



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
12 May 2023

Original: English

High-level political forum on sustainable development

Convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council
10–19 July 2023

**Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease
(COVID-19) and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda
for Sustainable Development at all levels**

Regional contribution on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat hereby transmits the input from the sixth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, held in Santiago from 25 to 28 April 2023, to the high-level political forum on sustainable development.



Regional contribution on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean

Summary

The sixth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was held at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Santiago from 25 to 28 April 2023 and was chaired by Argentina. The main objective of the Forum, held under the theme “Accelerating the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels”, was to provide a space conducive to peer learning through interactive sessions in which participants were able, through discussions on common experiences and goals, to identify good practices that would allow member countries to make recommendations and present them at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, under the auspices of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as part of the regional contributions to the global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC presented the report prepared by the secretariat entitled “Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration”, which contained an analysis of the progress and current status of the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17, as well as projections for their achievement by 2030. The presentation was followed by panel discussions on each of the Goals under review and on the theme “Path to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit: transformative initiatives – creating opportunities to strengthen commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its full implementation at all levels”.

The official activities of the Forum were preceded by the meeting of the mechanism for civil society participation in the sustainable development agenda and in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. A total of 41 side events, organized by multiple stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector and entities of the United Nations system, were also held in the framework of the meeting of the regional Forum.

Intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the sixth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development were adopted.

The present report is based on the summary of the Chair of the sixth meeting of the Forum.

Introduction

1. The sixth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development was held, with in-person participation, at the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in Santiago from 25 to 28 April 2023. The meeting was chaired by Argentina and convened under the auspices of ECLAC. It was open to member States of the Forum, associate members of ECLAC and observers, the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, United Nations resident coordinators, regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations, international financial institutions, academia, the private sector and civil society. The meeting had high participation from all relevant stakeholders, with more than 650 persons attending, including 170 government representatives, more than 300 representatives from civil society, academia and the private sector and 150 representatives from the United Nations system.

2. Preparatory activities for the Forum included a children and youth forum of Latin America and the Caribbean (24 April), which was also a preparatory activity for the Economic and Social Council youth forum, a meeting of civil society from Latin America and the Caribbean, a regional workshop on voluntary national reviews and voluntary local reviews, organized by ECLAC in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (25 April), and 41 side events.

3. The annual meetings of the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations in her capacity as Chair of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean and with all United Nations resident coordinators of the region were also held in the framework of the Forum.

4. At the opening session, statements were made by José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of ECLAC; Paula Narváez, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations; Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; and Santiago Cafiero, Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina, the country serving as Chair of the Forum.

5. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC highlighted that the Forum was a space for sharing experiences on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and, as part of the regional contribution to the global review process, for providing clear indications of the adjustments needed to achieve the defined objectives. Past the midpoint towards 2030, a series of crises were hampering the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and exposing the region to the risk of a new lost decade. Against that backdrop, ECLAC had presented a report with three main conclusions. First, in the face of the considerable delay in achieving most targets, transformative action was needed to achieve the Goals. Secondly, the institutions built, capacities strengthened and mechanisms created for the participation of civil society were just some of the lasting successes of the process. Thirdly, to pick up the pace, ECLAC was proposing a set of high-impact and transformative initiatives, in which governance played an essential role. Lastly, he concluded that foresight and the ability to adopt a forward-looking approach were increasingly relevant for the achievement of the Goals and that the crises were proof of the need to focus on the long term.

6. The Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations mentioned that the commitment expressed in the 2030 Agenda represented an opportunity to transform societies. The daunting post-pandemic scenario challenged States, civil society and the international community to promote measures to bridge the widened gaps. The international community should identify areas where the situation was getting worse and redouble

collaboration and resource mobilization to reverse such trends. The Secretary-General was at the forefront of an international agenda to accelerate implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The region could not remain on the sidelines of that global challenge, but instead should set priorities and establish commitments to work together to accelerate progress towards the Goals. A culture of peace, tolerance and respect should continue to be fostered, and efforts should be made towards recognition of rights and a cross-cutting and inclusive environmental agenda. Seven years from 2030, the path ahead was as important as the outcome, as it would lay the foundations for the paradigm shift needed to build the future that generations to come would inherit.

7. The Deputy Secretary-General highlighted that the report entitled “Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration, sixth report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean”, prepared by ECLAC, showed that progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals had faltered and even backtracked. The cost-of-living crisis, fiscal stress and the debt burden were overwhelming and climate-related catastrophes and biodiversity loss were aggravating the region’s social challenges. Migrants, women, children, young people and those living in rural areas were the hardest hit. Swift action was needed to get back on track. The region was at the forefront of the dialogue on care systems, prioritizing gender equality, which was a cross-cutting issue for sustainable development. Income inequality and the rural-urban divide persisted, however. Productive transformation, boosting renewable energy, bridging the digital divide, renewing cooperation models and rethinking concessional finance eligibility for middle-income countries, including by building a multi-dimensional vulnerability index, should be promoted and regional integration and cooperation were vital in that process. She called on all to rise to the challenge and act for a sustainable future, leaving no one behind.

8. The Minister for Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina mentioned that in a context of overlapping crises, development appeared to be increasingly relegated to the back burner. The position of developing countries and resource mobilization to finance international cooperation were being weakened, leading to deeper divides between countries in the North and the South. Added to that was the weakening of peacekeeping and mechanisms to promote development. The region had borne the worst consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and a transformative recovery could only be achieved through dialogue and cooperation that included every country. Development with social justice was needed, as were policies in the areas of agriculture, industry and science and technology that could boost agricultural output, energy supply and the diversification of productive structures to guarantee jobs and access to strategic goods and services. He also underscored the importance of recognizing domestic and care work and of mainstreaming the gender agenda. Human rights must be accorded central priority in all sectors and dimensions of sustainable development.

9. Following the opening session, in a video message, Volker Türk, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, referred to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which had set a guiding vision in the aftermath of two world wars. Latin America and the Caribbean had long been a champion of human rights, which were the cornerstone of sustainable development. In a context of global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the world had passed the halfway mark towards 2030. The pandemic had disproportionately affected women, Indigenous Peoples and Afrodescendants, older and LGBTI+ persons and refugees and migrants, pushing millions into extreme poverty in a context of fragile social security. The full realization of economic, social

and cultural rights was crucial for recovery and disaggregated data were vital for designing policies that included marginalized populations. His office would continue to support human rights in the region, the most powerful tool for emerging from the crisis and forging a new beginning.

Presentation of the report entitled “Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration”

10. Presenting the report entitled “Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration – sixth report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean”,¹ the Executive Secretary of ECLAC provided an overview of the cascading global shocks and development crises facing Latin America and the Caribbean, the institutional progress related to the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, the assessment of progress towards the targets of the Goals, proposals for acceleration and some final reflections. He mentioned that, over the period 2014–2023, growth in the region had been slower than during the lost decade of the debt crisis and that investment trends represented a structural problem. The region was lagging and productivity gaps had widened. Between 2011 and 2019, job creation had reached record lows and, while poverty and inequality had lessened, they remained high. Meanwhile, the inflationary shock of 2021 and 2022 had been met by raising interest rates. Fiscal deficits were approaching pre-pandemic levels, but public debt remained high despite having fallen in 2022. In the Caribbean, lower fiscal deficits and high levels of public debt had also been recorded. Concerning institutional progress on the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, significant institutional capacity had been created for its implementation and follow-up, including coordination mechanisms, voluntary national reviews, the community of practice on voluntary national reviews and the alignment of national development plans and strategies with the 2030 Agenda. There were various institutional arrangements for the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda in the region. In addition, progress continued to be made in implementing the 2030 Agenda at the national level. He highlighted the work of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee and the increasing participation of civil society in processes related to the 2030 Agenda.

11. Regarding assessment of progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, he said that countries and the United Nations had strived to improve the availability of data for monitoring. He mentioned the progress made towards the achievement of Goals 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17, which was described in detail in the report. Looking towards the future, it was clear that the consequences of both the pandemic and the cascading crises were serving to motivate the redoubling of efforts to achieve the Goals. Despite the setbacks, the efforts made by countries had left their mark on public, private and civil society institutions, which was a very positive outcome. One of the report’s findings was that halfway to the deadline set for the 2030 Agenda, the goals were not halfway to being met: data showed that only a quarter of the targets had been or were expected to be met by 2030. Progress towards 48 per cent of the targets was in the right direction but too slow, and for 27 per cent, the trend was backwards. Thus, 75 per cent of the targets were at risk of not being met unless decisive action was taken to get back on track. In order to make progress, transformative initiatives were needed. ECLAC had identified such initiatives in seven areas: the bioeconomy, sustainable tourism, the digital transformation, regional

¹ Available on the website of the Forum at <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org>.

economic integration, the care society and gender equality, the energy transition and related industries, and the export of modern, Internet-enabled services. A forward-thinking approach was needed, with a focus on the long term. The region suffered from a lack of institutional continuity in foresight exercises, which were disconnected from public policy decision-making processes. Prospective planning was relevant in the context of polarization, gaps in strategic decision-making and coordination over time. Lastly, he noted that the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, to be held in September 2023, and the Summit of the Future, to be held in 2024, presented new opportunities for the region to take and share effective decisions to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Goals.

12. Following the presentation of the report, statements were made by Argentina, the Bahamas, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay, Uruguay, Saint Kitts and Nevis, the United States of America (video message) and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

13. Delegates agreed that recovery needed to be sustainable, inclusive and resilient, which called for the strengthening of international cooperation and raised the need to convey, at international forums, a joint regional vision of how to accelerate implementation of the Goals based on cooperation and solidarity among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

Strategies to advance implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean

14. A discussion on strategies to advance implementation of the 2030 Agenda was moderated by Diane Quarless, Chief of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, with a panel comprised of Ashni K. Singh, Minister of Finance of Guyana; Shantal Munro-Knight, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of Barbados; and Winston Dookeran, Secretary-General of Euclid University.

15. The moderator mentioned that the COVID-19 pandemic had widened fissures of inequality and compounded well-known, pre-existing issues that undermined development, creating a perfect storm. Creative economic, productive, social and investment policies would be required to sustain the incipient post-pandemic recovery and reduce the implementation deficit. Addressing development challenges had increased debt in a subregion with high debt-to-gross domestic product (GDP) ratios. The subregion faced a steep climb to 2030 without access to long-term, low-cost financing to implement sustainable development and without the concerted support of the international community. ECLAC and the United Nations system could provide guidance in the design and implementation of strategies and policy interventions.

16. The Minister of Finance of Guyana said that recent economic developments had placed his country in a position to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In the previous three years, public investment had increased fivefold and had been focused on transportation and energy infrastructure and social services. Two strategies had been developed to advance the national and subregional agenda in line with the 2030 Agenda: the Caribbean Community agenda to reduce the regional food imports bill by 25 per cent by 2025, and a second-generation low-carbon development strategy to generate revenues through the mobilization of standing forests. However, the level of investment needed to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda exceeded the fiscal resources available and the international community needed to recommit itself to undertakings that had been made with respect to mobilizing and delivering financing for the most vulnerable countries.

17. The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of Barbados mentioned that her Government focused its strategies for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals on national implementation that highlighted activities to ensure delivery driven by scale and impact and on strategic leadership at the global level, for example through leveraging opportunities to call attention to structural and systemic changes needed in the global financial architecture. Her Government's Bridgetown Initiative for the Reform of the Global Financial Architecture was built on five proposals: drawing in \$5 trillion of private savings for climate mitigation, widening access to concessional finance for the climate vulnerable, expanding multilateral development bank lending for climate and the Goals by \$1 trillion, funding loss and damage, and making the financial system more shock-absorbent. Other critical factors included the promotion of greater inclusivity and participation by all partners and stakeholders, and the lack of data and of access to reliable data, which stymied measurement, monitoring and evaluation.

18. The Secretary-General of Euclid University, underscoring the points raised by other members of the panel and the importance of the ECLAC report for the design of future policy perspectives, said that Caribbean resilience had been tested by global crises and that in the light of the imperative paradigm shift, a rethink of macroeconomics for the region was required. In that regard, environmental diplomacy, financial resilience and a new convergence framework were three key areas, the mechanics of which would enhance implementation of the Goals. He highlighted the need for initiatives to provide sustainable financial buffers, transform social security systems and expand the region's economic space through regional integration. The institutional footprint was key to defining forward-looking action. The Caribbean was on the edge of a major policy reset: more than a shift in public policymaking, what was needed was a redesign of the architecture of public policy to achieve targets in the long term.

19. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Costa Rica, Cuba, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago.

Contribution of the United Nations sustainable development system in Latin America and the Caribbean: presentation of the 2022 system-wide results report of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean

20. The 2022 system-wide results report of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean was presented by the Executive Secretary of ECLAC and by Michelle Muschett, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in their capacity as Vice-Chairs of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean.

21. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC referred to the framework under which the regional collaborative platforms were created as part of the reform of the United Nations development system, including the five recommendations of the Secretary-General of the United Nations in that regard. He listed the 13 key functions of those platforms, as established in the management and accountability framework of the United Nations development and resident coordinator system. He also shared an update on the status of the implementation of the five recommendations of the Secretary-General, including the creation of rosters of expertise and the launch of the website of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean. He also outlined the main development challenges for the region presented in the results report in the context of slowing economic growth in most countries. He

explained that the Regional Collaboration Platform was organized into issue-based coalitions and thematic working groups on cross-cutting issues and that the results report was structured in the same way. He then presented the system-wide results for each of the issue-based coalitions.

22. The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNDP presented the outcomes of the different thematic working groups and additional priority areas, results achieved in response to requests from resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, and engagements with various stakeholders to better support countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda. She described the revised strategic priorities of the Regional Collaboration Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean for 2023, halfway to the deadline for the 2030 Agenda. In that regard, the working mechanisms of the Platform had been updated with the merging of previous groups to create two new issue-based coalitions and the creation of a new thematic working group for populations that had been left behind and a working group focused on evaluation.

Panel discussions

23. Pursuant to the wish expressed by the member States that the Forum should provide useful opportunities for peer learning, including through voluntary reviews, the sharing of best practices and discussion on shared targets, five panel discussions were organized to allow States and other stakeholders to report on and share their experiences and challenges in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Panel 1: Clean water and sanitation

24. The first panel, on clean water and sanitation, was moderated by Carolina González, Undersecretary of International Affairs and Federal Cooperation in the Ministry of Social Development of Argentina. The panellists were Pável Isa Contreras, Minister of Economic Affairs, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic; Mario Lubetkin, Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; Daniel Tugues, Deputy General Manager of Aguas Andinas; Ruth Spencer, Yale International Alliance, Antigua and Barbuda; and Freddy Mamani, Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

25. The moderator opened the panel discussion, noting that in Latin America and the Caribbean there were important shortfalls in terms of water and sanitation and that significant differences remained across the various regions and between urban and rural areas. The challenge was to achieve a sustainable and inclusive water transition, in which all sectors cooperated in taking effective action.

26. The panellists explained that water stress was on the rise and that there was a great deal of waste and inefficiency in water resource management. The relevant regulatory and institutional frameworks were weak. Panellists emphasized that water was essential for food production and that without water security, there could be no food security. Reference was made to the 700 voluntary commitments made at the United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028. It was urgent for member States to reaffirm the essential nature of the human right to drinking water and sanitation and to establish a permanent, intergovernmental water mechanism at the United Nations for water conservation and management.

27. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Argentina, Barbados, Brazil, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, the United States and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Panel 2: Affordable and clean energy

28. The second panel, on affordable and clean energy, was moderated by the President of the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies of Argentina. The panellists were Walter Verri, Vice-Minister for Industry, Energy and Mining of Uruguay; Andrés Rebolledo, Executive Secretary of the Latin American Energy Organization; Germán Carmona, Academic at the Institute of Engineering of the National Autonomous University of Mexico; and Kaira Reece, Sustainable Development Secretary, Trade Union Confederation of the Americas.

29. The moderator described the degree of progress made in the region with respect to the various targets of Goal 7 and the pending challenges, which included multidimensional energy poverty, the need to consider not only coverage but also quality of and access to energy by the different segments of the population, vulnerability to shocks and the need to increase energy efficiency. International cooperation was an enabling factor and fundamental to achieving all the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals.

30. Panellists highlighted the region's progress with respect to Goal 7, whose indicators were among the most promising. None of the targets of the Goals could be met without economic development, as countries needed to grow in order to provide welfare, including energy welfare. Regional indicators always obscured deep gaps and a distinction should be made among countries. In terms of energy sustainability, the region was on a promising path towards meeting the targets. The area lagging furthest behind was energy efficiency, as there was a dearth of national legislation and binding targets were generally not included in plans. The importance of public transportation, an area in which e-mobility had been shown to be financially viable, was underscored. It was necessary to address production and operating costs and recharging infrastructure, especially in relation to renewable energies, and to move towards a circular economy. To that end, regulation was essential, as it would provide certainty and enable various forms of financing, thus fostering domestic advances and reducing dependence on imported technology. That effort should be undertaken by academia, industry and Governments. Without a change in the production and consumption model, proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions would maintain the current situation. Energy should be considered a right and should be universally accessible and in public hands, as a priority.

31. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of the Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Paraguay and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of).

Panel 3: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

32. The third panel, on industry, innovation and infrastructure, was moderated by Michelle Muschett, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNDP. The panellists were Nicolás Grau, Minister of Economic Affairs, Development and Tourism of Chile; Perpétua Almeida, Director of the Brazilian Agency for Industrial Development; Manuel Albaladejo, Regional Representative for Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization; Brígida Fernández Rubio, Director General of the Development Planning Committee of the State of Baja California, Mexico; Hernán Ceballos, Manager of iNNpulsa Colombia; Fernando Saiz, Director of Public Affairs and Regulation of Telefónica Chile; María-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean of

the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); Dulce Patricia Torres Sandoval, Member of the General Coordination Committee of Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas, Focal Point of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas, Mexico; and Clelia Hernández, Director-General of the Nuevo León 4.0 Initiative of Mexico.

33. The moderator underscored that it was important for decision makers to be able to participate in spaces for collective peer learning through discussions on experiences, common goals, good practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine had illustrated the importance of infrastructure. Latin America and the Caribbean, where the Internet penetration gap was very wide, was the region that invested the least in innovation, but also the one with the most unicorn companies. The aim of the panel was to explore in depth the productive challenges facing the region and reflect on policies in the light of the new opportunities that were emerging.

34. Panellists agreed that industry was integral to the Goals because there was evidence of the direct relationship between industry and economic growth. The COVID-19 pandemic had shown that industry was vital for resilience and recovery. What was most worrying in the region was the high concentration of innovation and the high level of deindustrialization. There were gender gaps in industry, infrastructure and innovation. One in two women was not economically active because she was performing care work. It was vital to create care systems, which was a new industry that generated quality jobs and enabled women to work outside the home.

Panel 4: Sustainable cities and communities

35. The fourth panel, on sustainable cities and communities, was moderated by Santiago Maggiotti, Minister of Territorial Development and Habitat of Argentina and President of the Forum of Ministers and Highest Authorities of Housing and Urbanism of Latin America and the Caribbean. The panellists were Wendy Molina Varela, Vice-Minister of Planning in the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements of Costa Rica; Elkin Velásquez, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme; Armando Enrique Navarrete, Chief Economist of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration; María Soledad Cisternas Reyes, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility; Augusto Du Bois Goitia, Second Vice-Chair of the Inter-American Housing Union; Augusto Barrera Guarderas, Director of the Centre for Knowledge Transfer and Social Innovation of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador; and Arturo Noel Noyola Muñoz of the Red Nacional de Juventudes Afromexicanas of Mexico.

36. The moderator highlighted the commitment of the Forum of Ministers and Highest Authorities of Housing and Urbanism of Latin America and the Caribbean to contributing to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and said that Goal 11 called in particular for intergovernmental coordination in the region. Latin America and the Caribbean were more affected by climate change despite emitting less greenhouse gases, which represented a double inequality. Cities produced one third of greenhouse gases and 80 per cent of the region's population lived in urban areas.

37. Panellists highlighted that it was important to make up for lost time in the implementation of Goal 11. Work with local governments needed to be strengthened and localizing the Goals in municipalities and regions was a useful tool. It was also necessary to measure what was happening in municipalities and cities not only through Goal 11 indicators. Most countries had national urban policies in place to

combine resources, energy and efforts and to develop multilevel governance mechanisms. It was important to focus efforts on improving informal settlements and to realize the vision of integrated action. The comprehensive improvement of neighbourhoods required involvement of women, youth and the private sector. Improving the quality of life of citizens was part of integration. Financing was a key issue and a proposal had been made to establish a fund for green and resilient social housing, as well as other funds for financing.

38. Panellists also mentioned that accessibility was, in fact, a set of conditions to be met by physical spaces, transportation, communications and technology, among other things, to enable people to use cities as efficiently and comfortably as possible. A city that claimed to be smart was not, unless it had accessibility in technology. Accessibility was a legal concept and could therefore be demanded of the State. Failure to implement accessibility was a form of mistreatment of many people and States were not complying with their universally ratified legal obligations. At least 12 of the Sustainable Development Goals required accessibility needs to be met. Accessibility barriers had to be removed and legal frameworks improved in order to enhance governance and democracy and to have fair, sustainable and safe cities.

Panel 5: Partnerships for the Goals

39. The fifth panel, on partnerships for the Goals, was moderated by Marisol Merquel, President of the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies of Argentina. The panellists were Ana Montaña Medina, Director General for the 2030 Agenda in Mexico; Christian Salazar, Director of the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights; Luciana Servo, President of the Institute of Applied Economic Research of Brazil; Paula Poblete, Undersecretary for Social Evaluation of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Affairs of Chile; Sebastián Miller, Lead Economist of the Inter-American Development Bank in Chile; Pilar Garrido, Director for Development Cooperation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development; Pamela Martín García, Vecinas Feministas and International Planned Parenthood Federation – Americas and the Caribbean Region, Argentina; and Anabella Zavagno, Deputy Director General of ParlAmericas.

40. The moderator opened the panel by underscoring that progress on the Goals would require a large-scale mobilization of domestic and external resources and a resource-allocation approach based on financing for environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development. Achieving that would require strengthening of partnerships, as called for in Goal 17.

41. Panellists agreed that for a sustainable development agenda to be effective, there needed to be multi-stakeholder and multilevel partnerships among governments, the private sector, academia and civil society, in all areas and countries. In a region such as Latin America and the Caribbean, which had limited fiscal and monetary space, the desire for green and inclusive growth had to be reconciled with the need to protect the most vulnerable and provide a resilient response to external shocks. The Sustainable Development Goals were human rights in action and achieving them called for united action by multiple stakeholders at all levels. It was important to protect spaces for citizen participation and the rights of association and peaceful demonstration, among other matters. It was also vital to strengthen national and international partnerships, expand fiscal space and mobilize the investments needed to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

42. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay.

Panel discussion on the theme “Path to the Sustainable Development Goals Summit: transformative initiatives – creating opportunities to strengthen commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its full implementation at all levels”

43. The panel was moderated by María del Carmen Squeff, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations. The panellists included the Executive Secretary of ECLAC; Pedro Luis Pedroso, Ambassador, Special Representative of Cuba to the United Nations and Coordinator for Cuba’s Presidency of the Group of 77 and China; Paula Narváez, Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, in her capacity as Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council; and Luis Felipe López-Calva, Global Director of the Poverty and Equity Global Practice at the World Bank.

44. The moderator said that the panel would address the need to strengthen the commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the initiatives that would make it possible to face the enormous challenges that lay ahead. The discussion was highly relevant in the lead-up to the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit in September, which would seek to provide political guidance to States to accelerate the achievement of the Goals. The world was facing multiple crises, with more severe consequences for developing countries, which compromised the achievement of the Goals. A determined and cooperative effort would be needed to overcome them. There was a need to redouble the commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to the means of implementation adopted in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development to achieve adequate and predictable financing that could enable sustainable development. Several people from the region would be in leadership positions at the United Nations in 2023, a unique opportunity to make a significant contribution.

45. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC mentioned that the shocks the world had suffered cast a shadow over the prospects for sustainable development in the region. Referring to the general possibility of achieving the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 based on the current trajectory, he said that the results of efforts to strengthen institutions had been very positive. Efforts should be stepped up, with a forward-looking approach. ECLAC had identified seven potential transformative initiatives which, if carried out at the appropriate scale, could result in synergies and foster the achievement of various Goals: the energy transition and its impacts, the bioeconomy, the digital economy, the export of modern, Internet-enabled services, the care society and gender equality, sustainable tourism, and regional integration. To promote those initiatives, new instruments were needed, and the capacity for foresight would be essential for enabling the related opportunities to be seized.

46. The Ambassador and Special Representative of Cuba to the United Nations and Coordinator for Cuba’s Presidency of the Group of 77 and China said that it was a difficult time, in particular for developing countries, which were suffering the consequences of the pandemic, reduced official development assistance flows, geopolitical tension and conflicts in various parts of the world, market volatility, inflation, unsustainable debt burdens and climate change, to which must be added, in some cases, the imposition of coercive, unilateral measures by developed countries. It was time to usher in a new phase of international cooperation for development and meaningful reform of the international financial architecture. Sustainable development metrics that went beyond GDP were also needed in order to redefine countries’ access to financing and technical cooperation, reform the international trading system and address illicit financial flows. Those challenges called for the countries of the South to show a united front to prevent a business-as-usual approach from quashing dreams of social justice.

47. The Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, the country serving as Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, mentioned some of the regional circumstances affecting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including inequality and poverty levels, which remained above pre-pandemic levels. Institutions were weak and governance was deficient, issues that must be overcome to address many of the current problems. Building a solid industrial foundation that could foster productive diversification was one precondition for progress towards more sustainable economies and societies and more inclusive growth. Strong investment flows, appropriate international financial architecture, productive employment and comprehensive social protection systems were needed. There was a need to build care systems and invest in education, which was critical for achieving many targets and avoiding scarring from the pandemic.

48. The Global Director of the Poverty and Equity Global Practice at the World Bank said that Goal 1 (end poverty) was related to the core mandate of the Bank. The goal of reducing poverty to 3 per cent in 2030 would be out of reach if current practices continued. The question therefore was what should be done to shift the trajectory. Economic growth remained important, but not just any growth. The Poverty and Equity Global Practice emphasized the need to invest in the productive capacity of people living in poverty. Countries were being asked to effect an unprecedented technological transformation in the areas of energy, manufacturing and green jobs and financing modalities were needed to support the process. Institutional and legal changes, adjustments and instruments would be required for the private sector to be willing to cover the financing gap for the transition. The means to achieve the transition should be the outcome of national discussions and sovereign agreements. Multilateral organizations could provide support through technical assistance, information and funding.

49. In the ensuing discussion, statements were made by the representatives of Argentina, Barbados, Colombia, Honduras and Jamaica.

Civil society declarations

50. A representative of the children, adolescents and youth group of the mechanism for civil society participation in the sustainable development agenda and the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development read a declaration.²

51. The representatives of the mechanism for civil society participation in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development read a declaration to the Forum.³

Adoption of the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations

52. The intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations of the sixth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development were adopted.⁴ These had been previously submitted to the countries for a series of consultations facilitated by the Government of Argentina, the country serving as Chair of the Forum, through the Permanent Mission of Argentina

² Available at https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2023/sites/foro2023/files/youth_declaration.pdf.

³ Available at <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2023/en/programme/reading-civil-society-declaration>.

⁴ Available at <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2023/en/documents/intergovernmentally-agreed-conclusions-and-recommendations-sixth-meeting-forum-countries>.

to the United Nations in New York. On the adoption of the conclusions and recommendations, the Chair thanked delegations for their participation and flexibility in the consultation process.
