



ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

International Day of Multilateralism Friday, 24 April 2020

Statement by H.E. Mona Juul President of the Economic and Social Council

We mark this International Day of Multilateralism, against the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic posing a threat to the health and stability of the world's people, especially the most vulnerable.

I wish to express my full solidarity with all governments and peoples in our fight against COVID-19.

At this time of great uncertainty and global disruption, it is clear we need a coordinated international effort in the spirit of multilateralism. Along with the space to provide the necessary immediate humanitarian response, we must heed the call of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire.

The crisis has brought to the fore the interdependence of our world today. We face global challenges that we must solve through global solutions. Requiring more, not less, cooperation across national borders.

This is the spirit at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). As our global blueprint to end poverty, protect our planet and ensure prosperity, multilateral action is what the SDGs are all about. With the challenges presented by COVID-19 achieving the SDGs has taken on an added sense of urgency.

We have already seen the pandemic reversing hard-won progress on sustainable development. We must aim to recover better, and address the consequences of the pandemic with a long-term development perspective in mind. One shaped by our commitment to the Decade of Action and Delivery for the SDGs.

It is clear we need a united global response with a strong UN at its centre. I commend the World Health Organisation for their leading role in combatting and finding solutions to the pandemic. They are a vital part of the ECOSOC system and will continue to be vital when the immediate health crisis passes. Coordinated national and global measures will be needed to continue to prepare for – and prevent – future health emergencies.

Multilateral measures must also be ready to ensure an economic response every bit as large as the economic losses incurred to control impact of the recession we now face.

The COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated just how crucial multilateral institutions are to our collective health, prosperity, and security. The UN's 75-year anniversary will be an important platform to demonstrate our collective resolve and our collective response. For its part, ECOSOC is committed to mobilising its entire system of bodies, experts, and partners, to address the multifaceted impact this pandemic has on our countries, communities and people.

Exceptional times demand exceptional solidarity. No country can solve this crisis on its own. Let us ensure that all stakeholders are included, civil society, the private sector, youth and vulnerable communities, as we deepen our efforts during this Decade of Action to build a more sustainable and resilient tomorrow.