

OPENING REMARKS

BY

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PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL
COUNCIL (ECOSOC)**

AT

**ECOSOC BRIEFING ON THE OUTCOMES OF THE UNITED NATIONS
CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE (COP26)**

**14 DECEMBER 2021
10:00 A.M. – 12:00 P.M.**

VIRTUAL MEETING

Please check against delivery.

**President of the General Assembly,
Special Adviser to the UN Secretary-General on Climate
Action,
Distinguished Guests,
Excellencies,**

1. It is my pleasure to welcome you today to this briefing on the outcomes of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) that took place from 31 October to 13 November 2021 under the Presidency of the United Kingdom.
2. We have been encouraged by the sense of a reinvigorated multilateralism that defined this year's Climate Change Conference. The Glasgow Climate Pact to keep global warming to 1.5C and the other important commitments are a sign of progress. In today's briefing, our distinguished guests will share with us their reflections on the key outcomes of COP26 in the context of our pursuit for the Sustainable Development Goals and our response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Excellencies,

3. With a dedicated Sustainable Development Goal on Climate Action (SDG 13), closely interrelated with other Goals, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development offers a roadmap to pursue climate action and sustainable development in an integrated, inclusive and resilient manner.
4. The 2021 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF), which also reviewed SDG 13 on Climate Action, highlighted ways to build on the synergies between climate change and other SDGs and address tradeoffs. The HLPF also cautioned that the climate, biodiversity and pollution crises could receive less attention and even fewer resources, especially in today's context.
5. The world is starkly different today than it was in 2015, when we made historic agreements for sustainable development

and climate action. Today, we are struggling to end a global pandemic, which continues to devastate our communities and economies.

6. As of last month, more than **5 million precious lives** were lost to this pandemic. For the first time in over **20 years**, extreme poverty increased. Inequalities and gender-based violence are also on the rise.
7. International Labour Organization (ILO) warns on stalled global labour market recovery. The latest World Economic Situation and Prospects of UN-DESA cautions that vaccine inequity poses a serious risk of an uneven and fragile recovery of the global economy. Despite expressions of solidarity and commitments, vaccine equity remains elusive.
8. It is also worrying to note that an increasing number of extreme weather events continue to disproportionately impact countries vulnerable to climate change, in particular Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and African countries.
9. As trillions are being spent on COVID-19 recovery, we must transform this tragedy into a historic opportunity. We must ensure that recovery efforts are aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the goals of the Paris Agreement to **"build forward better."**
10. Achieving this alignment requires us to overcome our traditional silo approaches in favor of cross-sectoral decision-making and innovative solutions that unlock synergies across government portfolios, sectors of the economy, and the SDGs.
11. It also requires a shift in mindset to focus on integrated approaches that include the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development so to promote informed decisions that systematically promote sustainability and resilience.

12. Recovery packages and policies to address the impacts of the pandemic must also bolster climate action and promote the transformative changes we need to realize the objectives of Paris and Glasgow as well as the SDGs.

Excellencies,

13. The work of ECOSOC straddles over multiple dimensions related to climate change commitments and action. The HLPF meeting under its auspices keeps the focus on advancing in tandem on climate action and the other SDGs.
14. ECOSOC is the platform where Specialized Agencies, Funds and Programmes present their policies and activities and enhance coordination. ECOSOC's segments oversee how the UN system supports programme countries in combatting and adapting to climate change; build on the policy recommendations of UN system entities and coordinate humanitarian response to disasters induced by climate change.
15. ECOSOC's Regional Commissions, Functional Commissions and Expert Bodies mobilize concrete actions to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement in various areas.
16. The ECOSOC system thus reflects on aspects related to mobilizing science, technology and innovation to combat climate change; climate finance; the use of taxation; improving data; impacts on vulnerable populations; socio-economic dimensions or the role of government and stakeholders in climate action.
17. The Youth Forum allows young people to make their voice heard and bring their concern about climate change to the heart of the work of the United Nations.

18. We have much to learn from the representatives of those organizations and bodies. Today, we can reflect on their outcomes, learn from their ideas and share our views and reflections.
19. I look forward to hearing from our distinguished speakers and Member States to inspire climate action and maximize synergies with sustainable development.

I thank you for your kind attention.