



United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa

**MANAGEMENT SEGMENT ROUNDTABLE OF
THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL (ECOSOC)**

***“Unity in Action: Accelerating SDG Implementation and
Building a Better Future for All”***

Statement

(Virtual)

By

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**United Nations Under-Secretary-General and
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Mr. Vice-President,

Distinguished Delegates,

We convene at a time of cascading global crises characterised by geopolitical tensions, economic fragility, climate shocks and widening inequalities.

Consequently, the multilateral system is impacted, under strain and struggling to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals.

How, then, do we rescue the SDGs from stagnation and accelerate implementation?

A critical part of the answer lies in harnessing the transformative power of regionalism.

As global coordination diminishes, regional platforms are emerging as key avenues for building political consensus.

For example, the Arab Forum on Sustainable Development has galvanized collective action on climate and gender.

In Africa, the Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development has reinforced alignment of the SDGs and AU Agenda 2063, promoting genuine ownership and coherence.

Furthermore, the submission of Voluntary National Reviews by African countries, many informed by regional data, affirms the value of coordinated regional action.

In addition to this, regional mechanisms translate global aspirations into implementable solutions.

For instance, ECLAC's debt-for-climate swaps in the Caribbean, ECA's SDG Index and Dashboard, and gender-responsive fiscal reforms in Latin America prove how regional initiatives can deliver impact at scale.

Equally important, regional cooperation is indispensable for addressing cross-border challenges.

Example, UNECE's water governance, Africa's power pools and ESCAP's SDG 7 energy roadmaps, and regional transport corridors highlight the strategic value of coordinated regional action to advance sustainable development, energy transition and cross-border economic integration.

However, the full potential of regionalism remains untapped and this must change.

First, we must reform the global financial architecture to correct systemic imbalances and free up resources for development.

To this end, Africa's high-level working group has proposed greater access to concessional finance, reallocation of

Special Drawing Rights and enhanced Multilateral Development Bank lending.

Second, we must scale regionally proven financing innovations such as ECLAC's debt swaps and ESCWA's fiscal diagnostics.

ECA is also assisting Congo Basin countries to access global carbon markets through carbon pricing systems.

Third, we must better link regional and global policymaking.

ECOSOC should incorporate regional insights, such as ECA's *Economic Report on Africa* and *ESCAP's Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific*, into its deliberations, and also ensure outcomes from Regional Forums inform the High-Level Political Forum.

Distinguished Delegates,

We have the tools and frameworks.

What we need now is the collective resolve to elevate regional voices and empower regional action.

I thank you.