

**DRAFT SPEECH BY THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR-GENERAL: TECHNOLOGY INNOVATION IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SOUTH AFRICA), MR MMBONENI MUOFHE, AT THE OPENING CEREMONY OF THE 2015 GLOBAL FORUM ON RESEARCH AND INNOVATION FOR HEALTH: MANILA, 22 AUGUST 2015**

The Secretary of the Philippine Department of Science and Technology – Honourable Mario G. Montejo;

The Secretary of the Philippine Department of Health – Honourable Janette Loreto-Garin;

The President of the COHRED Group – Prof. Carel IJsselmuiden;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

At the outset, allow me to extend my sincere thanks for a warm welcome at this opening ceremony of the 2015 Global Forum on Research and Innovation for Health with the theme of “*People at the centre of research and innovation for health*”. It is a great privilege that I am able to join you and participate in this Forum.

Three years ago, the South African Department of Science and Technology and the Department of Health, together with the COHRED Group had the great privilege of hosting the 2012 Global Forum on Research and Innovation for Health, in Cape Town, South Africa. In taking on that important role, we committed ourselves as a country to honour the great role that had been bestowed upon us. I would like to thank you all for the success of 2012 COHRED Forum, held from 24 to 26 April, on the theme ‘*Beyond Aid - research and innovation as key drivers for health, equity and development*’.

The 2012 Forum attracted close to 500 participants, who took the opportunity for to network with people from the health and science-related ministries, research institutions and academia, development agencies and foundations, non-governmental organisations, civil society, and the private sector.

As we reflect back on what transpired during Forum 2012, we are proud to report that the good organisation, programme and diversity of participants at Forum 2012 helped to create a space through which a number of issues could be discussed to enhance the capacity of developing countries to take ownership of the health research and development agenda in their own countries.

We provided a platform to discuss how investments for health research can be made more efficient and effective, and how these investments can be increased, particularly for low-income groups suffering greater burdens of disease. We also spent a considerable amount of time discussing how the health and development impact of research and innovation could be maximised in sectors such as water supply, sanitation and food security.

The key message from Forum 2012 was that while we acknowledge the crucial role of aid, the resources made available should be used in a perspective of enabling countries to establish the foundations for their own sustainable development. We are, therefore, hopeful that participants at the Forum were able to draw inspiration to consider funding models in which developing countries can in future develop their own partnerships with their own resources and look to donors to support these partnerships as opposed to providing development aid.

During Forum 2012, we also made it possible for young leaders from across the world - 35 years of age and under - from all sectors who had had an impact on health and development to participate in the Forum. This youth – referred to as “Youth in Motion: Beyond Aid” included policy-makers, business representatives, social entrepreneurs and innovators, media and researchers who were provided with a platform to discuss their ideas and plans for a world moving beyond aid. We believe this was the start of a movement that would help develop the next generation of leaders by providing these young leaders with an opportunity to manage their own session, exposing them to stimulating discussions and ideas, providing them a platform to showcase their ideas and initiatives internationally, and giving them an opportunity to build their networks. Following their participation in Forum 2012, the Youth in Motion managed to come up with a draft communiqué titled: “*Moving Beyond Aid: A Global Communiqué*”.

As we handover the COHRED Forum from Cape Town to Manila, we hope that you will join us as we continue to advocate for health issues to remain central to the post-2015 development agenda. We must ensure that policies and development efforts targeted at health issues are responsive to the challenges as well as to the opportunities of sustainable development at both the international and national levels. In this regard, we appreciate the critical role played by the COHRED Group in continuing to make the case for the inclusion of research and innovation for health as a central component of the post-2015 development agenda. We acknowledge the fact that this agenda is going to be driven by increased R&D investments needs by all of us - and from the Department of Science and Technology's side, we remain resolute in our commitment to tackle this challenge. We especially look forward to enhance our working relations with our strategic partners, mainly in Asia and across the globe to ensure that we achieve all the gains we are envisioning for the post-2015 agenda.

In conclusion, let me express our deep appreciation and gratitude to the COHRED Group for your constructive engagement, guidance and support to us during our hosting of Forum 2012.

My sincere thanks go also to the government of the Philippines, especially the Philippines Departments of Health and Science and Technology for their presence here with us today and their continued support and commitment in advancing the global health research agenda.

Now, the time has come to handover the "symbolic drum" to the Government of the Philippines. I have every confidence that under your leadership and our collective effort, the COHRED Forum will reach new heights and continue to guide us develop cross-boundary solutions in the area of research and innovation for health and health equity.

I would like to take this opportunity to assure the Philippines the full support of the South African Government you take up the envious task of hosting us as we reflect on the increasing capacity and role of low and middle income in global health research and innovation.

I thank you.