

**REMARKS FOR H.E. MR. COLLEN VIXEN KELAPILE
PRESIDENT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL**

**ON THE OCCASION OF THE
LAUNCHING OF THE ECOSOC HANDBOOK; “STRENGTHENING
THE ECOSOC: FROM PRACTICAL TOOLS TO INNOVATION”
28 JANUARY 2022**

Introduction

- 1.** It is my pleasure to be with you today for the launch of the ECOSOC Handbook.
- 2.** I am deeply grateful to Pascale – who I served with last year on the ECOSOC Bureau – as Vice-President for having invited me to its launch. This is a great resource for delegations to have an overview of the crucial work of the Economic and Social Council to help them prepare for their active engagement in delivering its important mandates.
- 3.** Dear colleagues, we are facing an increasingly complex world, defined by constant technological change, the climate crisis and the threat of pandemics. ECOSOC will need to constantly adapt itself to provide the kind of policy analysis and policy guidance to Member States that can help them navigate these 21st century problems. The handbook shows that ECOSOC has been given some powerful mandates and tools that can be used to fulfill its core mandate – to provide solutions to international social, economic, health and related problems

and to promote economic and social progress and higher standards of living.

Presidents Message

4. My main message to you my dear colleagues is that it is worth the time to invest in the Council and to make it work. The Council has proven time and time again that it is agile and adaptable in line with the times. Just in the last decade of the 20th century, in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic, ECOSOC created UNAIDS to lead the global response to fighting the disease. It is an experiment that has been quite successful in cross UN coordination and collaboration, maximizing synergies' of each of its constituent parts.

5. I would also like to stress that ECOSOC has been very forward looking in addressing the interlinkages between peace and development. In 2002, it created the ad-hoc advisory groups on African countries emerging from conflict, first with Guinea-Bissau and then Burundi. The objective was to assess the humanitarian and economic needs of these countries and help them to elaborate a long-term programme of support geared towards preventing a relapse into conflict. The mechanism was the inspiration for the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and these two countries were subsequently transferred to the Commission.

6. I am encouraged by the continued engagement with the Peacebuilding Commission. I would also like to see a more structured relationship with the Security Council. We have a framework for inter-Council coordination with Article 65 and rules of procedure that allows the Security Council to propose items on its Agenda and those of its Subsidiary

Bodies. We should utilize these tools for more integrated approaches to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

7. I would also like to note that ECOSOC Presidents and their Bureaux have also proactively led change. The ECOSOC Partnership Forum, which was first convened in 2008 at the initiative of the President, is now gathering momentum and has been given new life by 75/290 and will bring a wide range of stakeholders from business, philanthropy, civil society, academia to support the Sustainable Development Goals and the Council's agenda.
8. The President of ECOSOC in 2012 also responded to the demand of young people to be heard on how they could contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, by organizing the first Youth Forum. The ECOSOC Youth Forum has now become one of the most institutionalized avenues for youth participation in the official UN processes and to engage with Member States on youth development as well as contributing to assessing the implementation of the SDGs.

Dear Colleagues

9. Let me take this Opportunity to also highlight the other new Forums that have emerged out of global consensus on the 2030 Agenda, namely the ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development and the Multistakeholder forum on science, technology and innovation for sustainable development. We now have the High-level Political Forum meeting under the auspices of ECOSOC, which provides for the global review of the Agenda. This has given new life to the Council and it is one of the main highlights of the ECOSOC calendar.

10. This year will be no different. I look forward to hearing from Member States on their efforts to foster an SDG-led recovery as well as conduct in-depth reviews of SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15, and 17. It also will build on the experiences and lessons to be shared by the 45 countries presenting Voluntary National Reviews. Inputs from all UN system entities, countries and other stakeholders will contribute to defining political guidance and accelerated actions. I hope that we will be able to adopt a strong declaration by consensus, as a demonstration of international solidarity and renewed commitment to gear the recovery towards building a fairer and safer world.

11. I am also keen to follow up on the Secretary General's report on Our Common Agenda, which has also recognized the important role of ECOSOC. The proposal for convening a Biennial Summit between the G-20, ECOSOC, the international financial institutions and the SG, would add to the visibility and legitimacy of the Council as part of global economic governance. Other proposals such as complementing GDP to better measure progress, the reform of the international tax system, the work on youth engagement, the Summit on Education, the Summit of the Future and the World Social Summit, will involve the work of the Council.

Dear colleagues,

12. The Council has shown itself to be adaptable, innovative and solutions focused. It has not been shy to embrace new issues or opportunities. With the 2030 Agenda as our roadmap, we can address the climate crisis and rising inequality and mainstream these issues more systematically in our work. ECOSOC should continue to get ahead of the

curve and I believe that the ECOSOC Handbook will be a great tool to help delegations understand how to leverage the opportunities that exist.

- 13.** Before concluding, I would like to note that we have a new Coordination Segment this year as a result of the recent GA resolution on strengthening the Council. It is an important step forward in strengthening the Charter mandate on coordination. This is crucial to promote accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the eight years we now have left, including through an inclusive and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, and with these last words let me encourage you all to attend and to support the **Launch and discussion of the Book “*Strengthening the ECOSOC: From practical tools to Innovation*”**

I thank you!
