

Sheila Oparaocha – Intro remarks:

- Thank you honourable chair. It is an honour to moderate the panel discussion of this 2nd SDG 7 review at the HLPF.
- Honourable chair, your excellencies, distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- Energy is key to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and net-zero emissions by 2050. However, as we just heard, progress towards SDG7 is still far off track.
- This makes it even more important to underline the promise of SDG7 which is an immense opportunity that we simply cannot afford to miss.
- By accelerating progress in the energy sector, we have the potential to trigger advancements in many other areas of sustainable development, leading to a multiplier effect across the 2030 Agenda. We must prioritize just, inclusive, and equitable energy transitions to ensure the prosperity of both people and the planet.
- We know what must be done. The latest edition of the Tracking SDG7 Report clearly identifies the gaps. In addition, the SDG7 Policy Briefs in support of the HLPF, which were developed by the SDG7 Technical Advisory Group (TAG) provide key policy recommendations based on thorough analyses of the relevant data.
- Both publications were presented yesterday at a special high-level launch event of the HLPF, providing us with plenty of technical inputs for our discussion today.
- Our session today aims to address five guiding questions:
- How can we expedite our progress in ensuring universal access to energy, thereby rescuing the SDGs?
- How can we overcome the setbacks caused by COVID-19 and the global energy crisis in recent years to achieve universal energy access?
- In what ways can we accelerate the application of renewable energy solutions and energy efficiency measures to drive just, inclusive, and equitable energy transitions, supporting climate action and the goal of achieving net-zero emissions?
- How can we enhance international cooperation and increase the flow of finance to support the achievement of SDG7 in developing countries, particularly addressing the needs of the most vulnerable, and ensuring that no one is left behind?
- Lastly, how can we further strengthen and leverage multi-stakeholder partnerships to effectively achieve SDG7, ensuring active involvement from key stakeholders such as the private sector, civil society, youth, **women** and others?
- To get us started, this panel discussion will aim to provide some insightful perspectives on some of these questions. I am very pleased to note that our panel today includes three very distinguished speakers, namely:
 - Mr. Guangzhe Chen, Vice President for Infrastructure, World Bank
 - Mr. Hans Olav Ibrekk, Special Envoy for Climate and Security, Norway
 - Ms. Yoko Lu, Women's Major Group and YOUNGO representative

- I am confident that today's session will provide us further with valuable insights and recommendations to advance our collective efforts towards SDG7.
- Let us seize this opportunity to drive meaningful change and make significant progress. Together, we can shape a sustainable future for all.
- Before I invite our first panelist for his intervention, please let me remind you all that your intervention should not be longer as 3 minutes. I thank you in advance for respecting the time limit.
- Let me now invite the Vice-president for Infrastructure at the World Bank, Mr. Guangzhe Chen, to make his intervention. Mr. Vice-President the floor is yours.