

THE DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL

**MESSAGE ON THE OCCASION OF THE
OPENING OF THE 2024 HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
(HLPF)**

General Assembly Hall, 8 July, 10:00 – 10:40 a.m.

Excellencies,

Dear colleagues,

I'm pleased to join you today at the opening of the High-Level Political Forum.

As we gather, our world faces multiple interlinked crises.

But I believe this is also a moment of great opportunity to turn things around.

Last year's SDG Summit generated new momentum and commitment to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

This Forum is our chance to carry this momentum forward and double down on acceleration efforts as we look ahead to 2030.

Over the coming days, we will hear from 37 countries on their progress on the SDGs.

We will examine critical goals on poverty, hunger, climate, peace, justice and effective institutions.

We will hear about the distinctive needs and plans of LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS and MICs, and how we will engage stakeholders and other partners.

We will also learn how Voluntary National Reviews are advancing bold policies and practices, and leveraging local expertise and partnerships to implement the SDGs.

We will hear how efforts to bolster economic stability, macroeconomic policies and fiscal reforms are leading to strong economic and employment growth.

Many countries are advancing innovative financing mechanisms and partnerships. These include using investment maps and integrated national financing frameworks to mobilize resources, international development cooperation, climate finance and public-private partnerships.

Others are leading the way on climate action by reducing emissions and increasing renewable energy production.

Nature-based solutions, community-based forest management, sustainable agriculture initiatives and the conservation of iconic species are also contributing to global efforts to halt and reverse biodiversity loss and reduce environmental degradation.

Countries are expanding social protection through improvements in health and education.

Policies to support the empowerment of women and youth, and the rights of children and their social and emotional wellbeing, have been implemented.

Countries are harnessing technology to expand basic services to all and promote pathways for digital transformations to keep pace with global developments in research and innovation.

Excellencies,

This Forum will also be an important moment to reflect on how to take this progress forward in the context of the Summit of the Future in September.

The Summit is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to mend eroded trust and demonstrate that international cooperation can carry us forward.

This Forum can help identify the bold, transformative actions that the Summit must achieve for current and future generations.

It will also serve as an opportunity to highlight areas where the UN can better support countries on their road to the SDGs.

To this end, the Secretary-General will convene a Special Event on Transforming Education this Thursday, in collaboration with the President of the General Assembly and the President of ECOSOC.

Next Monday, I will also convene a Special Event on SDG Acceleration entitled “Pathways to progress”, in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Spain.

This event will examine the need for greater investment in SDG transitions and highlight examples of country level action, where government efforts are supported by UN Country Teams, leveraging the Joint SDG Fund and the SDG Summit’s High Impact Initiatives.

Excellencies,

As we look ahead to the next two weeks, let us be inspired by this progress.

But let us also be clear-minded about the challenges we face.

Poverty remains the defining challenge of our time.

Food insecurity has reached alarmingly high levels.

Humanitarian crises and displacement are growing, fueled by rising levels of conflict.

Women and girls continue to face discrimination and disadvantage.

The impacts of climate change are intensifying, and action and financing for mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage are not keeping pace.

Institutions are struggling under the weight of rapid technological change, the dramatic need for social, economic transformation, and suffocating political polarization.

People and countries alike continue to be left behind, denied the support and representation they need and deserve at global decision-making tables.

Countries are desperate for an economic and financial system that responds to today's crises and can adapt to emerging risks. Reform of the international financial architecture is critical – especially for developing countries which are not receiving the level of support they need.

Above all, we cannot lose sight of a deeply sobering fact – less than one fifth of the Sustainable Development Goals are on track.

This is unacceptable.

But it is also fixable, if we summon the commitment, ideas, solutions and investments that have driven our progress so far.

Excellencies, that's what this Forum is all about.

I look forward to engaging with you in the coming days.

Your presence, energy and ambition tell me that, although the challenges before us are daunting, together we can overcome them, and achieve the peaceful, prosperous and sustainable future that all people need and deserve.

Thank you.

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