

**Opening Remarks by H.E. Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile,
President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**

COORDINATION SEGMENT
REPORTING BACK FROM THE PARTNERSHIPS FORUM AND
CONNECTING WITH THE COORDINATION SEGMENT

Thursday 3 February 2022

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

- 1.** The opening of the new Coordination Segment of ECOSOC today, the day after the Partnership Forum, concretizes one of the most significant changes introduced by the General Assembly last June for strengthening ECOSOC.
- 2.** The crises and challenges confronting us today are all threatening our ability to deliver on the promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for a better life for people and a healthy planet.
- 3.** The task of building back better from COVID-19 is daunting. But we need to embrace it as an enterprise to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.
- 4.** It is thus all the more important that ECOSOC plays its role in providing policy guidance, strengthening multilateral cooperation and mobilizing international solidarity for supporting the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

Distinguished delegates,

- 5.** The General Assembly decided to hold an ECOSOC flagship moment early in the year to kick off the “ECOSOC season”, from February to July.

6. It aims to allow ECOSOC to provide direction and inspiration for the work of the Council's segments, forums and subsidiary bodies as well as the UN system, leading up to the high-level segment and the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July.
7. ECOSOC is the one and only platform that gets the overview of the work of the UN system bodies and organizations on sustainable development. It is the place where UN system entities, chairs of functional commissions and expert bodies, stakeholders meet with Member States to discuss the major policy issues that come out of their deliberations, analysis and experience. It is the body that can instill direction, create synergies, and increase cooperation and coordination within the UN system at large.
8. This is what the new Coordination Segment is designed to do - enhancing ECOSOC's leadership, oversight and coordination role so as to maximize the impact of the UN system at large.
9. We need to ensure that the Council's deliberations during the coming two days offer clear guidance and inspire fruitful policy discussions leading up to the HLPF.
10. Yesterday's Partnership Forum provided a rich set of ideas, proposed new actions and policy options for you to build upon.
11. It assembled a range of stakeholders from all walks of life to discuss the essential theme of the 2022 ECOSOC and HLPF, "***Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development***".
12. Let me share with you some key messages from the Partnership Forum that would be relevant to our discussions in the next two days:
 - a) To ensure that our societies rebuild and recover from the pandemic in a more sustainable manner, we need the **engagement of all, partnerships with all, and solidarity with all.**
 - b) We are not helpless in this pandemic: the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are our guidepost and roadmap for recovery.

- c) The gaping inequalities in access to the vaccine are morally unacceptable and hinder health and economic recovery. We must address them as a matter of emergency.
- d) This also means ensuring equal access to financial resources for the recovery, building institutional capacities including in global South and the achievement of the SDGs, going beyond the measures implemented thus far.
- e) The Forum brought new emphasis on the **central role of the public sector** in enhancing the quality and access to public goods, and in promoting more transparent and accountable science-policy interfaces.
- f) Many speakers noted the **importance of ownership, leadership and participation at all levels of decision-making throughout our recovery efforts**. This was also a message of the global online stakeholder consultation undertaken in the lead up to the Partnership Forum. Everyone, especially the most vulnerable, should be meaningfully included in efforts to define the “new normal”, from health to economy, to social protection.
- g) Speakers also called for **strengthening engagement with the youth** in national and global policy spaces and in efforts to implement the SDGs. More spaces are needed for civil society and youth groups to work together towards sustainable recovery and development.
- h) There was a **renewed sense of urgency to attend to the needs of the furthest behind first**, including those who cannot be reached through traditional government measures or modern communication means.
- i) Concrete proposals were put forward on **enhancing the participation of women and vulnerable groups**, and on **policies related to health, education, poverty, hunger, inequality, water and sanitation and other essential areas**.
- j) **There were many examples highlighted of multi-stakeholder partnerships that deliver, and calls made for creating new alliances and launching new initiatives**.

Distinguished delegates,

- 13.** In the next two days, we need to build on the bold ideas discussed yesterday. We need to develop innovative recommendations on issues that should be further advanced by ECOSOC, its subsidiary machinery and the UN system.
- 14.** We should also consider the UN system's impact on producing coordinated solutions to advance the SDGs, while promoting a resilient recovery.
- 15.** We must identify aspects of the 2030 Agenda that receive inadequate attention, such as orphan SDGs and targets, and find them a home in the ECOSOC system.
- 16.** And above all, we need to rekindle a spirit of solidarity between peoples and countries.
- 17.** Let us utilize ECOSOC to its full potential – let us assess the global response to the pandemic and SDGs progress; let us develop policy guidance based on our combined ideas and experiences; let us leverage action by the UN system and multiple actors to overcome the pandemic and achieve the SDGs through strengthened international cooperation and solidarity.
- 18.** I encourage all of you to participate actively in the deliberations of these two days, and I look forward to your valuable contributions.

I thank you.
