

15 July 2022 New York



**Statement by the European Union and its Member States**  
**at the Adoption of the HLPF and High-Level Segment ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration**

I have the honour to *speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States*. The Candidate Countries North Macedonia\* Montenegro\* and Albania\*, as well as Andorra, Monaco and San Marino align themselves with this statement.

At the outset, Mister President, let me express our gratitude to the two co-facilitators of the process of negotiations on the Ministerial Declaration of the HLPF and High-Level Segment of the ECOSOC, Ambassadors Maurizio Massari of Italy and Margo Debye of Nauru, as well as their teams, dear Diego and Josie Ann. We would also like to thank you, Mister President, and your team for your support to the process, as well as all the Secretariat colleagues engaged in this difficult exercise.

The EU and its Member States would like to underline the importance we attach to the High-Level Political Forum as an important venue for stock-taking in terms of progress in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as well as for dialogue, mutual learning and reinforcing the science-policy interface. We also highly value its Declaration as a means to show momentum and our collective willingness to support progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

“Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda” (this year’s HLPF theme) has proved particularly challenging because the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and biodiversity loss have been exacerbated by the atrocious, unprovoked and unjustified aggression against Ukraine by Russia and Belarus. It is now imperative to stop the aggression, secure peace, defeat the pandemic and get the world on track through a human rights-based response, with particular focus on women and girls, and leaving no one behind.

Despite these dire challenges, the 2022 HLPF Ministerial Declaration will not only support, but accelerate SDG implementation. The consensus reached between all the delegations proves once again that multilateralism is able to provide results.

Nevertheless, we have not managed to achieve a collective ambition in some areas where progress is crucial to achieve the SDGs.

First and foremost, gender equality needs to dramatically advance. Because gender issues are reviewed in-depth this year and are a precondition for the achievement of all the SDGs, we should send a clear message that more should have been achieved towards the empowerment of women and girls.

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\* North Macedonia and Montenegro continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

Women and girls in diverse situations and conditions face unique challenges and forms of discrimination, including based on their sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, belonging to a minority, property, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation and gender identity. We regret that this reality is not reflected in the current Ministerial Declaration.

We are also disappointed that the Declaration does not acknowledge the vital role that women human rights defenders play across the world in building peace and supporting development. Every year UN MS come together when the Commission on the Status of Women meets under the auspices of the ECOSOC. We regret that some countries still refuse to acknowledge this Commission as an integral part of the ECOSOC yearly process and fail to implement their recommendations in the HLPF Ministerial Declaration.

Secondly, on the issue of “nature-based solutions and ecosystem based approaches” and the references to the “post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework” we regret that the agreed references from the UNEA Ministerial Declaration were not used.

Third, we also find the absence of language on the interlinkages between food production and biodiversity loss in the SDG15 section particularly regrettable as food production causes about 80% of biodiversity loss.

Finally yet importantly, the EU also regrets that the HLPF membership is not able to agree on climate language in issues such as temperature goals and emission reductions, without lengthy and difficult discussions. The insistence by some to use both language from the Paris Agreement and the Glasgow Pact, has led to a lengthy text that fails to provide a clear and strong political message from the HLPF to the COP27 process. The need for ambition in climate action has certainly not been achieved.

Thank you.