Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The topic of my presentation is “National consultations’ place among other tracks on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda”.

I would like to begin with a question: “Why is there so much talk, and, to many unsophisticated observers it may even appear to be fuss, about the post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda?

Obviously, because we still remember how the global development agenda, centered around the Millennium Development Goals, was built at the turn of the millennium. Admittedly, that past process has been neither wholly inclusive nor sufficiently transparent. The MDGs, many believe, have been overwhelmingly shaped by a small group of traditional donors and UN insiders.

As a result, there emerged an agenda, notwithstanding its widely acknowledged advantages and subsequent great results, that many saw as lacking in some respects in substance. For instance, one could often hear throughout the intervening years that the MDGs did not cover such vital areas for global development as energy, employment, and migration, among others.

That is why it is highly commendable that the current effort at developing the post-2015 UN Development Agenda has become truly inclusive and transparent.

Arguably, there are several tracks related to the post-2015 UN Development Agenda, depending on what one includes in this process.

I would like to single out just four tracks, which, in my opinion, are the most crucial.
The first is associated with the UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. The Task Team has already issued its report, right after the completion of the International Conference on Sustainable Development “Rio+20” in June 2012. The Report was entitled “Realizing the Future We Want for All”. By its very title this document clearly referred to the Rio+20 Outcome Document. The Report argues that inequalities in income and wealth have increased over the past few decades, which only serves to indicate that globalization proceeded at a very uneven pace. Therefore, addressing this challenge necessitates that a future development agenda be inclusive in terms of stakeholders and comprehensive in its coverage. With such a logic in mind, the report argues that the post-2015 UN Development Agenda should encompass all possible thematic areas, and that specific thematic goals to be realized through the tool of partnerships that bring together interested global stakeholders.

Belarus holds very dear the idea of global partnerships. We actually began advocating for this specific tool as a proper means in addressing contemporary transnational challenges perhaps a decade ago. That is why the idea that the post-2015 development agenda should be underpinned by partnerships is very appealing to us. We sincerely hope that it will eventually find its way in the post-2015 development agenda.

The second track relates to the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda established by the Secretary General, which has been tasked to report on options beyond 2015. The Panel consists of 27 persons and represents global leaders from government, private sector and civil society. Its work will reflect new development challenges while also drawing on experience gained in implementing the MDGs, both in terms of results achieved and areas for improvement. The Panel is expected to submit a report containing recommendations to the Secretary-General very soon.

The third track is the Member State-led process in the UN General Assembly that seeks to elaborate within the Intergovernmental Open Working Group a set of “Sustainable Development Goals” or SDGs. This track was mandated by the Rio+20 conference. It has taken UN Members States rather long to agree and finalize the Group’s composition and modes of operation. But, once that has been done earlier this year, the Group has started with its substantive work. Interestingly, the Member States have decided to use here an innovative, constituency-based system of
representation that is new to limited membership bodies of the General Assembly. This, in effect, means that most of the seats in the Working Group are shared by several countries.

In particular, **Belarus is a member of the Group sharing its seat with Serbia.** The Chair of our conference, Mr. Yury Ambrazevich, is our national representative there. Belarus stands in the Group for an inclusive and transparent process for the development of the SDGs. Likewise, we believe in the need of putting in place an evaluation mechanism of how UN Member States would implement the post-2015 UN Development Agenda. At least, in our opinion, this idea may be realized through **voluntary reports** by interested UN Member States. Moreover, at the Group’s latest session, our representative voiced the idea of elaborating an appropriate **index** that would help measure the level of implementation of the new development agenda. We believe that such an index should incorporate in a balanced way the three dimensions of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental.

Finally, **the fourth track** is about the **national consultations** on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda initiated by the United Nations Development Group. This is an UN-driven process. Such consultations, as far as I know, have been launched in around 100 countries. They take various forms and shapes, but they all seek in general to explore national development priorities on the basis on views expressed by various national stakeholders. I believe that the colleagues from the UN Country Team in Belarus and other countries will elaborate more on the specifics of their respective processes.

What all the four tracks seem to have in common is that they all either have proceeded from or have acquired a close relationship to the international conference on sustainable development “Rio+20”, held in June 2012 in Brazil. What this essentially means is that the international community has already embraced the view that a **future global development agenda should be built around the issue of sustainable development.**

Such an approach is right. Indeed, **sustainable development is a comprehensive paradigm**, because it is about a comprehensive and balanced coverage of development challenges, be they economic, social, or environmental.
Since the final decision on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda will be taken by Member States, the track associated with the Open Working Group on the SDGs appears to be the main drive in this four-fold process. Indeed, it is the prerogative of UN Member States to decide in 2015 on a future global development agenda. And, Member States’ decision will surely be informed by recommendations of the Working Group. But, how will the Working Group come to its own recommendations?

It is not likely to result exclusively from its own deliberations and findings. Rather, its recommendations will significantly build on the outcomes of the other three tracks. Each of them, in turn, brings its own value in the process.

The UN System Task Team on the post-2015 UN Development Agenda adds, I would say, an institutional vision, namely, that of the UN System. The High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons will impart to the process, in my view, a leaders’ vision, in other words, how global leaders perceive the future development agenda.

Finally, the national consultations, in my opinion, serve the three-fold purpose. First, they provide a grass-roots’ vision to the post-2015 Development Agenda. Indeed, after all, the consultations are about what ordinary people around the globe think of their daily development needs. Second, by accumulating the outcomes of national consultations, the United Nations Development Group itself will be better placed to advance its institutional vision. Third, the national consultations undoubtedly help national governments forge their national visions on the issue in question, which they will advance in the General Assembly. At least, we in Belarus intend to utilize an opportunity provided by the national consultations to the full.

To sum up, the process of national consultations stands as an absolutely indispensable component in the ongoing post-2015 UN Development Agenda. Indeed, if we want to have in a few year’s time a truly comprehensive global development agenda, we, the UN Member States – the decision-makers in that Organization, must fully take into account the three types of visions produced by the relevant post-2015 tracks, namely, the institutional vision, the leaders’ vision, and the grass-roots’ vision.

Thank you for your kind attention.