



Opening Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram at the Virtual 2021 ECOSOC Partnership Forum “Partnership as a Game Changer for a Sustainable Recovery from COVID-19”

May 3, 2021

New York

Good morning!

Excellencies, dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the Economic and Social Council’s Partnership Forum on the overarching theme of, “Partnership as a Game Changer for a Sustainable Recovery from COVID-19”. I call this virtual meeting to order.

If ever, there was need for partnership, it is now. The COVID 19 pandemic is the most serious and the most pervasive crisis the world has confronted since the end of the Second World War.

It has revealed the unity of humanity, the common vulnerabilities of the rich and the poor, the advanced and the developing economies. It is illustrated and exacerbated underlying inequalities within and among nations. It is underlying the imperative of cooperation of solidarity and of partnerships in the widest sense of the word.

The United Nations, with its universality and convening power, is the fount of partnerships between states, companies, and civil society across the world. The contributions of the Global Compact, the International Chambers of Commerce, and the UN Office of partnerships have established that partnerships are invaluable instruments in the promotion of prosperity and development. We must build and fully utilize these partnerships to respond to and recover from the crisis.



The goals which such partnerships must achieve today are as urgent as they are clear. First, we must defeat the pandemic. This requires, most importantly, universal, equitable, and urgent access to the COVID-19 vaccines and related materials, equipment and technologies.

The ECOSOC's Special Meeting on 16th April has identified the actions that are needed. Our partnerships must help to secure implementation of these identified measures. No one is safe until everyone.

Second, we must halt and reverse the descent of millions into extreme poverty and destitution. This means helping the poorest people with direct and indirect economic support and social safety. It means providing the poorest countries, with fiscal space through debt relief, emergency grants, and concessional finance, to save lives and livelihoods. The consensus achieved at the Financing for Development Forum's outcome document sets out the agreed actions which governments and our partnerships must promote.

Third, the global recovery must be sustained. The richer countries have injected around \$17 trillion to revive their economies. The developing countries need an estimated \$4.3 trillion to recover from the impact of the pandemic and get back on track to implementing the SDGs. The 650 billion in new SDRs that are to be created and the envisage repurposing of unused STI are important components of the solution. Further financial support, official and private debt restructuring, larger concessional inflows, low interest loans, and larger FDI will be needed. Our partnerships must help to promote these financing solutions.

Fourth, we need to redress the structurally induced economic and social inequalities among and within nations including through reform, equitable trade, investment, tax, and technology regimes.

Fifth, to recover better, and create a resilient sustainable environmentally friendly global economy. Massive investment- \$100 trillion- over the next 30 years are needed in sustainable infrastructure,



particularly in the developing countries, both public and, particularly, private sector investment will need to be mobilized to ensure implementation of the SDGs and achievement of the goal of net zero carbon emissions by 2050. The role of our private sector partners will be critical in this endeavor.

Sixth, we are meeting just ahead of the Science, Technology, and Innovation Forum. In the post-COVID world, global digitalization and bridging the digital divide has become vital for economic survival of countries, companies, communities, and individuals. We should utilize all available technologies to enhance productivity and growth in food and agriculture, manufacturing, services, education, and health. I have proposed the creation of a database of open source technologies and learning from the experience of the rapid and collaborative development of the COVID-19 vaccine, we should try to identify and collectively promote the specific scientific and technological breakthroughs which could accelerate an enhanced implementation of SDGs.

Finally, the ECOSOC will also convene the Development Cooperation Forum later this week. This will be an opportunity and will provide a framework to enhance the impact of our partnerships especially at the country and community levels, for recovery, growth, and development.

Excellencies,

I look forward to our discussions this morning. I hope that these will yield consequential results.

Thank you.