

**WELCOMING REMARKS**

**BY**

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

**AT THE SDGs LEARNING, TRAINING AND PRACTICE 2022  
ORGANIZED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL  
AFFAIRS (DESA) AND UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR  
TRAINING AND RESEARCH (UNITAR)**

**5 JULY 2022  
11:00-12:00 HOURS**

**CONFERENCE ROOM 8**

*Please check against delivery.*

- **Moderator – Excellency, Ms. Egriselda López, Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations;**
- **Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, UNDESA;**
- **Excellency - Mr. Leonel Fernández, Former President of the Dominican Republic;**
- **Excellencies;**
- **Distinguished Colleagues;**
- **Dear Participants;**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen;**

1. It is my pleasure to join UNITAR and DESA in welcoming you all to this **7<sup>th</sup> Edition of the SDGs Learning, Training and Practice Center.**

2. Today marks the opening of the **2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)**, which convenes yearly under the auspices of the **United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).**

3. I commend our colleagues from **UNITAR and DESA** for their continuous close collaboration in organizing this event.
4. The SDGs Learning, Training and Practice Center has proven to be a huge success and benefited thousands of participants, underlining the importance of keeping the project alive.
5. I wish to also recognize the efforts of all partner organizations, who will be sharing their expertise with stakeholders from all across the globe.
6. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will only become a reality through knowledge-sharing and cooperation to produce better solutions together. We thank you all for contributing to such a process.
7. This year, the SDGs Learning, Training and Practice Center is able to host its opening session in-person, despite maintaining the majority of other sessions virtual.

8. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly hindered the world's progress towards the achievement of the SDGs, eroding many years of development progress.
9. The pandemic has set back progress towards many SDGs almost everywhere, and slowed implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
10. At the same time, historic progress was made in some areas such as the use of ICT for public services.
11. The 2021 UN Climate Change Conference (COP 26) also made major advances with the adoption of the Glasgow Climate Pact.
12. Today's global challenges, such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and the major food, energy and financial crises compounded by the war in Ukraine, along with the deteriorating humanitarian situation, require extraordinary efforts to address the major risks we are facing.

13. It is nevertheless crucial to appreciate the rapid and impactful contributions that have been made towards recovery and rebuilding back better, as well as the importance of protecting education.
14. **Providing quality accessible education** and sharing knowledge and information remains key to achieving the SDGs.
15. I am confident that you will emerge from this year's SDGs Learning, Training and Practice Center having gained improved knowledge and skills to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the **Decade of Action**.
16. I will now invite **Mr. Liu Zhenmin**, Under-Secretary General of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), to give his opening remarks.

**I thank you all for your kind attention.**