

Check Against Delivery

**ECOSOC Organizational Session
27 July 2023**

**Incoming President of the Economic and Social Council
Her Excellency Ms. Paula Narvaez
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations**

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Firstly, I would like to thank Ambassador Lachezara Stoeva for her outstanding leadership of the Economic and Social Council during its 2023 session. I commend her vision for the Economic and Social Council and commitment to the values and principles of the United Nations Charter. She has steered the work of the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development to provide innovative and practical policy guidance for advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in the lead up to the SDG Summit in September.

I am honoured to assume the Presidency of this esteemed Charter body—the Economic and Social Council, at this critical juncture for multilateralism. I am committed to ensuring that the Economic and Social Council provides a unifying platform for Member States to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. To this end, I will work with you to leverage the diverse work and expertise of the ECOSOC system, including the ECOSOC functional commissions and expert bodies, and the UN system entities.

The SDG Summit in September will be a pivotal moment in our path to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It would be critical for the Economic and Social Council to build on the momentum from the SDG Summit to support countries in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable

Development Goals. The Council, through its various forums and segments, must lead the way to translate the political guidance and commitments at the SDG Summit into policy guidance and practical actions for countries to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In this context, the theme for the 2024 session of the Economic and Social Council and the 2024 high-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council is very timely. Our theme for 2024 will be “Reinforcing the 2030 Agenda and eradicating poverty in times of multiple crises: the effective delivery of sustainable, resilient and innovative solutions”. We will be reviewing in-depth SDG1 on no poverty, SDG2 on zero hunger, SDG13 on climate action, SDG16 on peace, justice, and strong institutions and SDG17 on partnerships for the goals.

Excellencies,

Half-way through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, much remains to be done. The Economic and Social Council must play its part to help countries address today’s global challenges and turbocharge the Sustainable Development Goals. As President of the Economic and Social Council, I am committed to working with all of you to ensure that the Council delivers on this beyond expectations.

To further these aspirations, I am pleased to present my priorities for this Presidency that will be pursued through the various segments, forums and special meetings of the Council:

1) My first priority will be to leverage ECOSOC’s policy guidance in an international context of multiple crises.

The recently concluded High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development demonstrated that the SDGs are in jeopardy, with significant setbacks, particularly in poverty reduction. This is due to not only by the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also by conflicts and geopolitical tensions, such as the war in Ukraine, with rising food and fuel prices, forced migrations, trade tensions, added to the triple environmental crisis. It would be important to

steer the work of our various segments and forums to provide transformative policy guidance to Member States to address the multiple crises and advance the implementation of the SDGs.

2) My second priority will be to focus on food crisis and strengthening humanitarian aid.

Extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods, the outbreak of war in Ukraine and the proliferation of other conflicts, followed by growing uncertainty around global food and agricultural markets, such as rising fertilizer prices, have pushed acute food insecurity to new highs. This makes it necessary to strengthen agricultural development, as it is a frontline humanitarian response.

3) My third priority will be addressing gaps in the international financial architecture.

Efforts to address the shortcomings of the current architecture must be comprehensive and aligned with the SDGs through concerted action by all parts of the system. In particular, the rising debt levels of developing countries, including middle-income countries, must be addressed. We must support the Secretary-General's SDG Stimulus to leverage affordable, long-term financing for sustainable development investments to accelerate sustainable industrial transformations. In this regard, the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development (FfD) will play a critical role.

4) My fourth priority will be the Summit of the Future.

In the year ahead, Member States will be preparing for the 2024 Summit of the Future and deliberate on major issues proposed by the Secretary-General for action at the Summit of the Future. The series of policy briefs to support the preparations point to the complementarities and linkages among these major issues with the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, it would be critical to take into account the work of the Economic and Social Council and the ECOSOC system as they relate to the tracks of the Summit of the Future.

The proposal for the convening of a World Social Summit in 2025 is also highly relevant for the Economic and Social Council, given the work of its Commission for Social Development

and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development's guiding principle of leaving no one behind.

We should also take the opportunity to contribute to the upcoming United Nations Conferences for Small Island developing states and Landlocked developing countries.

5) My fifth priority will focus on concrete solutions for scaling up climate action in the face of the triple crisis

According to the latest IPCC report, we have only seven years left to keep the Paris Agreement target of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels within reach. It is imperative to accelerate climate action, deliver on climate finance commitments, such as the Loss and Damage Fund, to increase efforts to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change, particularly in highly vulnerable countries, such as small island developing states (SIDS). Climate action goes beyond SDG13 and has strong interlinkages with the other SDGs. Therefore, the Economic and Social Council can play a key role to address such interlinkages to accelerate climate action.

6) My sixth priority will be promotion of gender equality.

The multiplier effect of the empowerment of women and girls merits promoting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, with special emphasis on increasing female participation in the labor market and in science, technology and innovation, and recognizing and investing in the care economy. The work of the Council's Commission on the Status of Women will be key in this regard.

7) My seventh priority will be strengthening institutions in a context of rapid technological change.

Technological advances have posed significant challenges to democratic systems, the protection of human rights, data and privacy, public trust and increased social discontent. Technology can bring multiple benefits, but with significant risks of widening development

gaps, if not acted upon quickly. The Global Digital Compact seeks to contribute to the discussions to shape a shared vision on digital cooperation. Through the work of the Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum) and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, a subsidiary body of ECOSOC, the Economic and Social Council can make important contributions to inform these discussions.

8) And lastly, my priority will be to strengthen ECOSOC's engagement with civil society

I will build on the work of my predecessor and encourage greater participation of civil society and all interested parties, in particular major groups and other stakeholders (MGoS) of the HLPF. We need diverse voices of women, young people, people with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and other excluded groups to ensure no one is left behind in order to achieve the SDGs.

Excellencies,

We have an ambitious session ahead of us. I count on your active engagement in all aspects of the work of the Economic and Social Council and the ECOSOC system to deliver on our mandates and help countries in their pursuit of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We share a profound responsibility to work together towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you.