,500 staff members from dozens of UN offices, has become a major hub for the United Nations' work to advance the Sustainable Development Goals – in Kenya, in the region and around the world.

But much more needs to be done to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The United Nations and Governments cannot do this alone. We need the active support and involvement of everyone -- civil society, international bodies, Non-Government Organizations, academia, organizations of faith and, of course, the private sector.

The private sector brings innovation and a 'can-do' culture to our efforts to achieve sustainable development.

It can help drive change and deliver solutions to advance the Sustainable Development Goals, which carry huge opportunities for responsible companies – big and small.

The business agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals converge in many ways, and private sector action has a central role to play in the success of each of the seventeen Goals.

Sustainable cities, clean energy, better heath for all, sustainable patterns of consumption and production – these are just some of the areas that require the innovation and dynamism of the private sector, working in partnership with governments, communities and organizations like the United Nations, we have to make our cities resilient through innovation and sustainable practices

I thank all the partners and exhibitors who are participating in this Expo. Asanteni sana!