



Statement by H.E. Bob Rae (Canada)

President of the Economic and Social Council

Seventh Intersessional Meeting of the United Nations Human Rights Council on
Human Rights and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

11 February 2025

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

I am honoured to join you today to help reinforce our collective commitment to human rights as well as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

As we look ahead to 2030, we are reminded of the formidable challenges we face: inequalities that are increasing, pervasive poverty, persistent hunger, climate change, and ongoing conflicts. Yet, I remain confident that with deliberate and concerted actions, we can in fact still put the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) back on track.

Building on the momentum generated by a very successful Summit of the Future, we continue to galvanize the ECOSOC system to assist Member States in achieving the SDGs. The efforts of ECOSOC will also support key intergovernmental processes in 2025, such as the Fourth International Conference on Financing for



Development, the thirtieth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the UN Ocean Conference, and the Second World Summit for Social Development.

In particular, the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development will be pivotal in addressing today's theme: the review of the global debt architecture. Debt sustainability remains a critical financing challenge, especially in the Global South, where many countries allocate more resources to debt servicing than to essential social services, including health and education.

Allowing this debt crisis to persist would be a failure to uphold our human rights obligations and would hinder progress toward the 2030 Agenda.

Furthermore, the UN's ongoing work on developing a framework of measures for sustainable development progress—beyond gross domestic product—is critical. Traditional economic indicators often fail to capture the multidimensional aspects of well-being and sustainability. A Beyond GDP agenda is intrinsically intertwined with achieving human rights, notably economic, social and cultural rights, and would promote a more balanced and effective international development cooperation.

The High-Level Political Forum in July, convened under the auspices of ECOSOC, will play a crucial role in contributing to the follow-up of the Summit of the Future



and its Pact for the Future. It will draw on the experiences of 39 countries conducting Voluntary National Reviews, offering a barometer of progress towards the SDGs.

I wish you success in your deliberations and look forward to continuing the collaboration between the Human Rights Council and ECOSOC.

Thank you.