



ECOSOC

United Nations Economic and Social Council

TAKING ACTION TO IMPROVE LIVES

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Collen Vixen Kelapile
(Botswana)**

**Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council on behalf
of the President of the Council at the observance ceremony
in commemoration of the United Nations Day
(26 October 2020)**

President of the General Assembly, Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkir,

President of the Security Council, Excellency Ambassador Vassily A. Nebenzia,

Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Antonio Gueterres,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to deliver these remarks on behalf of the President of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), His Excellency Ambassador Munir Akram, who sends his sincere regrets for not being able to join personally at this important event.

We commemorate today the entry into force on 24 October 1945 of one of the most meaningful and revered documents in world's history - the Charter of the United Nations (UN).

The UN was indeed established to “**save succeeding generations from the scourge of war**” as well as to promote “**better standards of life in larger freedoms.**”

The fundamental principles and values of the Charter have served as the firm foundation of the post-1945 world order. Against all odds since the founding of the UN, our nations have avoided another global conflict and the related devastating suffering.

But we could have never anticipated that, 75 years after the signing of the Charter, we would be fighting a global enemy that has transcended borders, reached all levels of society and upended our lives with frightening speed.

The COVID-19 pandemic is the greatest challenge we are facing as the international community since the creation of the UN. The pandemic has touched us as human beings, and it has shown how intimately connected the world is. The response and recovery approaches need to be based on robust and committed global solidarity and cooperation. They must be guided by the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Mr. President, Excellencies,

The Charter of the UN not only cemented principles and values, but also established the dedicated intergovernmental bodies to facilitate the related policy discussions, actions and decisions. One of those Charter-based Principal Organs is ECOSOC. Since its first meeting in January 1946 in London, the Council has served as a central platform of the UN for promoting economic and social progress.

With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ECOSOC deepened its focus on promoting a coherent and coordinated UN system support to Member States in the delivery of sustainable development. As we entered the Decade of Action and Delivery, the Council has added a strong sense of urgency in achieving the SDGs by 2030.

The High-Level Political Forum for sustainable development (HLPF), the core UN platform for following up on the 2030 Agenda, now meets under the auspices of ECOSOC.

As the world is confronted with the twin major crises of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and avoiding a climate catastrophe while simultaneously seeking to realize the SDGs, it is without a shadow of doubt that ECOSOC's mandate is more indispensable today than ever before.

The Council needs to continue to promote integrated approaches to sustainable development policies; identify solutions to our pressing challenges; effect transformative change; galvanize peer learning and support; as well as coordinate unprecedented levels of international cooperation to realize our common goals.

Let us be inspired by what we have achieved to date with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. These important agreements remain our best hope for surmounting today's multiple crises and building resilience.

It is therefore encouraging to note that, despite the disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, in July this year at the HLPF as many as 47 countries reviewed their achievements and challenges in realizing the 2030 Agenda. This continuing commitment to the UN's shared vision for transforming the world is a cause for optimism. Today, 168 countries have undertaken Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), several for a second and third time over the last 5 years.

Mr. President, Excellencies,

As we renew our commitment to the Charter of the UN, let us be clear about what we want this Organization to be. If we all remain true to the common pledge that we made in 2015 of “**leaving no one behind**” and that we should reach the furthest behind first, let us equip the UN to do just that. A UN fit for the purpose that we agreed to in 2015 should not be starved of the resources and capacities it requires to fulfill its vital mandate across the three pillars of peace, development and human rights.

Let us therefore properly use the occasion of this 75th Anniversary of the UN to recommit to international solidarity and cooperation in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating impacts. Let us, today, also agree to support the kind of response that will put us back on track to realize the SDGs during the Decade of Action and Delivery.

I wish to conclude by reassuring you that ECOSOC is an essential pillar of multilateralism, and it is more than ready to play its part to tackle the pressing challenges of today and tomorrow.

I thank you, Mr. President.