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**Statement
Introduction of Secretary-General Progress Report on the SDGs
High-Level Political Forum**

New York, 10:00 am, 10 July 2023

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Colleagues,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I am pleased to present the special edition of the Secretary-General’s report on ‘Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals: Towards a Rescue Plan for People and Planet’, to highlight the pressing challenges that lie ahead as well as the transformative action required to meet the 2030 targets.

With only seven years left to achieve the SDGs, the promise of the 2030 Agenda is, in peril. The fragility of past hard-earned progress was compounded the climate crisis, conflict, gloomy global economic outlook and the lingering effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

If current trends continue, by 2030:

- A staggering 575 million people will remain trapped in extreme poverty,**
- 84 million children will be out of school,**

- **2 billion people will still be relying on polluting fuels and technologies for cooking, and**
- **It will take nearly 300 years to close gender gaps in legal protection, eliminate discriminatory laws and put an end to child marriage.**

The world is still reeling from the devastating impacts of COVID-19. The pandemic has created significant reversals in global health, education outcomes and economic prosperity. Although the worst is over, the recovery has been slow, uneven and incomplete.

War, conflict and human rights violations had displaced a staggering 110 million people by May 2023, of whom 35 million were refugees – the highest figures ever recorded.

In addition, the climate crisis is worsening as greenhouse gas emissions continue to rise. Global temperature is likely to reach the critical 1.5 degrees Celsius tipping point above pre-industrial levels by 2035. Catastrophic and intensifying heat waves, droughts, flooding and wildfires have become far too frequent.

Excellencies,

This report serves as a vital wake-up call, sounding the alarm on the considerable challenge that lies in front of us. At the same time, it showcases the progress the world has made so far and the potential for further advancements.

Since the adoption of the SDGs in 2015, the world has made important gains in areas such as poverty reduction, child mortality, electricity access and the battle against certain diseases, among others. Today, 95 per cent of the world's population is within reach of a mobile broadband network.

We must make the next seven years count. We must achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and break through to a better future for all. The SDG Summit in September will be a critical moment for Member States to renew their commitment to the SDGs. The world will need to meet the daunting task ahead with unprecedented ambition and action. It must deliver a Rescue Plan for People and Planet.

Bold and innovative changes in five areas are needed.

First, the Secretary-General urges Heads of State and Government to renew their commitment to seven years of accelerated, sustained and transformative action to deliver on the promise of the SDGs.

Second, governments must advance concrete, integrated and targeted policies to leave no one behind and end the war on nature, with a particular focus on advancing the rights of women and girls and empowering the most vulnerable.

Third, it is crucial to strengthen national and sub-national capacity, accountability and public institutions to deliver accelerated SDG progress. From national planning to domestic budgets to private sector governance models – all must be aligned and geared towards achieving the SDGs.

Fourth, the international community will need to mobilize the resources developing countries need to achieve the SDGs. To this end, the Secretary-General urges Member States to endorse and deliver an SDG Stimulus of at least 500 billion US dollars per year between now and 2030. Reforms of the international financial architecture are also urgently needed to ensure that the voice of developing countries is fairly represented.

Finally, Member States must continue to boost the capacity of the UN development system – and of multilateralism more generally – to address SDG gaps and emerging global challenges.

This ambitious agenda is only possible with the aid of timely, high-quality disaggregated data. Well-functioning and well-funded data ecosystems are critical to understanding where we stand now and what we need to achieve the SDGs.

Excellencies,

The 2030 Agenda remains the clearest blueprint of humanity’s highest aspirations. When historians write about the twenty-first century, they will judge leaders and policymakers by whether they have succeeded in building the future that this blueprint is meant to invoke.

Back in September 2015, when global leaders met to adopt the SDGs, they declared that “the future of humanity and of our planet lies in our hands.” These are truer today than ever before.

Together we must ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals are achieved in full and on time.

I thank you.
