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**MR. LI JUNHUA**

**UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS**

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**Opening remarks**

**2025 ECOSOC Special Meeting on International Cooperation in Tax Matters**

**28 March 2025, 10:00 am – 10:30 am**

**ECOSOC Chamber**

President of ECOSOC,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,

Welcome to this important ECOSOC Special Meeting on International Cooperation in Tax Matters.

Our meeting today is exceptionally timely. Today's dialogue opens as we confront against the backdrop of mounting challenges in our pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals, and an increasingly complex global tax landscape.

The urgency is undeniable. Despite our collective efforts, we remain off-target on many SDGs. Inequality continues to rise, exacerbated by technological disruption, pandemic aftershocks, and policy decisions that too often favour capital over labour.

In this context, I would like to highlight three critical dimensions of our work in framing today's discussions.

First, the power of taxation as a catalyst for sustainable development. Effective tax policies generate revenue essential for public investments, while simultaneously reshaping economic incentives to promote sustainable development. When designed with inclusion in mind, tax systems also promote equity and economic opportunity.

Second, the imperative of strengthening international cooperation to address tax challenges. Developing countries continue to lose significant resources through tax avoidance and evasion—impeding critical investment in sustainable development. Our focus must be on empowering these countries with robust domestic tax administration and building capacity for effective international engagement.

As we celebrate 20 years of international tax cooperation at the United Nations, we recognize that the UN Tax Committee has laid strong foundations for the UN intergovernmental process and capacity building, especially towards the landmark United Nations Framework Convention on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. It is our great pride in UN DESA to serve as Secretariat to the UN Tax Committee and to celebrate its outstanding contributions to international tax cooperation.

Third, the transformative potential of gender-responsive taxation. As we commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we have a unique opportunity to reimagine tax systems to address systemic gender disparities, and actively promote women's economic empowerment. This demands a critical examination of hidden biases in tax policies and the design of equitable alternatives that acknowledge the diverse economic realities faced by women and men.

Distinguished delegates,

This 2025 Special Meeting on Tax is a critical step towards shaping the outcomes of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development in Spain. As preparations for FfD4 intensify, your deliberations today will offer valuable insights for addressing the SDG financing gap and constructing a more inclusive and effective international tax system.

Today's discussions will also directly inform the UN intergovernmental process in advancing the vital work of the UN Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation and its early protocols.

I am confident that today's panel discussion will help advance concrete solutions and strengthen international tax cooperation. The Secretariat stands ready to support you.

Thank you.

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