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United Nations Economic and Social Council

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President of ECOSOC

Statement at the

**High-Level Dialogue on Reaffirming the Commitment to Multilateralism
through the Strengthening of International System and Institutions on the
occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations**

New York, 10 September 2019

President of the General Assembly,
President of the Security Council,
Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a pleasure for me to be with you today in this high-level dialogue on reaffirming the commitment to multilateralism.

It is indeed of fundamental importance that we remind ourselves of the values of multilateralism and international cooperation. This is particularly important at a time in which questions are being asked on the rules-based order based on those values which the United Nations created seventy-five years ago, increasingly questioned with the rise, in some countries, of nationalism, protectionism and isolationism.

Globalization has led to significant poverty reduction during the MDG era. But there are questions about its effectiveness for not leaving people behind, responding to increasing inequalities and making countries less vulnerable to external shocks. We are also witnessing unprecedented technological advancements with economic, social, cultural, environmental and political



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implications. As the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation underscores, "the mechanisms for cooperation and governance of this landscape have failed to keep pace", and effective digital cooperation requires strengthened multilateralism.

Excellencies,

History teaches us that the world is better when countries work together rather than adopt a go-it-alone approach. Through international cooperation, together we have been able to make notable progress in fostering peace, sustainable development and human rights.

It is thanks to global collaboration that landmark international agreements have come to life, from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 - which set out, for the first time, fundamental human rights to be universally protected – to landmark international agreements on climate change, financing for development and disaster risk reduction, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015 – an ambitious universal plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals provide us a blueprint to help better manage globalization, including by addressing inequalities as well as the risks of globalization.

The momentum generated by the adoption of the 2030 Agenda is promising. The fact that 142 out of 193 Member States of the United Nations have already presented their Voluntary National Reviews at the High-level political forum on sustainable development (HLPF) shows the broad international commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to the multilateral process.

The upcoming SDG Summit, together with the other high-level meetings and Climate Summit, offer us the opportunity to renew our trust in multilateralism, and collectively catalyse action toward the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement.



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With the 2030 Agenda, we pledged that no one would be left behind and we promised to “endeavour to reach the furthest behind first”. We should be guided by this principle in our pursuit for the world we want – and this should be the basis of a “new multilateralism”.

Only through global cooperation and multilateralism and increased ambition, we will be able to address today’s complex challenges and create the conditions for long-lasting peace and sustainable development. Only the United Nations, with its universal membership, can allow everyone to bring their viewpoint and foster solutions. Now more than ever, we need more rather than less collective action.

It is also necessary that, within the United Nations, we continue to improve our way of working, ensuring more coherence across the United Nations pillars of peace, development and human rights to maximize the impact of the Organization’s work. We, in our capacity as presidents of Charter bodies must make our part in breaking the silos among our organs because many of today’s challenges can only be addressed successfully through joint efforts and integrated approaches.

To this effect, I am determined to continue strengthening ECOSOC’s relationship with the other United Nations intergovernmental bodies. We have to think outside the box and be creative on how we can work together to ensure the United Nations remains relevant in confronting evolving challenges and threats.

I would like to conclude by remembering the words of a remarkable man who devoted all his life to the service of multilateralism and United Nations – Mr. Kofi Annan – *“More than ever before in history, we share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations”*.

Thank you.



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