



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

2023 HLPF Opening

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Statement by

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[Expected duration: 7 minutes, current word count: 769 words]

President of the Economic and Social Council,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Participants and Delegates,

1. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Goals is **our commitment, to creating an ideal world**.
2. It is a rallying point, for **all of humanity** to work **in concert... in solidarity...** and ensure that **no one is left behind**.
3. However, half-way to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, **our world is in trouble. Only 12% of targets are on track**.

4. Equally alarming, **some of the targets** are regressing from the baseline we have set in 2015.
5. ECOSOC thus provide a vital platform, to allows us to come together, **to work in unison**, to reaching our 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
6. ECOSOC **immense wealth of knowledge and expertise**, together with the UN system entities, can support countries in their efforts to achieve the SDGs, and **to reach the furthest behind**.
7. Through **collaboration and coordination**, ECOSOC enables us, to explore ways to meet the **challenges on achieving SDGs**, and respond to the **impacts of the multiple crises**, **with** risk-informed, integrated, and **transformative policies and actions**.

Excellencies,

8. In February, I had the honour of chairing the **Coordination Segment of ECOSOC**.... bringing together **Member States, ECOSOC functional commissions and expert bodies, UN regional commissions, specialized agencies, and United Nations funds and programmes**.

9. Our aim was to promote **accelerated recovery**, address the **lingering impacts** of the **COVID-19 pandemic**, and achieve the **necessary transformations** to realize the **2030 Agenda and the SDGs**.
10. Allow me to **share some key points**, that emerged from the coordination segment namely -- **interlinkages, self-evaluation, and concreteness**.
11. **First on Interlinkages**: The pandemic and its ongoing challenges continually remind us of **their inter-connectedness**.
12. They can only be addressed through **interlinked solutions, tools and initiatives**. To achieve this, **we need to**:
 - **Break down persistent silos**, to fully **unleash** tools and transformative initiatives;
 - **Resolve critical bottlenecks in key areas**, such as **data, digital technologies, effective institutions and financing** - to multiply efforts to advance **implementation of** all the Goals;
 - **Foster international cooperation and solidarity**; and
 - **Enhance coherence and coordination**, between ECOSOC, the UN system, and the international financial institutions.
13. **Second, Self-evaluation**: This mid-point of the 2030 Agenda is a key moment to **reflect, evaluate and act**, to create an **enabling and**

conducive environment, for implementation of the **2030 Agenda in its entirety**.

14. People-centered policy design and decision-making, **supported by an inclusive and coordinated multilateralism**, and **effective global partnership are crucial**.

15. I encourage you, in the coming days of this **high-level political forum on sustainable development**, to address the following questions:

- Have we appropriately addressed the development challenges faced by people on the ground?
- Have our efforts been sufficiently agile and resilient, in this post-pandemic world?
- Have we taken an **inclusive approach**, integrating risk, emerging challenges, and opportunities, such as disaster risks, climate change and digital transformation, into our policy design, decision making, and concrete actions?
- Does the current institutional framework, at all levels, have the capacity and ability, to mobilize adequate resources including finance, and to foster trust and effective development policies?

16. **The VNR is an important pillar of this self-evaluation**. We have to use this opportunity, to conduct a **truly honest review**, identifying gaps and challenges, as well as support needed, to bring the SDGs back on track.

17. **Third, Concreteness:** I cannot over-emphasize the need for **scaling up concrete, transformative actions** to accelerate the **implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.**
18. This is crucial for **the recovery, addressing other crises,** and getting the 2030 Agenda **back on track.**
19. During the Coordination Segment we heard **very good, concrete, tangible, specific, and context-sensitive practices and actions.**
20. This year we took the initiative to compile these “**concrete and transformative policies and actions**” of the UN system, to be incorporated as an **annexed to the ECOSOC President’s Summary of the 2023 HLPF.**
21. The annex contains **more than 105 policies and initiatives from 50 bodies and entities.**
22. I encourage you to go through the annex, **as they could serve, as a valuable resource for enhancing collaboration** among Member States, and the ECOSOC system for the attainment of the SDGs.

Excellencies,

23. The ECOSOC Coordination Segment this year, has shown that transformation is possible through, **concrete and transformative policies and actions.**

24. We must **seize**, the upcoming **SDG Summit in September**, and **other high-level meetings**, to **translate our actions** into the transformations required to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the SDGs.

25. This year is a **“judgement day”** in our **commitment to achieving the ideal world we aim to create.**

Thank you.