

**Opening remarks by Ms. Lachezara Stoeva
President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)
for the High-level interactive dialogue on Culture and Sustainable Development
“Culture as a global public good: Filling SDG implementation gaps beyond 2030”**

5 July 2023, 10.00 a.m.

Conference Room 4, United Nations Headquarters, New York

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you today for the opening of this High-level interactive dialogue on Culture and Sustainable Development.

This event is particularly timely, as I will have the honour to chair the High-Level Political Forum of the ECOSOC which will start next Monday. During the Forum, we will reflect on the status of implementation of the SDGs, including SDG 11. SDG 11 highlights the crucial role of culture in making cities livable, inclusive and sustainable in its Target 4, “Strengthen efforts to protect and safeguard the world’s cultural and natural heritage”.

UNESCO, alongside partners such as the European Union, has been leading the global advocacy for the recognition of culture as a driver of SDG implementation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

While I note that the draft Political Declaration of the SDG Summit does not yet include culture, I also see that Member States are clearly calling for its integration. This is in line with the historic Declaration adopted unanimously at the UNESCO World Conference on Cultural Policies and Sustainable Development – MONDIACULT 2022. The declaration called for the inclusion of culture as a specific goal in its own right in the post-2030 development agenda. Indeed, culture, as a source of resilience and recovery for communities during and following emergencies, plays

a fundamental role in the maintenance of peace and security, and fosters the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

This event is part of a series of landmark moments leading to post-2030, including the upcoming SDG Summit and the Summit of the Future in 2024. I trust that this will be an opportunity to reflect on the role of culture in meeting the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, and to build a post-2030 development agenda that fully integrates the transformative power of culture for the benefit of communities.

Thank you.