

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**Ms. Bjørg Sandkjær
ASSISTANT-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR POLICY
COORDINATION**

Remarks

2025 ECOSOC Operational Activities for Development Segment

Wednesday, 21 May 2025, 4:30pm

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

It is a pleasure to join you today on financing for sustainable development.

We are meeting in an extraordinarily challenging global environment. The world economy is decelerating, with significant downside risks, particularly if trade tensions further escalate. Donors are retreating from aid commitments and the value of multilateralism itself is being questioned.

This is exacerbating a sustainable development crisis, with financing challenges at its heart. Without adequate financing, achieving the SDGs will remain out of reach.

Discussions at preparatory sessions for the 4th International Conference on Financing for Development in Spain are focusing on solutions to these issues. Despite the

challenging environment, Member States are putting forward ambitious and creative solutions.

First, the negotiations have highlighted the importance of country leadership and country ownership in defining financing strategies.

Integrated National Financing Frameworks (INFFs) have emerged as a vital tool for countries to lay out strategies to finance their national sustainable development strategies.

The UN family has come together to support more than 80 countries in implementing INFFs, with Resident Coordinators often in the lead.

I was encouraged to hear several of you report on concrete progress you have made in helping countries mobilizing additional financing, e.g., through green bonds in Indonesia and Tajikistan.

Through its Financing for Small Island Developing States (FINS) Initiative, DESA is providing targeted support to countries such as the Dominican Republic, Seychelles, Fiji, and Vanuatu to develop integrated financing strategies aligned with their national development priorities.

This work is undertaken in close collaboration with Resident Coordinators and UN Country Teams, and is anchored in the UN Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework.

Second, FFD4 has a strong focus on strengthening countries' capacities to mobilize resources domestically. DESA supports member states in this area through technical advice, expert and intergovernmental processes.

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on the United Nations Framework Convention on International Tax Cooperation, serviced by DESA, is drafting the framework convention — a landmark opportunity to make the international tax system more inclusive and effective.

We are also working to ensure that fiscal policy promotes both growth and equity - linking domestic revenues with social investments and climate goals.

DESA also oversaw a Development Account project that brought together the UN Regional Commissions to strengthen domestic resource mobilization as part of INFF implementation. The project helped countries enhance tax policy and administration, address illicit financial flows, and align public finance with sustainable development priorities.

Third, private investment is a major driver of sustainable development.

Together with our partners, DESA supports countries in identifying investment opportunities.

Through the Global Investors for Sustainable Development (GISD) Alliance, we are working to scale up private

investment aligned with the SDGs.

We are also deepening our engagement with RCs and UNCTs to support governments in operationalizing their financing strategies—including through SDG Investment Fairs and tailored support for countries in special situations.

Dear colleagues,

The upcoming FfD4 in Spain represents a critical opportunity to complement our work on the ground with achieving systemic reform at the global level.

FFD4 aims to catalyze a large-scale, impact focused investment push for the SDGs, and reform of the international financial architecture to make it more inclusive and effective.

DESA remains committed to working collaboratively with all of you to ensure that financing becomes a bridge to sustainable development, not a barrier.

Thank you!