



**Opening Remarks at the 2023 ECOSOC Youth Forum  
The President of Economic and Social Council  
H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva  
“Accelerating the COVID-19 Recovery and Full Implementation of the  
2030 Agenda with and for Youth”  
Tuesday 25 April 2023 – 9:00 am – Trusteeship Council Chamber**

Youth Representatives,  
Honorable Ministers,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
and Friends joining us in person and online,

Welcome to the 2023 Economic and Social Council Youth Forum!

It is great to see this Chamber once again full of the energy, enthusiasm and commitment that only young people can bring. The COVID-19 pandemic may have impacted our in-person meetings but not the determination of all of you, young leaders from around the world, to continue your valuable engagement in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The Youth Forum takes place during a time of conflict, compounding economic and social crises, global insecurity, the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the disastrous effects of climate change. The world we live in today feels less safe and less equal.

Young people have been uniquely burdened by the recent shocks and crises in ways that far surpass what we had initially thought. Youth unemployment is at an all-time high. Disruptions to education and skills training are rampant throughout the world. Young people in the least-developed countries and small island developing states are particularly impacted by climate-related disasters.

The Youth Forum comes at a pivotal moment for all of us. We are at the midpoint of our commitment to reach the sustainable development goals and the 2030 Agenda. We have only 7 years left.



We are looking forward to your ideas, recommendations and solutions for a better, more peaceful, and more sustainable tomorrow on SDG 6, clean water and sanitation; SDG 7, affordable and clean energy; SDG 9, industry, innovation and infrastructure; SDG 11, sustainable cities and communities, and SDG 17, partnerships for the goals.

During the next three days, you will have the opportunity to discuss, exchange views, network and advance accountability to the commitments and promise we set forth in 2015.

Your participation, insights, wisdom, and unique experiences are critical to the debates, discussions, and outputs of the ECOSOC Youth Forum, the High-Level Political Forum in July and the SDG Summit in September. The priorities that you would identify during the next three days will help to determine key actions for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and strengthen commitments to the meaningful youth engagement in the work of the United Nations.

What we need is immediate, bold and transformative action to reverse course and redirect our energy on accelerating the SDG implementation for and with young people. What is expected of us is to uplift and amplify youth voices around the world. What we need are opportunities for young people to come together and share their visions for change and impactful action.

This is what the Youth Forum represents. It is an opportunity and space for profound and genuine action, driven and influenced by you, the youth of the world. It is a platform to listen—to listen to the voices of the current and future generations, to listen to the voices of those who will not be overlooked anymore. We need you to guide us and to be part of the decision-making processes that will affect the future.

We are inviting you to be candid in your discussions, especially on the third day of the Forum, as together we will advance key messages and recommendations as inputs to the preparatory process of the SDG Summit.

I also welcome the participation of Ministers, senior officials and youth delegates to the Forum. Use the Forum for informal exchanges with other youth leaders.

Friends,

The Economic and Social Council will be your home for the next three days. I can assure you that we hear you, we value you, and we are eager to learn from you.



Let's shape together the world you wish to live in and the future you deserve.

Welcome to the 2023 Youth Forum!