



# ECOSOC NEWS

## Inga Rhonda King, President

New York, 22 April - 10 May 2019

### Major developments

- ❖ The programme of the 2019 High-Level Segment and High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) is available at this [link](#).
- ❖ The 2019 ECOSOC operational activities for development segment will take place from 21 – 23 May 2019 at UN Headquarters in New York, view event materials [here](#).
- ❖ On 20 May 2019, Dr. Steven Pinker, Harvard professor and best-selling author, will be featured at the Inaugural ECOSOC Presidential Lecture under the theme “Reason, Science, Humanism and Progress in Creating the Future We Want.” If interested in attending register [here](#).

### Participation of the President in Meetings

On 22 - 26 April 2019, the President of ECOSOC, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King delivered opening remarks via video message to the Third Meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development. In her remarks, the President acknowledged governments and businesses are putting the SDGs at the center of their plans recognizing their importance and investment potential. She emphasized that although people are living better now than ten years ago, “conflicts, humanitarian crises, inequality, climate challenge and environmental degradation are limiting progress toward achieving the SDGs.” The regional forums, as preparatory meetings of the High-level Political Forum in July, are key opportunities for fostering partnerships, defining common priorities, and providing an important space for knowledge-exchange among a wide range of regional stakeholders.



On 29 April, ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King participated in the Special Meeting of the Council on International Tax matters

On 29 April 2019 ECOSOC President, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King, delivered closing remarks at the ECOSOC Special Meeting on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. The President noted taxation as one of the essential tools in the SDG toolkit to address inequalities; tax policy changes can influence the behavior of businesses and households towards more sustainable production and consumption patterns. She noted that much work remains to build a global tax architecture aligned with national, regional and global sustainable development priorities. In her closing, the President expressed that the committee members should continue to use ECOSOC to “generate and raise awareness of actionable recommendations, exchange experiences and

lessons learned in their implementation, highlight specific needs for capacity support, and mobilize multi-stakeholder action.”

On 29 April 2019, H.E. Ms. Kira Christianne Danganan Azucena, Vice President of ECOSOC, delivered opening remarks at the 2019 Session of the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names on behalf of the ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King. She underscored the importance of ECOSOC’s technical advice and standard setting through its expert bodies. The President encouraged Member States to use the existing resources, guidelines, manuals and best practices available by the group to support the creation of national names authorities.



The ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King attended the SEEK Awards ceremony, where she delivered the keynote address – 2 May 2019.

The 48th Annual “Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge” (SEEK) Student Awards Ceremony was held on 2 May 2019 at which the ECOSOC President, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King delivered a keynote address. She stressed the defining issues of our time as climate change and technological change. The President highlighted that fulfilling the commitments of the 2030 Agenda and upholding its principles would be paramount to navigating through these challenges. The President noted the potential impact that technological advancements are expected to impact the future of work. The President called for an investment in capacity-building and training to prepare young people for the labor market and stressed the importance of “hard and soft skills” to empower young people to be successful and adapt to rapidly changing environment. In closing, the President underscored that “better jobs for youth can only be created through collective action and policies that guarantee access to quality education, skills, markets, networks, information and technology and engage all young people from all different backgrounds and all settings.”

On 3 May 2019 DESA convened a briefing for the Permanent Missions that will be making Voluntary National Reviews in the 2019 HLPF in July. The President of ECOSOC participated in the meeting. She explained the importance of the VNRs. She used the opportunity to highlight the benefits of ‘the Friends of VNRs’ which she is creating as an informal initiative this year. The Friends will support VNR countries by enabling peer learning at and before the HLPF, helping to identify best practices and challenges and experiences. In her remarks, the President encouraged countries to join the group and serve as friends for other VNR countries. The President expressed her support and the support of the ECOSOC Bureau, DESA and DGACM to provide VNR countries with any guidance and assistance necessary.



ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King during the VNR Briefing for Permanent Missions – 3 May 2019.



ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King delivering remarks at the EGM on Lessons Learned from the first cycle of HLPF – 6-7 May 2019.

On 6-7 May 2019, DESA and EU held an Expert Group Meeting on “Lessons learned from the first cycle of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF).” The meeting was an opportunity to engage in a discussion and share ideas on how to best improve the Forum in order to maximise its impact during its next cycle. In her opening remarks, the President of ECOSOC stressed active participation and commitment of all relevant stakeholders is essential to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The President shared key ways she is working to elevate the impact of the Forum including the creation of ‘the Friends of VNRs’, an informal group to support discussions and action derived from VNRs. Secondly, the President noted thematic reviews will have resource persons instead of a large panel of presenters to ensure interaction with the audience and give more time for discussions.

On 7-8 May 2019 H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King, President of ECOSOC delivered an opening statement at the Ambassadorial Retreat on the Comprehensive High-level Midterm Review on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Decade 2014–2024. The event focused on identifying synergies and coherence between the implementation of SDGs and the Vienna Programme of Action. In her opening statement, the ECOSOC President acknowledged that the effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action is critical for the attainment of the SDGs. The ECOSOC President encouraged all the LLDCs to actively engage in voluntary national reviews (VNRs) in the future.

## Bilateral Meetings of the President of ECOSOC



On 26 April, ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King met with representatives of the EESC.

On 26 April 2019, H.E. Inga Rhonda King, President of ECOSOC met with the European Economic and Social Committee. The ECOSOC President commended the organization for working on taxation and the environment on an international level. The President welcomed suggestions on how ECOSOC and its expert body could continue to add value in those areas. The EESC holds decision-makers accountable for their commitments and in mobilizing European civil society around the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The ECOSOC President noted that the role of EESC could bring valuable opportunities and lessons learned to improve the VNR process.

On 26 April 2019, the ECOSOC President, H.E. Inga Rhonda King participated in a meeting with the Bureau of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. Ambassador King underlined the key role of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in advising the Economic and Social Council on issues pertinent to indigenous peoples. The ECOSOC President

noted that the work of the Forum is critical in ensuring the rights of indigenous peoples are accounted for and realized in the implementation of 2030 Agenda. The President expressed that indigenous people should not only be involved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda but also in its follow-up and review. UNPFII is one of the most important mechanisms for indigenous peoples all over the world, as it is a high-level institutional body under ECOSOC where relevant issues for indigenous peoples are discussed by 16 independent experts.



On 26 April, ECOSOC President H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King met with the Bureau of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues.

On 30 April 2019, Inga Rhonda King, President of ECOSOC met with Ms. Marie Paule Roudil, Director of UNESCO Liaison Office in New York and Representative of UNESCO to the United Nations. They discussed the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development and UNESCO's efforts in the preparations of SDG 4 (quality education) review for the 2019 HLPF in July. The ECOSOC President stressed the importance of the HLPF in July as it is the last meeting in the first HLPF four-year cycle. The President also welcomed UNESCO's contributions to the discussions on how to strengthen the implementation of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda.



ECOSOC President with Ms. Babita Bisht, Deputy Director for the Division of External Affairs, Green Climate Fund – 3 May 2019.

On 3 May 2019, the ECOSOC President, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King met with H.E. Dr. Muhammad Al-Issa, Secretary General of the World Muslim League (WML). They held discussions on how to strengthen cooperation between ECOSOC and the Muslim World League.



ECOSOC President with H.E. Dr. Muhammad Al-Issa, Secretary General of WML – 3 May 2019.

On 3 May 2019, a Bilateral meeting with ECOSOC President, H.E. Ms. Inga Rhonda King and Ms. Babita Bisht, Deputy Director for the Division of External Affairs, Green Climate Fund took place. They held substantive discussions on financing for sustainable development and the upcoming 2019 HLPF.