



*Check against delivery*

**Closing statement of the President of Economic and Social Council  
at the High-level Segment of the Council at its 2020 Session  
17 July 2020**

Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Colleagues,

Our discussions over the past two weeks have shown how the pandemic is changing the world we live in.

But even more so, they confirm that our collective commitment to realising the future we want has not changed.

It has been heartening to hear a united call to build a better tomorrow.

Time and again, your statements testified to the global determination to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

The message from this High-Level Segment is clear:

Our recovery efforts must lead to a more just, inclusive, and sustainable world.

Excellencies,

Before we conclude, I have the distinct honour to unveil a new UN system initiative:

A United Nations stamps under the theme:

“We are All in This Together – Help Stop the Spread of COVID-19”.

The stamps pay tribute to frontline workers and, provide clear and colourful reminders on how to stay safe during the pandemic. While also helping us keep in touch with friends and loved ones while we remain physically apart.

A surcharge has also been added, with proceeds going directly to the WHO COVID-19 Solidarity Response Fund.

Dear Colleagues,

The HLPF Ministerial Declaration is an opportunity to demonstrate the United Nations’ global solidarity during this ongoing crisis, and our commitment to recover better.

I would like to reiterate my sincere gratitude for the excellent work and dedication of its co-facilitators: Ambassador Panayotov of Bulgaria and Ambassador Mudallali of Lebanon, and their teams.

The virtual consultations have shown the commitment of all delegations to reach an agreement. I hope that we very soon will be able to adopt a declaration fit for the decade of action and delivery. I count on you all!

Colleagues and friends,

I hope you come away from this HLPF and high-level segment - as I do - with a real sense that this has been a learning experience.

We have heard from 47 countries in their voluntary national reviews.

They have explained how the crisis is compounding the obstacles they already faced to eradicate poverty, eliminate inequality and combat climate change.

We have heard how COVID-19 has affected everyone, everywhere.

And will continue to for some time.

This current reality can be disheartening.

But, this is precisely the kind of global challenge for which the United Nations was founded.

As we celebrate the 75th anniversary of our organisation this year, we are reminded once again, never to take progress for granted.

Let this be our call to action.

Even in troubling times, there remains great hope in the power of working together.

This is the very spirit of multilateralism.

With Agenda 2030 as our road map, this is also the spirit we must summon today to recover better, and put our words from the HLS into action.

For a just, inclusive and sustainable world.

Thank you.