

**Opening Remarks for H.E. Ms. Paula Narváez,
President of ECOSOC
SDG Summit**

**18 September 2023, New York
General Assembly Hall**

Mr. President of the General Assembly,
Mr. Secretary General
Honourable Heads of State and Government,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Halfway into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, we have stalled and in many cases are reversing progress on the SDGs. The planet continues to be devastated by the impacts of ***climate change***. The increased severity and frequency of disasters makes recovery challenging for all, and especially those vulnerable peoples and countries.

At the same time, the ***international financial architecture*** is struggling to respond and adapt to the current moment of crisis. Countries already under debt distress have been further crippled due to the economic and financial tolls of pandemic recovery and climate disasters. Growing digital divide is intensifying inequalities, and gender inequality continues to undermine our progress. Realizing gender equality and the

empowerment of women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets of the Agenda 2030. Women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, economic resources and political participation as well as equal opportunities for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels.

In our landscape, we see **multiple** crises posing further threat to sustainable development. And yet, we must find a way to advance our achievement of the SDGs and strengthen our collective resolve to work towards the ideals that sustainable development offers our people and our planet.

I am heartened by the adoption of the Political Declaration. It is a testament to our leaders' unwavering commitment "to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs and uphold all principles enshrined in it." It acknowledges our collective need to take **immediate action** across all of the 17 Goals.

At the same time, the *High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development* will speak to the need for an international financial architecture that can respond both to our current needs and challenges on the horizon. And the *Climate Ambition Summit* presents an opportunity for decisive progress on climate action and to raise the bar for more timely and targeted efforts.

This week should serve as a turning point to rescue the SDGs. We must not let this moment slip away.

As President of the Economic and Social Council, I commit to using the 2024 Session to leverage the outcomes of the SDG Summit, as well as of the other high-level meetings during this week.

The Economic and Social Council, with its various segments, forums and subsidiary bodies, stands ready to support countries' efforts to turn commitments into action, to realize the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Council will aim to provide transformative policy guidance, while also strengthening its role as the accountability platform for better, faster UN development system support.

Ultimately, it is all of us that must commit to full engagement, constructive dialogue and raised ambitions, including the important participation and vision of civil society and other stakeholders. It is the only way to guarantee the needed transformations.

The strength of multilateralism can guide us toward a path of partnership during these times of crises. I look forward to hearing your innovations and commitments to action over the coming days and, even more, being part of the transformation that will make sustainable development not only our goal, but our reality.

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