

Remarks for H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva, President of ECOSOC

International Forum of Volunteers

Astana, June 20-21, 2023

Excellencies,

Distinguishes guests,

Ladies and gentlemen,

In 2015, world leaders made a historic global promise to secure the rights and well-being of everyone on a healthy, thriving planet. This commitment is encapsulated in the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, which seek to build a better world for the people and the planet.

At the halfway mark to 2030, we are at a crossroads. Without swift and decisive action, the Sustainable Development Goals will remain off-track.

Thus, we need urgently to come together to deliver on the SDG promises. We must be ambitious and innovative. And we must recognize the potential for transformative action at all levels – the local, the national, and the global.

We need the active contribution of all stakeholders and, more than ever, we need to harness the galvanizing power of volunteers.

More than one billion people volunteer annually. They have the ability to drive positive change at the local and global level. They understand the daily struggles on the ground and have insightful knowledge of what works, and what doesn't.

Volunteers also provide much-needed support to organizations and governments that are working towards the SDGs. They bring diverse perspectives, skills, and expertise that can enhance the implementation of these goals. In addition, volunteers can act as agents of change, as they inspire others to embrace sustainable practices and behaviors.

The United Nations deeply values the contribution of volunteers in all areas of the work of the Organization. And we need you more than ever!

The next months will be crucial to changing course as world leaders will meet in New York in September, for the SDG Summit. They will be taking stock of SDG achievements and will recommit themselves to driving the transformation needed to make the SDGs a reality for all by 2030.

You need to be part of this global conversation. We need your energy, disposition and creativity to meet the promises outlined in the 2030 Agenda!

Thank you.