

**Remarks delivered by H.E. Lok Bahadur Thapa, Vice-President  
of the Economic and Social Council**

**At UNITAR orientation course  
on the work of the Economic and Social Council  
16 January 2025 – 10:00 am – conference room 5**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning!  
Happy New Year to you all.

I am delivering these remarks on behalf of the ECOSOC President Ambassador Bob Rae and on my own.

I welcome you all to this annual orientation course on the work of the Economic and Social Council.

This course is a valuable resource for all delegations, particularly those who are new to the ECOSOC. I hope that you will leave this course with a solid understanding of the Council's key functions, working methods and the programme of work ahead so that you can actively engage in the delivery of the Council's important mandates in 2025.

I would like to acknowledge Mr. Marco Suazo, Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) and thank UNITAR for co-convening this important event in partnership with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA).

Distinguished Delegates,

As a UN Charter body, ECOSOC holds powerful mandates to provide policy guidance, review, and analysis in the economic, social, and environmental fields.

It plays a key role in strengthening multilateralism and international solidarity. It is more indispensable now than ever as the world continues to grapple with complex and closely interlinked challenges.

ECOSOC is also the forum to support and reinforce the work of the UN and humanitarian partners in addressing the severe humanitarian crisis affecting vast segments of populations around the world.

A central function of the ECOSOC is to promote the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs including by acting as the principal UN platform for open and inclusive dialogues, where Member States can formulate coordinated policy guidance to advance impactful and transformative action and share experiences and valuable lessons learned with the UN system, think tanks and diverse stakeholders.

It is through this collaboration that we can turn the tide on SDG delivery and uphold the promise of a better world for all.

Distinguished Delegates (colleagues),

In 2025, ECOSOC will advance its work under the annual theme of *“Advancing sustainable, inclusive, science- and evidence-based solutions for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals for leaving no one behind”*.

A set of SDGs on health, gender, decent work and economic growth, oceans and seas, as well as partnerships will be reviewed in-depth at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July, where 39 countries will also present their voluntary national reviews on their implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Council will also seek to contribute to other key UN processes in 2025, such as the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development, the Third UN Ocean Conference, the Second World Summit for Social Development, to ensure a holistic and integrated approach to advancing the SDGs.

Dear colleagues,

The Pact for the Future adopted last September calls for the strengthening of ECOSOC to accelerate sustainable development.

It is our collective responsibility to fully utilize ECOSOC's potential and ensure that it can effectively deliver its Charter mandates.

We must empower the Council to provide robust, evidence-based, innovative, and actionable policy guidance to effectively address the crises that are hindering the SDGs.

We should also make full use of the Council to deepen its engagement with international financial institutions to help bridge the significant financing divide and address gaps in financing for development, particularly for fragile and conflict-affected countries.

To leave no one behind, it is crucial for the Council to address the crisis of displacement, promote better-managed migration systems, and safeguard the rights of tens of millions of people on the move.

Artificial Intelligence needs to be on the Council's agenda, building on the Global Digital Compact, with special focus on bridging the digital divide and ensuring equal and ethical access to this transformative technology to shape a safe and sustainable digital future for all.

These are key priorities of the present ECOSOC presidency, which will be highlighted through a series of special meetings of the Council this year.

Additionally, gender equality, the active participation of civil society, and the representation of diverse voices, including youth, need to be reflected across all ECOSOC segments and forums.

Dear All,

I encourage you to make the most of today's course and the valuable expertise and knowledge of all the presenters.

I look forward to your active participation in, and contributions to our work ahead this year.

Thank you.