



**Opening Remarks by
H.E. Ms. Mona Juul**

President of Economic and Social Council

2020 HLPF Special Event, “SDG Acceleration Actions to Build Back Better”

Tuesday, 14 July 2020

473 words

Under-Secretary-General Mr. Liu,
Executive Secretary of
Economic Commission for Africa Ms. Songwe,
Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to join you for the 2020 High-level Political Forum Special Event, “SDG Acceleration Actions to Build Back Better.” I extend my warm greetings and welcome to all who are with us virtually from across the world.

Today, we meet in the strangest of times, under extraordinary circumstances.

The global pandemic crisis is affecting billions of lives and livelihoods across the world, reversing development gains achieved over the last 20 years.

Statistics suggest that developing countries could lose at least USD 220 billion in national income. And such numbers have a human face. It means

lost jobs, closed businesses and bankrupt governments in the most vulnerable countries.

While the devastation is deep, we are before an unprecedented opportunity. The kind that demands us to truly search for transformative solutions necessary to recover better and realise sustainable development.

Distinguished participants,

As the global pandemic continues to cause immense global suffering, I note that this year's High-Level Political Forum, convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council, offers a tremendous opportunity for countries and other stakeholders to share plans and solutions to tackle the global human crisis we are in.

Although we are gathering here virtually, we must make the most of this space to take stock and turn the recovery into a historic turning point to build a healthier, more equitable and more sustainable future.

Excellencies,

I have been encouraging all Member States and other non-state actors to be forward-looking and use the 2020 High-level Political Forum as a place to announce new, ambitious commitments through its online database, "SDG Acceleration Actions".

SDG Acceleration Actions are new, bold and smarter solutions for multiple SDGs aimed to speed up the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to build back better in the wake of the current pandemic crisis.

I am thrilled to note that over 170 actions were already published on the website, which is managed by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The theme of 2020 High-level Political Forum is *"Accelerated action and transformative pathways: realizing the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development "*. Time for rhetoric is over. It is time for action.

Now is the time for leaders and every one of us, who are hearing this message, to change the course and take transformative action to drive sustainable

recovery and development. Think what the world can achieve when we all take the accelerated global actions, local actions and people actions, called for by the Secretary-General!

I am excited to be here representing ECOSOC. I would like to challenge every one of you to consider making bold commitments and taking actions to build back better for all together.

Thank you!

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