



INTERGENERATIONAL DIALOGUE ON LEVERAGING SKILLS AND INVESTMENT TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS

19 July 2023, 2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Conference Room 3

SPECIAL
EVENTS



HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



Opening remarks by H.E. Ambassador Lachezara Stoeva, President of ECOSOC

Excellencies,
Colleagues and friends,

It is a pleasure to be with you here today.

I would like to thank the European Union and DESA for organizing this event and for the kind invitation to share with you some remarks.

I also would like to thank all of the young people here who have travelled from around the world to attend the Forum.

This event is bringing together an intergenerational panel of members of government, UN officials, and young people in the fields of climate change, employment and technology, to discuss challenges and solutions to the economic empowerment of youth.

In the past few years, young people have grown up amidst immense uncertainty. Uncertainty about the future of our planet and uncertainty about how the next technological development will change their lives and affect their career and economic opportunities.

The ILO reported in 2022 that more than 1 in 5 youth are not in education, employment or training, and that 77 percent of young people are employed in the informal sector. The UN Commission on Social Development has stressed that youth unemployment has large negative

effects on societies, and particularly negative effects on low-income and middle-income countries.

Since 2020, young people have had their education disrupted and have entered the workforce during and after a global pandemic with devastating impact. Inflation rose dramatically, which has increased the cost of living across the globe, creating a crisis, which UNDP estimates could drive 71 million people into poverty.

We are here today, because there is no viable future for this world if youth are not engaged and have not the opportunity to thrive economically.

We are *not* here today to ask you, young people, to solve the challenges you are facing alone. We are here to discuss them together, across generations, side by side, as equal partners. You have been at the Forum since last week and have been able to participate in the panels and discussions on an equal footing.

A few days ago, we celebrated World Youth Skills Day. In August we will commemorate International Youth Day. In a little over two months, we will come together to participate in the SDG Summit. In 2024, the ECOSOC Youth Forum and the Summit of the Future will take place.

Let's take this conversation today to begin connecting all these opportunities to scale up discussions and actions to engage, get involved, shape and find solutions with youth and by youth. These opportunities must be adaptable to potential shifts caused by the accelerated digital transformation and the green transition, as well as focused on achieving the 2030 Agenda.

I hope that through a dynamic discussion of challenges, we can harness the collective intellect and creativity of multiple generations to find opportunities and solutions amidst the uncertainties.

Thank you.