



## HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

#HLPF #SDGs #GlobalGoals



### Townhall - “From the SDG Summit to the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions”

*Monday, 8 July 2024, 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M., General Assembly Hall*

#### Draft Concept Note

The 2023 SDG Summit Political Declaration is a testament of the international community’s continued resolve and shared commitment to prioritize and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, upsurge in armed conflicts and adverse impacts of climate change are threatening the progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.

We have reached a critical juncture in the progress towards sustainable development. This situation has been exacerbated by inequalities and vulnerabilities that affect the poorest and most at risk populations, particularly in developing countries. This is driving more people into extreme poverty despite reductions in the global poverty rates in previous years.

“The SDGs need a global rescue plan,” indicated the UN Secretary-General António Guterres in his opening remarks to the SDG Summit. The President of ECOSOC emphasized the importance of the SDG Summit as a turning point to rescue the Goals, stressing that the Council stood ready to support countries’ efforts to turn commitments into action.



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The SDG Summit marked the half-way point to the deadline for achieving the SDGs, seeking to provide renewed impetus for accelerated action, which cannot be accomplished without increased international cooperation and solidarity.



Increased collaboration is crucial to facilitate equitable knowledge sharing and resource transfer. It will be critical for achieving the much needed and just reforms to the international financial architecture to support developing countries in redirecting national and international resources towards sustainable development. The development and deployment of frontier technologies should also ensure strong collaborative frameworks which would nurture innovative solutions, guarantee equitable benefits-sharing, and build understanding and agreement on ways to ensure ethical and responsible practices. This includes advances in artificial intelligence.



This year's high-level political forum on sustainable development will follow up on the commitments made in the Political Declaration of the 2023 SDG Summit, including those related to the SDGs that will be reviewed in-depth. Regarding SDG 1 (no poverty), member states agreed to enhance and support policies and strategies for reducing poverty and inequality, including through international cooperation. For SDG 2 (zero hunger), the Political Declaration emphasized the need to accelerate actions to end hunger, food insecurity and all forms of malnutrition. Addressing SDG 13 (climate action), the Political Declaration stressed the importance of enhancing the implementation of the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement. For SDG 16 (peace, justice, and strong institutions), emphasis was placed on promoting inclusive societies that would provide equal access to justice based on respect for human rights. SDG 17 (partnership for the goals) was addressed throughout the Declaration, with the expressed desire for international coordination and support for achieving the SDGs by



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2030. Meeting these goals will require transformative, sustainable, resilient, and innovative solutions to ensure a just and equitable future.



Part of the slow progress in achieving the SDGs is a financing issue. The SDG financing gap has increased from 2.5 to 4.0 trillion US dollars annually for developing countries.<sup>1</sup> The United Nations Secretary General called for an SDG stimulus of at least USD 500 billion each year as a long-term plan to ensure deliverable action and financing.<sup>2</sup>



It has never been more imperative to ensure that an inclusive lens is utilized within all policy adaptations and discussions at all levels. Vulnerable populations face intersecting threats, and for policies to be resilient and sustainable, their specific vulnerabilities need to be considered.



Threats are heightened by the climate crisis and its multidimensional harm to countries that contribute the least to climate change. Over the past fifty years, the number of recorded disasters has increased fivefold. For example, droughts have resulted in two billion people living under water stress and an 80 per cent increased risk of crop failure and hunger in sub-Saharan Africa and Southeast Asia alone.<sup>3</sup> Millions more are being driven into poverty as populations struggle to secure basic needs. Climate impacts have exposed millions of children to homelessness and 920 million children to water scarcity<sup>4</sup>. The impact of climate inaction is leaving billions behind, drawing increased

<sup>1</sup> United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Financing for Development Report 2024.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations, SDG Stimulus Brochure 2023.

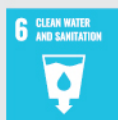
<sup>3</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, New report shows climate disasters are reversing global development at unprecedented rates, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, GAR2023 Special Report.



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focus to early warning systems as a strategy to combat anticipated raises in poverty and hunger in times of natural disasters.



This shift towards prioritizing resilience, prevention, and risk assessments over emergency responses is crucial for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It requires innovative and forward-looking solutions that foster increased sustainability. Inefficient and insufficient disaster risk response furthers socioeconomic inequality as it drains economic resources from affected countries. Innovative solutions utilizing new technologies, international cooperation, financing for disaster management, and addressing evolutions of new threats are critical to building resilience.



As reflected at the SDG Summit, sustainability must be at the center of all solutions for equitable and lasting change. Achieving the SDGs requires strengthening ambition and commitment, leaving no one behind. But it also requires strengthening trust and nurturing solidarity to address the critical juncture in the current global context.



A number of meetings convened this year and next, including the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Development States, the Summit of the Future, the Third United Nations Conference on the Landlocked Developing Countries, the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development and the Second World Summit on Social Development, present opportunities to advance the SDG Summit outcomes and address key SDG interlinkages, as well as foster global cooperation and advance integrated solutions for addressing current global challenges.





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### Proposed questions for discussion

- How can we build on what has been learned at all levels to implement the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs?
- What are key strategies for transformation and accelerating implementation in the follow-up to the SDG Summit?
- How can we harness synergies, strengthen interlinkages and minimize trade-offs for realizing the SDGs?
- What policies and good practices from the 2024 Voluntary National Reviews and from other countries and stakeholders can strengthen sustainability, resilience and innovation?
- Where do we stand in terms of progress to reaching the SDGs by 2030, in key development areas such as poverty and hunger?
- What specific aspects of the 2030 Agenda require urgent attention and resources from governments and other stakeholders?
- What are the main challenges in achieving effective international cooperation that would ensure transformative and accelerated action on the SDGs?
- What are some transformative policies and initiatives that can address the wellbeing of vulnerable populations?