



**OPENING OF THE 61ST SESSION OF THE
COMMISSION FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

6 February 2023
Conference Room 4

Remarks by H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva,
President of the Economic and Social Council

Distinguished Delegates,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure to join you at the opening of the 61st session of the Commission for Social Development.

We are meeting here today when the world is facing multiple, interconnected crises. Projections for global economic growth are dim.

Digital transformation, demographic trends and climate change are transforming the sectoral composition of growth, with implications for labour markets. And the pandemic has exacerbated some of these trends.

It is clear that these structural transformations require complementary efforts in education, training and lifelong learning. Investing in human capacities for the emerging and future demands of the job market, while also instilling the values of inclusion, sustainability and partnership enshrined in the 2030 Agenda, is a fundamental way to achieve progress across the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Commission will address these interlinkages focusing on the social dimension of sustainable development. Your discussions on the creation of decent work and how it relates to inequality and poverty as we pursue a just and sustainable transition to low-carbon and environmentally



friendly economies and societies will be essential to inform the work of the Council, the HLPF and the SDG Summit.

Dear Colleagues,

To ensure a fair and inclusive transition to a green economy, Governments have the responsibility to put people first. They must support those regions, industries, and workers that will face the greatest challenges in the transition. Policies that facilitate the reallocation of displaced workers are needed. These could include, for example, tailored job-search assistance, flexible learning courses, employment programmes, and hiring and transition incentives.

Putting people first means, we must create opportunities for young people to accumulate knowledge and skills relevant for the labour market through education, training and early work experience.

Putting people first requires that everyone has access to comprehensive, adequate, and sustainable protection. This can be achieved through universal, comprehensive, risk-informed, gender-responsive and sustainable national social protection systems. . The COVID-19 pandemic showed how key social protection systems are. They remain integral in countries' efforts to build resilient economies and societies in pursuit of the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I commend your Commission's collaboration with other functional commissions and with partners throughout the UN system, as well as with other stakeholders. Such partnerships are essential to navigate the complexities of our times and facilitate integrated approaches.



Improving collaboration among ECOSOC functional commissions and expert bodies, and among them and UN system entities, as well as increasing stakeholder participation, were among the recommendations resulting from the review of the work of these subsidiary bodies undertaken last year.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the Commission for Social Development for actively participating in the review of the work of ECOSOC functional commissions and expert bodies, providing valuable insights to the discussions and contributing to the successful outcome.

Dear colleagues,

This is a critical year for us as we approach the SDG Summit in September 2023. The Summit will be about implementation, action and transformation. World leaders will share their vision and transformative actions to realize the SDGs. All meetings of ECOSOC and the High-Level Political Forum under its auspices will prepare the SDG Summit. I count on the Commission for Social Development to provide an important contribution.

We must work together to translate our discussions and conclusions into concrete actions towards achieving the SDGs by 2030.

I wish you fruitful discussions and look forward to receiving the outcomes of your deliberations.

Thank you.