My name is Norine Kennedy, speaking from the United States Council for International Business.

Thank you to the panel – the business groups working with the FfD Business Sector Steering Committee appreciate this opportunity to participate as stakeholders in this Forum and help implement the commitments of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Over the course of this week, we have noted with satisfaction many concrete suggestions from panelists and distinguished delegates on increasing the private sector role’s in mobilizing finance, investment, trade, innovation, expertise and other resources for sustainable development, and more particularly the business role in the evolution to an SDG-guided international framework of cooperation and implementation.

On the topics before us this morning, we would agree with other commentators on the central role of multilateral trade, and the need to make it synergistic with mobilizing domestic resources and creating the right environment for FDI. Trade is a powerful vehicle for development, and it also creates a network for broad deployment of innovative technologies and knowhow. The attempted Environmental Goods Agreement demonstrated the potential of this synergy, and we continue to encourage governments to see trade as a vital avenue for economic prosperity and technological opportunity towards sustainable development. We also appreciated the attributes of a vital active eco-system for innovation presented by the panellist from Sri Lanka. Other key attributes of the necessary eco-system for innovation include IP protection and a strong patent system and stakeholder consultation and dialogue. We encourage the further engagement of business on specific technical roadmaps towards successful realization of the SDGs.

The private sector is indispensable to underwriting and realizing the SDGs, whether directly or through innovation and investment, public private partnerships, provision of expertise, services and equipment, linkages with SMEs and the creation of value chains involving new technologies and processes that are cleaner and greener.

We appreciate the efforts that FfD and all of you have made to involve the private sector, yet we continue to feel that the full potential of business, whether in this or other UN SDG related forums, such as the recent STIF, is under-utilized. We encourage you to draw in and mainstream business perspectives and experiences on the matters under discussion here, whether concerning finance and investment, TOSSD, infrastructure, project development and execution, technical expertise or public-private sector partnerships.
However, we still have a lot of work to do to create the needed collaboration at both senior and ground levels to increase the enabling environments, policies, programs, processes, and projects that can further animate business on the SDGs.

As business, we know how to deliver results. Implementation is ingrained in our DNA, and from our collective day to day experiences, we can contribute significantly more to FfD and realization of the SDGs. But the level and scope of engagement need to be radically scaled up.

As the World Bank advisor said yesterday, all FfD stakeholders need to challenge ourselves to have more dynamic and open flows of ideas and collaboration. The actions and recommendations set forth at this FfD Forum do not yet adequately reflect the potential contributions of the private sector.

The few business representatives sitting up here are a great start, but we would suggest future FfD ECOSOC Forums and related working groups crowd in business inputs, panelists and perspectives from both developed and developing countries. We are pleased to share that there is strong interest from business across all sectors to constructively engage and would appreciate the opportunity to bring broader business views forward in this regard.

In closing we would like to echo the key actions raised by the distinguished speaker from Sri Lanka - Synergize, harmonize and coordinate. We are ready on all 3. The FfD Business Sector Steering Committee commits to working with the FfD Office and all of you in advancing financing and investment for sustainable development.