



Integration Dialogue 1

Institutional strengthening, governance, inclusion and the rule of law
27 May 2021

Opening Remarks by
H.E. Mr. Juan Sandoval Mendiola, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico
to the United Nations, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council

Excellencies,
Dear colleagues,

I am delighted to welcome you to the first in a series of three integration dialogues that I am convening in preparation for the 2021 Integration Segment of the Economic and Social Council.

Before I give my opening remarks, I would like to go through a few housekeeping announcements. I would like to inform you that this meeting is being recorded. I would also like to request that all participants keep their microphone muted and their cameras off when you are not speaking. I request the Lead Agency, Moderator and panellists to please keep their camera on throughout the meeting while keeping their microphone off except when they have the floor.

Dear Friends,

COVID-19 and its cascading impacts have brought to light what the 2030 Agenda had recognized five years earlier: the interlinkages and integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals. Not only because we are globalized but because our health is intrinsically connected with our food and our ecosystems, our economies rely on us and our institutions and our planet, our institutions rely on us, we rely on our planet by nature for our very existence – sadly, we have taken this self-evident truth for granted. Because of these interlinkages, and at times our lack of coherent and effective actions, the pandemic is impacting and often reversing progress across all SDGs. Take an urgent look at this.

But we now know that we can achieve transformational action and accelerated progress if we tap on the synergies that result from the integrated nature of the SDGs and overcome the tradeoffs.

Therefore, these Integration Dialogues will focus on three cross-cutting themes to explore the interlinkages of the current challenges and the SDGs in depth and to identify ways to maximize the impact of policy measures. Our dialogue will be based on the most creative ideas emanating from Member States, and the work of the Council's subsidiary bodies and the UN system.

Check against delivery

This first dialogue will address “Institutional strengthening, governance, inclusion and the rule of law”. It is led by UNDP, which has worked extensively on monitoring progress and supporting implementation of SDG 16.

The second Dialogue on 3 June will focus on “Building back better towards inclusive, sustainable, and just economies for recovery: Re-designing the contract between people and planet” and will be led by ILO. The third Dialogue on 10 June will focus on “Human well-being and capabilities: Building back more resilient, healthy, equitable and sustainable societies” and will be led by FAO.

Dear colleagues,

Integrated policy frameworks are at the heart of realizing the 2030 Agenda. This is not by chance. Integrated strategies and policies are meant to break silos, generate positive impacts and co-benefits in related sectors, increase coordination among various actors, and instill multidimensional approaches. These approaches are crucial at a time when we look for sustainable and resilient recovery strategies that also set inclusive and effective paths towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Global Sustainable Development Report in 2019 highlighted entry points where measures can have multiplying effects across the SDGs by building on the strong interlinkages within systems such as food or energy systems.

Institutional strengthening, governance, inclusion, and the rule of law are among the actions that have cascading impacts across the SDGs. Good governance, inclusive governance and peaceful and right-based societies are conditions for progress on every single SDGs. They are based on the same values that the UN stands for. They must be ensured in all contexts, despite the multiple obstacles they can face, from lack of capacities to various forms of conflicts or corruption.

The Economic and Social Council was given the Charter mandate to coordinate the work of the entire UN system, including the specialized agencies, in the economic, social, health, cultural, educational, and related matters. It is a powerful role which should be used to provide the solutions to economic, social, health and related global problems that the Charter speaks about. ECOSOC has never been as relevant as it is today.

COVID-19 represents one of these compelling global challenges that ECOSOC was created to address. And the UN system has been at the heart of the policy and operational response to COVID-19 and its impacts. ECOSOC’s role extends from setting priorities for the global health response and advising on public health measures in countries — to leading myriad efforts to deploy, coordinate, analyse and develop resources, initiatives, and frameworks at the national and international level in order to better respond to the pandemic’s impacts and recover in a sustainable, inclusive and resilient manner. ECOSOC’s range of expert work, through its functional commissions and expert bodies, has also contributed by recommending policy and standards on how best to respond to the pandemic and encourage an inclusive, sustainable and resilient recovery. It is important for the members of ECOSOC and for the UN, to hear to what all these entities have been doing to achieve those goals, especially how we are doing things differently, working together with a fresh look and continue in our path to development.

Effective multilateralism is what improves people’s lives. Beautiful documents aren’t enough.

Dear colleagues,

Check against delivery

I am therefore delighted to be here today to start off our discussions and learn from UN system and Member States' wide experience in dealing with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. I look forward as well to listening to your best practices regarding integrated policies, programmes and strategies for an equal, resilient, and sustainable recovery and towards the achievement of the SDGs.

I believe our exchanges, here and at the 2021 Integration Segment, will significantly contribute to improve coordination, impact, and coherence of the UN system action to support our efforts to achieve the future we all want, leaving no one behind.

Thank you.

Check against delivery

**Closing Remarks by
H.E. Mr. Juan Sandoval Mendiola, Deputy Permanent Representative of Mexico
to the United Nations, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council**

Excellencies,

Distinguished Panelists, Delegates and Participants

I would like to thank our lead entity UNDP, our moderator, Ms. Sarah Cliffe, our distinguished panelists and all of you for participating virtually in the first ever Integration Dialogue today.

We are living through extraordinary times and facing challenges that can only be overcome if we act together in a coordinated and integrated way. The pandemic demonstrated how interconnected we are. What started as a health crisis turned into a socio-economic turmoil threatening our progress towards the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It has been an enlightening dialogue with your rich contributions from the perspective of your respective entities and countries. We have covered a full scope of issues, highlighting the richness of the work of the ECOSOC system and UN entities. We also heard about the challenges faced by countries in the wake of the pandemic and how they are trying to respond to its unprecedented socio-economic impacts.

We are all aware of the urgency to stop the pandemic and alleviate its negative impacts on our people, especially the most marginalized. We must build on this momentum to ensure no one is left behind in our recovery efforts to a more sustainable path. To this end, strong, effective, accountable and transparent institutions, governance and rule of law are prerequisites for an effective and inclusive recovery from the pandemic, as well as for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs.

Our reflections throughout this dialogue will provide important inputs for the ECOSOC Integration Segment in July. To this end, the outcome of the integration dialogues will be a concise note identifying key integrated policy options to put us back on track for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

I invite you to join us at the second Integration Dialogue on “*Building back better towards inclusive, sustainable, and just economies for recovery: Re-designing the contract between people and planet*” on 3 June 2021.

I thank you.