



**Her Excellency Ms. Inga Rhonda King
President of the Economic and Social Council**

Closing remarks

**2019 High-level Segment of the Economic and Social Council
New York, 19 July 2019, 5:30 pm, ECOSOC Chamber**

Honourable Ministers,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to address you at the close of this 2019 ECOSOC High-level Segment.

This High-level Segment concludes the ECOSOC cycle on the 2019 ECOSOC theme, *“Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”*.

The consideration of our theme has contributed in a significant way to increasing awareness and galvanizing efforts towards empowerment, inclusiveness and equality, which are core themes at the heart of the 2030 Agenda.

The entire ECOSOC system – the segments and forums and functional commissions and expert bodies – has worked to address gaps and challenges, provide integrated policy recommendations, and review progress.

The High-level Segment also included the ministerial segment of the high-level political forum, the premier global forum for follow-up and review of sustainable development.

I am confident that our deliberations on the theme during this cycle have moved us all to double our efforts to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We have continued to emphasize the transformative nature of the 2030 Agenda.

We continue to rise and adapt to the demands that the Agenda places on us all – development actors and stakeholders – to think and work differently.

We have heard that an integrated approach is essential for achieving the SDGs and to reduce inequality, end deprivations, and leave no one behind.

We have seen that reaching to the local level, empowering people, giving them voice and including them in decision-making leads to better outcomes, with stronger support to implementation.

And we have heard that we must commit to, and undertake, deliberate, decisive, transformative actions to accelerate implementation and achieve the SDGs by 2030.]]

Excellencies,

Today, the High-level Segment allowed for a broadening of the discussion around the 2030 Agenda and the 2019 ECOSOC theme by looking at long-term trends and scenarios. I believe it is a great accomplishment of the resolution 72/305.

This morning, we had a look to the year 2030 and beyond.

We heard that the world is at a turning point. Several mega trends are unfolding that will greatly impact on the delivery of the SDGs by 2030 and beyond. Some bring immediate threats – such as the looming debt crisis or uncertainties on growth or inequality-; others bring existential threats such as climate change, pollution or biodiversity loss. Others bring both threat and opportunities such as population trends, urbanization -- or technologies, which need to be carefully managed so that it supports the common good.

We do know many of the solutions and we need to accelerate and scale them up. Education hold many keys. And we know that solutions are multilateral. But we are still a bit uncertain about how exactly we can achieve some of the in-depth transformations we need to realize the SDGs – notably in the way we live, work, produce and consume. We need more reflection and exchange. ECOSOC and the HLPF can serve as platforms to nurture this conversation.

I will also take, as a key message of today, that, to realize the 2030 Agenda, governments must reinvent themselves: one minister of government herself recognized the need for greater ‘agility’. We need a government that can react swiftly to urgent trends while keeping the compass on the long term. We need a government that engages and listens to people. Participation is facilitated by new technologies and other developments.

But we also need to find ways to engage the poorest and most vulnerable in the decisions that impacts on their lives.

Leaving No One Behind should become a principle of governance, as the Committee of Experts on Public Administration recommended. The government of the future should also serve as a platform to engage other actors. We need a government that fosters a whole of government and a whole of society approach to the SDGs. A government that nurtures innovation. A government that finds new ways to engage the business sector and actors such as micro enterprises or small

family farmers which can have a major impact on the wellbeing of societies. We heard that some of those transformations and long term planning are already in motion in some countries.

I wish to thank all participants today for sharing your perspectives and views and for our enriching discussions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to give thanks to all of you for this meaningful and productive ECOSOC cycle and for the commitment you have shown to sustainable development.

I wish to thank the members of the Economic and Social Council, and all Member States, for their active engagement and contributions during this ECOSOC cycle.

I would like to convey my sincere thanks to the members of the ECOSOC Bureau for their outstanding work. I am fortunate to have such a competent Bureau.

I wish to thank all stakeholders for their participation and commitment throughout the cycle.

I thank the Departments of Economic and Social Affairs, General Assembly Affairs and Conference Management, Global Communications, Safety and Security, and all other Secretariat Departments involved, for their dedication and support.

And I thank you all for your support to the Economic and Social Council and for your active participation and engagement.

I wish you a safe and pleasant journey home.

Thank you.
