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**Draft video message by the ECOSOC President
First Global Workshop for countries
conducting Voluntary National Reviews at the 2020 HLPF
19-20 November 2019, Oslo, Norway**

I am pleased to welcome you to this global workshop for countries presenting a Voluntary National Review at the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in July 2020.

It is a particular pleasure for me that this first of three global workshops is held in my home country - Norway.

While unfortunately I am not able to join you in person, I am confident that my colleagues will spare no effort to make your stay in Oslo as pleasant and productive as possible.

I would like to express my gratitude to everyone who made this workshop possible, and especially the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs for their preparations.



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The Voluntary National Reviews were created with the ultimate purpose of promoting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 SDGs.

This workshop is intended to support you in preparing your country's VNR. The presentation of VNRs at the HLPF allow countries to share their experience, learn from each other, and launch partnerships.

The HLPF is the core UN platform for the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda. As ECOSOC President, I will spare no effort in ensuring that the presentation and discussion of the VNRs at the HLPF is a truly useful exercise, both to your country and to all other participants.

Over the past four years, 158 reviews have been presented by 142 countries. In 2020, 50 countries will present their VNR – with 27 of you doing so for the first time, and 23 for the second time.



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Norway was one of the first countries to present a VNR in 2016. We stand ready to share our national experiences, as well as to learn from the opportunities and challenges your countries have encountered.

Let me conclude with a reflection from previous VNR countries:

The VNR process is not only about reporting to other Member States on progress. Preparing a VNR is first and foremost a unique opportunity to start a conversation on a shared sustainable development vision with all parts of your government and the whole of society.

Ultimately, it creates the opportunity to collectively accelerate national progress towards the SDGs.

On that note, I encourage you to participate actively in the discussions over the next two days and wish you every success in your preparations.



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I wish you a wonderful time in Norway.

Thank you.



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