



**ECOSOC**  
**YOUTH FORUM**  
10<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

#YOUTH2030

## **10<sup>th</sup> Economic and Social Council Youth Forum**

### **A Decade of Action: Building a Resilient Recovery**

**Opening Statement by H.E. Mr. Munir Akram**  
**President of the Economic and Social Council**  
**7 April 2021**

Mr. President of the General Assembly,  
Mr. President of the Republic of Costa Rica,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates, and  
Youth from around the world

It is a great pleasure for me to welcome you to this 2021 Youth Forum of the United Nations Economic and Social Council.

A special welcome to all the young faces joining us online and on social media around the world. Welcome also to many ministers and delegates who are attending this virtual meeting.

This year, we are marking the 10th anniversary of the ECOSOC Youth Forum.

This is an important commemoration. It brings us back together, to reflect on a decade filled with challenges and crises but also with important achievements in eradicating poverty and building a better world.

Ten years ago, the Youth Forum first met at the UN headquarters during the final stages of the review of the millennium development goals.

Youth were clamoring for a seat at the table to be heard and to help shape the post 2015 development agenda.

Enlivened and enriched our deliberations and contribute to the work of ECOSOC and the United Nations.

Today, we are at an important inflection point in world history. We face multiple challenges – the Covid pandemic, a deep global recession, rising poverty, an impending climate catastrophe, rising inequality and extremism, a new arms race, proliferating and unresolved disputes, and the danger of revived great power rivalry and tensions.

The world community must respond to these challenges with wisdom and determination.

First, we must defeat the Covid-19 virus. Vaccines must be made available to everyone, everywhere. We must oppose vaccine nationalism. And, we must understand that No one will be safe until everyone is safe.

Second, we must mobilize national and international efforts especially finance, to recover from the recession which has been induced by the pandemic and to revive the prospects of achieving the SDGs by 2030.

Third, we must do everything possible to avoid the impending climate catastrophe – to achieve net zero emissions by 2050 and transition to a green global economy. The commitments made at the Paris Conference to mobilize \$100 billion in climate finance annually must be fulfilled.

Fourth, we must attack and redress the endemic inequalities in our national and international structures – economic, social, racial, gender inequalities. We must defeat the rising forces of racism, extremism and fascism.

These, and other challenges, must be addressed comprehensively and coherently. We can do so only through international cooperation, especially by fully utilizing and strengthening the United Nations – the world’s only universal organization – and by reinforcing respect for its fundamental principles.

The future belongs to you, the youth. We need your energy, your ideals, your boldness, your imagination, your innovation, to build the structure of a peaceful, prosperous and equal world order.

I look forward to your valuable contributions which will enrich and enliven our deliberations at this Forum and the forthcoming events that we will have, the Financing for Development Forum in April, the Science, Technology and Innovation Forum in May and the High Level Political Forum in July.

Thank you for your attention.