

Video message**2022 session of the United Nations high-level political forum on sustainable development
UN Secretariat / President of ECOSOC****5 July 2022**

Your Excellency ECOSOC President Collen Vixen Kelapile;

Your Excellency UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres,

Excellencies, dear colleagues and friends,

The COVID-19 pandemic is not over yet. Cases are rising in 110 countries, and deaths have risen in three of the six WHO regions. The world needs to remain vigilant.

The pandemic has exposed divisions and inequities within and between countries, and flaws in the world's ability to deal with global health threats.

COVID-19 has halted, or even reversed progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals and reminded us that without health, there is no sustainable development.

We must make strategic shifts to drive progress and move beyond the short-term thinking that has led us so often into a cycle of panic and neglect.

First, we need to promote health – by addressing the root causes of disease and creating the conditions for good health and well-being;

Promoting health requires multisectoral action and strengthening partnerships – including on the SDGs for education, gender, and environment..

By reducing environmental risk factors alone, we estimate that a quarter of the global burden of disease can be prevented.

Second, we need to reorient health systems towards primary health care as the foundation of universal health coverage;

90% of essential health services can be delivered through primary health care.

In many countries, primary health care has been neglected and health spending is imbalanced towards secondary and tertiary care.

The benefits of investing in primary health care are enormous: for promoting health, strengthening resilience, preventing disease, and advancing equity.

Third, we need to protect health by strengthening the global architecture for health emergency preparedness, response and resilience.

The pandemic has exposed the gaps in our capacities for global emergency preparedness and response.

WHO proposes a new global health architecture, under the aegis of an international accord on pandemic preparedness and response, that addresses three key areas:

First, governance that is coherent, inclusive and accountable;

Second, systems and tools to prevent, detect and respond rapidly to health emergencies;

and third, adequate and efficient financing, domestically and internationally.

We need a sustained commitment to equity, inclusivity and coherence in the global health architecture, with WHO empowered to play its leading and coordinating role.

Excellencis, dear colleagues and friends, the world is currently progressing at a quarter of the rate needed to achieve the health-related targets of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Through a rigorous focus on delivery, we can double that rate, by focusing on interventions with the greatest impact in countries.

The Global Action Plan for Health Lives and Well-being for All is currently working in 52 countries to strengthen multilateral collaboration for impact.

I will conclude with three requests:

First, prioritize health at the centre of our plans for sustainable development;

Second, support the strategic shifts for a stronger global health architecture;

Third, strengthen the incentives for collaboration and hold us accountable on how we jointly support countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I thank you.

[488 words]