



The Economic and Social Councils as drivers for sustainable solutions to new challenges towards southeastern Europe integration
Social Dialogue Summit 2023
Remarks of the President of ECOSOC

20 March 2023, Thessaloniki, Greece

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to address today's Social Dialogue Summit.

At the time when the world is facing a confluence of crises of historical proportions, it is heartening to see your determination to advance Southeastern European integration.

The crises and the continuing impacts of COVID-19 cannot be addressed by any single country or organization.

I also commend the Southeastern European countries for their strong commitment to the implementation to the 2030 Agenda.

In the Voluntary National Reviews presented by your countries at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, we have seen your great efforts in implementing the SDGs and leaving no one behind.

The meetings of ECOSOC and the HLPF have recognized that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals are our blueprint for recovering from COVID-19 and other crises and for realizing a sustainable future for all.



Economic and Social Councils are well placed to support Governments' efforts in this direction.

They are a tool for inclusive governance, that engages various actors in the world of work and sustainable development.

They allow governments to anchor their policies in the experience of various economic and social actors.

They allow to solve trade-offs between policies to address various SDGs through dialogue.

In the United Nations, the Economic and Social Council was created by the UN Charter as the only UN body entirely dedicated to development.

It assembles UN Member States and the UN system to help find responses to the current crises and their impact on the SDGs.

The HLPF, which meets in July every year under ECOSOC's auspices-is the apex UN platform to review progress in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

This year, all meetings and forums of ECOSOC will contribute to prepare the SDG Summit to be held in September 2023 in New York.

The SDG Summit must be a milestone when Presidents and Prime Ministers rekindle the sense of hope of the SDGs and put the world on track to realize the SDGs.

The HLPF next July will be a pre-summit event.

It will also address the SDGs on water, sustainable energy, cities, industry and infrastructure, and strengthening partnerships for the SDGs.

Today, you will discuss the achievement of SDG 7 on energy.

The world is currently in the grip of a major energy crisis, which is generating shockwaves through not only the global energy market but also food and financial markets.



Cooperation in the energy sector is vital. The General Assembly High-level Dialogue on Energy in 2021 resulted in the *Global Roadmap for Accelerated SDG 7 Action*, with a clear way forward towards accelerating progress towards 2030 and net zero emissions by 2050.

As Secretary-General António Guterres has put it, “*we have a double imperative – to end energy poverty and to address climate change.*” At today’s rate of progress, however, the world is neither on track to achieve SDG 7 by 2030, nor net zero emissions by 2050.

Governments look to Economic and Social Councils and – at global level to ECOSOC, to find solutions to the energy and other crises.

We owe it to the people whose well being depends on solving the crises and building a better future.

This is why I look forward to hearing the conclusions of your important Social Dialogue.

Thank you.