

**2023 ECOSOC High-level Segment**

**Closing remarks**

**by**

**H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, President of the Economic and Social Council**

**Thursday, 20 July, 5:30 pm, ECOSOC Chamber**

Deputy Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This 2023 ECOSOC High-level Segment was convened at a critical juncture.

As we have heard over the past weeks, our world faces cascading and interconnected crises.

It is imperative that the Economic and Social Council continue to address pressing sustainable development challenges.

During this ECOSOC High-level Segment we heard tangible examples of how countries are stepping up responses to accelerate implementation of the SDGs.

We benefited from the rich experiences and lessons learned by 38 VNR countries and the European Union.

And we were enriched by your key messages during the General Debate. I will ensure that they feed into the SDG Summit.

Today, we also heard about the need for the continued strengthening of the UN.

We must boost the capacity of the multilateral system. We need fundamental reforms – not quick fixes - to tackle emerging challenges and address SDG-related gaps that have surfaced since 2015.

Today we also focused on overcoming ‘short-termism’, looking at long-term analyses and policies to advance sustainable development, not only to the year 2030 but well beyond.

We now have access to knowledge, technologies, and resources that are unprecedented in history. If used properly, they can lead to breakthroughs that can become “game-changers.” These are the transformations needed to truly accelerate SDG implementation.

During the Segment’s broad-spectrum and in-depth substantive discussions, key messages emerged:

- Halfway to the deadline for the 2030 Agenda, we are leaving more than half the world behind.
- Just 12 per cent of the Sustainable Development Goal targets are on track.
- Progress on 50 per cent of the SDGs is weak and insufficient.
- We need to mobilize solid support, for biodiversity and the environment; to education; food systems; the digital transition; decent jobs and social protection.
- We need clear long-term plans and pledges to come together for action.
- We need ambitious national commitments and interventions to reduce poverty and inequality.
- And we need clear long-term policies, investment plans and partnerships to drive progress across major SDG transitions.

In September, world leaders will gather here for the SDG Summit.

This represents a moment for recommitment to action – we must unite to turn the tide for a new, accelerated and transformational drive for SDG achievement. The SDGs are not just an option, they are our only option.

Excellencies,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to conclude by expressing my deep appreciation to all of you for your active participation and insightful contributions during this 2023 ECOSOC High-level Segment, indeed, during the past year.

I would like to convey my special gratitude to the fellow members of the Bureau for their outstanding work.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the UN Secretary-General, Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed, DESA Under-Secretary-General Li Junhua, who provided crucial leadership to this High-Level Segment and other segments and meetings of the Council.

I also wish to thank all colleagues in the UN Secretariat – particularly the Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination in UNDESA, the DGACM team,, as well as the interpreters, conference officer, technicians and everyone else who has supported the work of ECOSOC.

I also wish to thank all stakeholders for their engagement and invaluable contributions. You are indelible part of the implementation of Agenda 2030.

And last but not least, I would like to thank my own team at the Permanent Mission of Bulgaria.