

**ECOSOC Informal Briefing  
Joining Forces: Effective Policy Solutions for Covid-19 Response  
11 May 2020, 10:00 – 12:00**

**Closing remarks  
by  
Mr. Liu Zhenmin, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs**

**Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**I am pleased to join you this morning. I would like to commend the President of ECOSOC for organizing this important meeting.**

**I am also grateful for the critical messages from our distinguished agency Heads and from the insightful dialogue.**

**As we have heard today, the corona virus is a human crisis of historic magnitude.**

**The pandemic has destabilized global economic growth, leading us into a major global recession that threatens the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.**

**According to the 2020 SDG progress report, between 40 to 60 million people are likely to be pushed back into extreme poverty, the first increase in three decades."**

**The lack of domestic financial resources, high debt levels and fragile health systems present an urgent challenge.**

**The crisis may well have far reaching impacts on education, human rights, food security and sustainable development in the long term. It may also have a long-lasting impact on migrations and the attitude towards foreigners and migrants.**

**Pre-existing inequalities along various dimensions, appear to aggravate the vulnerability of people to the pandemic and its impacts.**

**At the international level, the crisis threatens to hit especially hard the LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, who are already experiencing the social and economic effects. It can have potentially devastating impacts on health and livelihoods in the months to come.**

**As the Secretary-General has underscored, we must support the health response; mitigate the socio-economic impact; and use the recovery to build back better, anchored in the 2030 Agenda and leaving no one behind. The first line of response has been the national and local level. Those are critical interventions.**

**But we can only succeed in controlling the pandemic and its impacts, through a coordinated multilateral response, and solidarity with the poorest and most vulnerable countries and people.**

**We must remain guided by 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. The crisis laid bare the weaknesses of our health, social protection and other systems. We must address those shortcomings and build the kind of institutions, policies and economy that will put us on track towards realizing the SDGs for all people.**

**We must build on the lessons we learned through this crisis, such as on the use of information technology, to accelerate progress during the Decade of Action and delivery for sustainable development.**

**Our response must be inclusive, reaching everyone, and turn the tide against inequality. Acting through the multilateral system, we can respond to disparities across countries.**

**The Secretary-General has launched various initiatives and called for a global stimulus package of historical size. I urge all countries to follow suit. The Department of Economic and Social Affairs has been supporting the Secretary-General and informing the international response to the crisis through its analysis, and through its support to intergovernmental work. As you, the Member States, face this crisis, I wish to assure you that you have the full support of the United Nations and my Department.**

**Together, let us respond to this pandemic and move to the path towards a sustainable future of peace, prosperity and dignity for all, on a healthy planet.**

**Thank you.**

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