

UNITED NATIONS



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AFFAIRS**

**Closing Remarks
High-level segment of ECOSOC**

**Thursday, 19 July 2018
10:00 am, ECOSOC Chamber**

Madam President of ECOSOC
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have come to the end of the 2018 high-level segment of ECOSOC.

The High-level Political Forum showed that it is well established as the overarching platform to follow-up and review progress towards the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

The Forum brought together over 110 Ministers, Vice Ministers and decision makers from around the world, along with Mayors, Members of Parliament, NGOs, think tanks, academia and the business sector.

The debates on the SDGs and on the VNRs have been evidence based and thorough. We saw many earnest exchanges of experiences and practical advice.

We heard participants explain what has worked to advance implementation of the SDGs, and what was not so successful. We heard about good strategies to overcome challenges, from integrated water resource management and how to make use of renewable energy, to how to phase out plastics that pollute our oceans and pile up our landfills. We witnessed the enthusiastic participation of various stakeholders.

The HLPF allowed us to pause, take a step back, and gauge how we stand on the road towards the SDGs. We are proud of the many advances we have been making. But we also emerge with a better awareness of where the gaps are. This knowledge will help us to focus efforts in the year to come.

While sustaining enthusiasm for the SDGs, we sense that the HLPF is already channeling this momentum into actual improvements in policies and concrete measures.

This is also why we must keep the spirit and improve the way the HLPF works. We will have this opportunity at the 74th session of the General Assembly, when it will review the resolutions on the HLPF.

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

As we uphold the 2030 Agenda, let us not forget how we are all united around a historic agreement of unprecedented ambition and shared vision to leave no one behind.

With 2030 as our target date, let us look to the long term and possible scenarios. This is what we did today in the ECOSOC high-level segment. It is clear that we must pay greater attention to the tremendous impact that issues such as technological change and population ageing, will have on every aspect of society. I welcome that the General Assembly is going to decide shortly to refocus the ECOSOC high-level segment on long term trends and scenarios. We need a forum where governments come together to envision the future.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

All what we do – both in the normative area here at the UN Headquarters and in the implementation on the ground – needs to be focused on advancing the 2030 Agenda and achievement of the SDGs.

With the ECOSOC review and reform of the United Nations development system, we are strengthening the overall United Nations architecture to effectively deliver on the 2030 Agenda.

Let us now embark on the new cycle with enthusiasm and renewed commitment to show enhanced progress when the HLPF meets next year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Next year, the HLPF will meet not only in July but also in September, when it will review the whole 2030 Agenda. The September HLPF will be a summit and we look forward to having all your Heads of State and Government.

My department, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, will continue to support Member States and work with the UN system for the review of the SDGs and other dimensions of the 2030 Agenda.

We will work hard to present you with an overall picture of where we are, including through our support to the Global Sustainable Development Report and through a process of reflection, so that our Heads of State and Government can come up with a forward-looking political document that will guide us for the next 4-year cycle.

Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Finally, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for your vision and guidance, and to your excellent team who worked closely with my Department. I thank all UN entities who have contributed to the process.

For now, I wish you a nice break over the summer so that we can come back refreshed and enthused to embark on yet another year of intensive, but rewarding work.

Thank you all very much.
