

## **Joint Briefing on the work of ECOSOC and the General Assembly**

**19 January 2023**

### **Statement by the President of ECOSOC**

*[Introduction & international situation]*

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

I am pleased to welcome you to this joint briefing. It is my honour to join the President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi.

In 2023, the world continues to be challenged by the economic fallout of COVID-19 and the impact of the war in Ukraine. Inflation may be moderating in some countries, but its effects persist. The number of countries at risk of debt distress remains high. Many households around the world are battling with high food and energy prices. Prospects for global economic growth are bleak.

The impacts of climate change are being felt on every continent. Livelihoods and infrastructure have been damaged or destroyed, setting back years of development gains.

These interlocking crises have been high on the respective agendas of ECOSOC and the General Assembly. The joined-up work of these two principal organs shows the vitality of the United Nations in supporting the crisis response of the international community.

Still, the President of the General Assembly and I share the same belief that we must and can do more. And we must and can do better. We are very ambitious for what we can achieve in the year ahead.

*[Vision for the year going forward]*

From the beginning of my Presidency, I have maintained that ECOSOC, as the Charter body entirely dedicated to development, has a crucial role to play in responding to the challenges we face.

Its theme for this cycle “Accelerating the Recovery from COVID-19 and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda at all levels” allows it to do just that.

The case for an inclusive recovery has never been stronger. That recovery must address critical, immediate needs, while also marshalling the transformative policies and resources for a long-term acceleration towards the sustainable development goals.

During the coming six months, ECOSOC will not only continue to address ways to grow the economy and jobs, put in place social protection policies, and protect the planet. It will also continue to promote an adequate response to the complex interrelated crises spanning the peace, security, development, humanitarian pillars of the United Nations.

Excellencies,

Our calendar for 2023 is crowded with important events and meetings. The SDG Summit in September is the opportunity to turn the tide and launch momentum to realize our vision for a more sustainable, inclusive and prosperous world.

I am determined to ensure that each segment, forum or meeting of ECOSOC – as well as the high-level political forum on sustainable development - the HLPF – under its auspices- help to pave the ground for the SDG Summit.

*[Contributions of ECOSOC]*

At the ECOSOC Partnership Forum on 31 January, a wide breadth of stakeholders will share their experience, vision and priorities for realizing the goals and their expectations for the SDG Summit.

The Coordination Segment on 1-2 February will bring together the ECOSOC Functional Commissions and expert bodies, along with the Regional Commissions and UN entities on the main theme of ECOSOC. Building on the knowledge and work of the Council, the Segment will identify transformative policy recommendations and actions that could be put in place to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. These recommendations will inform the 2023 SDG Summit as well as other high-level meetings such as the mid-term review of the Sendai Framework.

Young people will elaborate on their own aspirations and proposals at the Youth Forum in April. ECOSOC multistakeholder forum on Science,

Technology and Innovation in May will bring together scientists and policy makers to launch new ideas and partnerships. This will reinforce the efforts of the President of the General Assembly.

The Development Cooperation Forum and the Financing for Development Forum will identify ways to step up investments in the SDGs. Their proposals will be discussed at the HLPF. They can lead to transformative recommendations at the SDG Summit, such as on the reform of the international financial system.

At the Operational Activities Segment, we will take stock of the efforts of UN Country Teams to support preparations for the Summit. We will also hear from the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and UN system Executive Heads how they are progressing in strengthening UN system support to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Excellencies,

As we look for transformative pathways to achieve the SDGs, humanitarian emergencies keep pulling us back.

Global humanitarian needs are at unprecedented levels. Currently 339 million people in 69 countries are in need of humanitarian assistance, an increase of 65 million people compared to the same time last year. The estimated cost of the UN-coordinated humanitarian response to target the most vulnerable 230 million people in need is \$51.5 billion.

The humanitarian work of the United Nations is more important than ever. Both the General Assembly and ECOSOC play an indispensable role in discussing humanitarian challenges and required solutions.

This year's ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment will discuss current and emerging humanitarian challenges and priority themes. Key actors will share their experiences and lessons learned, with a view to strengthening the coordination and effectiveness of the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

The ECOSOC Meeting on the Transition from Relief to Development will bring together humanitarian, development and peacebuilding actors. They will discuss collaboration and key actions to build resilience and advance the transition from relief to development in conflict and post-conflict countries and in countries facing humanitarian emergencies. The meeting will also review UN support to the Sahel, South Sudan and Haiti.

This too is part of our relentless efforts to achieve the SDGs.

*[HLPF as a pre-event for the Summit]*

This year's HLPF will be the key preparatory event for the SDG Summit.

Over the past years, the HLPF has established its central role in the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

I believe that, next July, it should convene the largest possible number of ministers from all sectors of the SDGs. It should launch a multisectoral

multistakeholder push to achieve the goals, leading to the SDG Summit and beyond.

The HLPF will also reflect on policies to recover from COVID-19 and today's crises in a way that puts us on track to achieve the SDGs. I anticipate that this will be one of the key messages of the declaration of the SDG Summit. We will learn from the 40 countries presenting Voluntary National Reviews and from the voluntary review of the European Union.

The HLPF will also reflect on ways to address the continuing plight of small island development states, least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. It will aim to accelerate the follow-up to the LDC5 Conference. The joint meeting with the PGA on LDCs on 8 February should build momentum to this end.

We will also hear the voices of all major groups and other stakeholders throughout the HLPF meeting. I am meeting with major groups and other stakeholders every month to keep them engaged in preparing the HLPF and ECOSOC events.

Over the spring, ECOSOC's functional commissions and expert bodies will identify new policies to overcome Covid-19 and other crises and accelerate progress to achieve the SDGs. Their inputs are a great contribution to the work of ECOSOC and the HLPF. We will strive to use them better.

I am committed to the implementation of the recommendations which resulted from the review of the work of ECOSOC subsidiary bodies which was conducted in 2021-2022. By improving the work of the ECOSOC system, we can demonstrate what an inclusive and networked multilateralism looks like.

Cooperation between the GA and ECOSOC can achieve the same result. One example is the joint meeting of the General Assembly's Second Committee and the Council on "New perspectives on poverty eradication and their insights for sustainable recovery", held last October.

I am consulting with the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General and the Youth Envoy on how ECOSOC can best contribute to the follow-up to the recommendations of the report on Our Common Agenda that are within its purview. The Council is an integral part of the efforts to "turbocharge the SDGs", as the Secretary-General put it.

*[Conclusion]*

The coming months are filled with challenges. But they can also yield huge benefits to humanity in those troubled times.

I am optimistic that we will succeed.

Because of your continuing strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda-- a commitment that multiple actors, including the private sector, share and transform into action.

I am also optimistic because we all concur that business as usual will not allow us to overcome the crises we are facing. We are all convinced of the need for transformative policies, deep structural reforms and game changing actions. And there are multiple ideas on what those are.

I am also optimistic because of the close cooperation I have with the President of the General Assembly and with all delegations.

And last but not least, I am optimistic because this is simply our only option. Together, we can ensure that the United Nations deliver the better world it was built to create.

Thank you