



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals



Ministerial roundtable "Accelerating achievement of the SDGs by 2030: addressing on-going crises and overcoming challenges"

Thursday, 14 July 2022, 2:30 to 4:30 pm

Secretariat Background Note

The multiple and interlinked global crises – the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and the impacts of the conflict in Ukraine and elsewhere – are putting the very viability of achieving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) by 2030 at great risk. These crises have also contributed to further new and emerging crises and challenges in relation to food insecurity, debt, inflation, further supply chain disruptions, energy access and rising energy costs, as well as continued social, economic and environmental instability. While the crises are reversing years or even decades of development progress, the emerging challenges – many of which were unforeseen just a year ago – are further complicating and slowing efforts to rebound and build back better.

The Report of the Secretary-General on Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals describes these crises and challenges within the framework of the SDGs. The report stresses that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic reversed the steady progress of poverty reduction over the past 25 years and that this unprecedented reversal is further exacerbated by rising inflation and the impacts of the war in Ukraine. It is estimated these combined crises will lead to an additional 75 million to 95 million people living in extreme poverty in 2022, compared to pre-pandemic projections.

With regard to hunger and food security, between 2014 and the onset of the pandemic, the number of people going hungry and suffering from food insecurity had been gradually rising. The COVID-19 crisis has pushed those rising rates even higher, and the war in Ukraine is further disrupting global food supply chains and creating the biggest global food crisis since World War II. The COVID-19 crisis has also exacerbated all forms of malnutrition, particularly in children.



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals



Inflation, debt and supply chains are affecting the global economy. The COVID-19 pandemic caused the worst economic crisis in decades in 2020, severely damaging working time and income. Although the global economy started to rebound in 2021, waves of spreading COVID-19 infections, together with rising inflation, major supply-chain disruptions, policy uncertainties, and unsustainable debt in developing countries, caused the global economy to slow down at the end of 2021.



The COVID-19 crisis has exacerbated global income inequality, partly reversing the decline of the previous two decades. Weak recoveries in emerging markets and developing economies are expected to raise between-country inequality. Globally, refugees were at the highest absolute number on record in 2021.



The impacts of climate change are already being felt across the world and COVID-19 further delayed the urgently needed transition to net-zero economies. While the economic slowdown and COVID-19 lockdowns led to the temporary reduction of CO₂ emissions in 2020, global energy related CO₂ emissions rose by 6.0% as demand for coal, oil and gas rebounded with the reopening of the economy in 2021. Based on current national commitments, global emissions are set to increase by almost 14% over the current decade, which could lead to a climate catastrophe unless governments, the private sector and civil society work together to take immediate action.



During the pandemic, comprehensive packages have been implemented, including short-term measures to protect businesses' incomes and people's jobs, as well as ambitious national or regional recovery plans. The report of the Secretary-General on Long-term future trends and scenarios - impacts on the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals indicates that, of a total of \$18.2 trillion committed to address the COVID-19 crisis in 2021 in the world's 50 largest economies, only 5% has been committed for green recovery packages, raising concerns that public investments may lock into a "business-as-usual" pathway.

The pandemic has shown a valuable lesson that sustainability aspects need to be included to reshape economies during recovery and building back better in ways that no longer damage climate and planet but protect the natural



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals



world. The large amounts of fund allocated to stimulus packages have paved the way for rethinking economies over the long term and implementing policies that will have multiple benefits, including employment creation, broadening social protection, ensuring sustainable food systems, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and protecting the environment.

Objective

This roundtable will bring together ministers from different portfolios who will present various perspectives and experiences and engage in a dialogue on what steps can be taken to address these new and emerging crises and challenges. The session will connect the theme of building back better from COVID-19 with the new and emerging crises and challenges currently being experienced. The session will also focus on advancing the changes needed in the immediate term to address the emerging issues and rescue and advance the SDGs in the year ahead leading up to the SDG Summit in September 2023.

Outcome

The outcome of the roundtable will be a summary of the session by the President of ECOSOC that will be included in the President's summary of the 2022 high-level political forum.

Practical arrangements

The ministerial dialogue will be held from 2.30 to 4.30 p.m. on Thursday, 14 July, in the Trusteeship Council Chamber. Delegations whose Ministers wish to express an interest to speak in the ministerial dialogue should register through the e-speakers module on the e-deleGATE portal (edelegate.un.int). Inscription will open on Thursday, 16 June, at 10 a.m., and will close on Wednesday, 29 June, at 5 p.m. (EDT). Participation in the dialogue will be in person only and will be limited to participants at the level of minister or, time permitting, vice-minister. In order to hear as many statements as possible within the limited time available, a time limit of three minutes per statement will be strictly implemented. A provisional



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals



list of Ministers that have expressed an interest in speaking during the ministerial dialogue will be circulated in the week of 5 July.

Proposed guiding questions:

- Of the current crises and challenges that have emerged this past year, which one is having the largest impact on building back better and SDG achievement in your national context? What immediate measures are being taken at the national level to address these impacts?
- What can we learn from the different country experiences in implementing long-term plans and measures for the SDGs when confronted with unforeseen events, crises and challenges?
- What immediate measures are needed at the international level to address the crises and challenges that have emerged during the past year, including increased global food insecurity, rising energy costs and insecurity, inflation, and increased CO₂ emissions?
- What measures are needed to assist developing countries, including countries in special situations as well as Middle Income Countries, to address the emerging crises and challenges?
- What are the next steps and actions to be undertaken and implemented during the year ahead in the social, economic and environmental areas with a view to recover, build back better and bring about the transformations needed to rescue and advance the SDGs leading up to the SDG Summit in September 2023?
- What needs to be done to ensure that plans for addressing crises better incorporate measures for reducing inequalities, advancing climate action, protecting the environment and promoting sustainable consumption and production patterns over the immediate and long-term?

