



**2022 Organizational Session: First Informal Meeting  
Election of the Bureau of ECOSOC**

**Handover Remarks  
by ECOSOC President, H.E. Ambassador Munir Akram  
Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United  
Nations  
(23 July 2021)**

**Excellencies,  
Dear Colleagues,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It has been an honor to serve as the President of ECOSOC. My country has been privileged to serve in this capacity six times.

2. Although it was my second opportunity to occupy the Council Presidency, there was no sense of déjà vu. The Council Presidency of the past year, in the midst of the greatest economic and social crisis that has confronted the world in a century, was a unique experience.



3. The whole world was in a lockdown. Thousands were dying each day from COVID-19; hundreds of thousands were infected; trade was halted; and global economy in deep recession. The likelihood of a vaccine against the virus was but a glimmer of hope.

4. Throughout the past year, the ECOSOC was at the centre of the intense international discourse on ways and means to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences, while also persisting in the endeavour to implement Agenda 2030 and the SDGs and avert the existential threat of a climate catastrophe.

5. These unprecedented challenges required new, bold and creative responses from the world community.



6. During the year, the ECOSOC made its contribution to building the responses to these challenges; it set out the actions needed to provide “a vaccine for all”.

- reached agreement on measures for financing recovery from the pandemic and achieving the SDGs;
- drew attention to the special needs of the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDs;
- reviewed the systemic causes of inequality;
- identified concrete ways to utilize science, technology and innovation, especially digitalization, to advance the SDGs;
- promoted dialogue and action on sustainable infrastructure investment; and



- not the least, achieved consensus on a comprehensive Ministerial Declaration, at our just concluded High Level Political Forum, which constitutes a comprehensive agenda for action.

7. Unfortunately, the challenges we face are far from being overcome.

8. As the WHO Director-General stated this week, the world is failing the test of solidarity in assuring the availability of the COVID vaccine to all. If we fail this test, we will put in jeopardy the lives and livelihoods of hundreds of millions of people in the developing world as well as the prospects of a quick recovery of the world economy.

9. Despite our consensus, the developing world has yet to find the financing needed to recover from the recession



and economic downturn triggered by the pandemic. The burden of debt is triggering the collapse of weaker economies. With large financial injections; the rich are recovering, while poor slide further into poverty even as new strains of the virus spread to unvaccinated populations. The promises of vaccine unity, larger concessional funds SDR creation and reallocation, must be fulfilled on an emergency basis.

10. And, actions on climate and the environment hang in the balance. There is so far no firm assurance that the developed countries will fulfill their promise of providing \$100 billion in climate finance annually. Unless there are visible steps taken towards international solidarity, the success of COP26, and achievement of the goals and objectives of the Paris Agreements, will be in jeopardy.



11. The Council has the fundamental responsibility, in accordance with its Charter mandate, to mobilize global solidarity and international cooperation to overcome the world's daunting challenges.

12. I am confident that, under the able leadership of Ambassador Kelapile, the ECOSOC will respond actively and boldly to meet these challenges during the next year.

13. It has been a privilege to have worked closely with Ambassador Kelapile of Botswana, Ambassador Baeriswyl of Switzerland, Ambassador Kyslytsya of Ukraine and Ambassador Sandoval of Mexico on the Council's Bureau this year.

14. I am also happy to have worked closely with the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Volkan Bozkir,



thus aligning the work of the ECOSOC and the General Assembly.

15. I wish to once again thank the UN Secretariat, especially all our colleagues in DESA, in particular the Council's Secretary, for their support and assistance to the Pakistan Presidency.

16. Within the ECOSOC, and outside it, Pakistan will continue to extend its whole hearted support to the Council's endeavours and I wish Ambassador Kelapile every success in guiding the Council next year to ever greater success.

**I thank you.**