

ECOSOC ELECTS A NEW PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENTS

H.E. Mr. Collen Vixen Kelapile, Permanent Representative of Botswana to the United Nations, was elected as President of the Economic and Social Council for the 2022 session. In addition, the Permanent Representatives of Bolivia, Finland, and Thailand were elected as Vice-Presidents. The election of the Vice-President from among the Group of Eastern European States will be conducted at a later date.



UN ECOSOC President ✓
@UNECOSOC

New @UNECOSOC
President Collen Vixen Kelapile of Botswana said: "ECOSOC's role has become even more critical & is no less important than the other peer Principal Organs of the @UN, including the Security Council & the General Assembly.

8:50 AM · Jul 23, 2021 · Canva

The new President underscored the importance of the work of ECOSOC to counter global geostrategic tensions, existential climate crisis, mistrust in societies and the dark side of the digital world. He also reiterated his belief that the 2030 Agenda as a formidable blueprint to solve 21st century challenges. Amb Kelapile [summarized](#) his priorities for the 2022 session to include: (i) swift recovery from COVID-19 (vaccine equity, assistance to most vulnerable); (ii) promoting the need for fiscal space for recovery and the financing gap; (iii) reinforcing national and multilateral efforts to address persistent inequality; (iv) promoting peacebuilding in post-conflict regions facing recurrent challenges that threaten durable peace and security; (v) transfer of technology, knowledge-sharing, and scaling up support for innovation and technology; (vi) supporting climate resilience efforts; (vii) opening ECOSOC to more inclusive dialogue and to foster partnerships including with NGOs, Civil Society, and private sector; and (viii) championing partnerships for opportunities for the youth.

Outgoing ECOSOC President, H.E. Mr. Munir Akram, [shared](#) the highlights of his Presidency, including ECOSOC's focus on the measures taken to address vaccine equity, the special needs of LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDs, systemic causes of inequality, concrete ways to utilize science, technology and innovation, and promotion of dialogue and action on sustainable infrastructure

investment. He also spotlighted the consensus on a comprehensive Ministerial Declaration for both the High-Level Political Forum and ECOSOC. He underscored the continuing need to find financing for developing countries to recover better, achieve vaccine equity, and take visible steps towards international solidarity for actions on the climate.

Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs Liu Zhenmin congratulated both the outgoing and incoming Presidents and shared his reflections on the 2021 session of the Council. He underscored the need for ECOSOC to continue to play a leading role in promoting sound policies during the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development. He also lauded the 2021 High-Level Political Forum as a successful platform for addressing gaps, challenges, and solutions related to the implementation of the SDGs and recovery from COVID-19. He assured the Council of DESA's support for the newly elected ECOSOC President and the Bureau as well as its subsidiary bodies.

ECOSOC AND HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

2021 High-Level Political Segment (HLPF)



The [2021 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development](#) took place in a hybrid format from 6 to 15 July 2021 under the theme, “Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic,

social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.” 2021 HLPF included the thematic review of SDGs 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 17.

42 countries, including 9 first timers, presented their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs), facilitating the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Since 2016, approximately 200 VNRs have been presented at the annual HLPF.

At the opening, the Vice-President of ECOSOC highlighted the messages from the Integration Segment. This was followed by addresses from the President of Senegal, the Director General of the World Health Organization and the Director General of the World Trade Organization and 2019 Nobel Laureate, Professor Michael Kremer.

ECOSOC High-Level Segment

 ECOSOC | 75



The [ECOSOC High-level segment](#) (including the three-day ministerial segment of the HLPF convened under the auspices of the ECOSOC) was held in a hybrid format from 13 to 16 July 2021. It was also an occasion to celebrate the 75th anniversary, the Economic and Social Council which was officially commemorated on 26 January 2021.

At the opening of the High-level Segment and the Ministerial portion of the HLPF, ECOSOC President Munir Akram [highlighted](#) the triple-crisis of covid, climate, and Development and emphasized the need for a “paradigm shift in our approach to global development, climate change, and economic cooperation.”

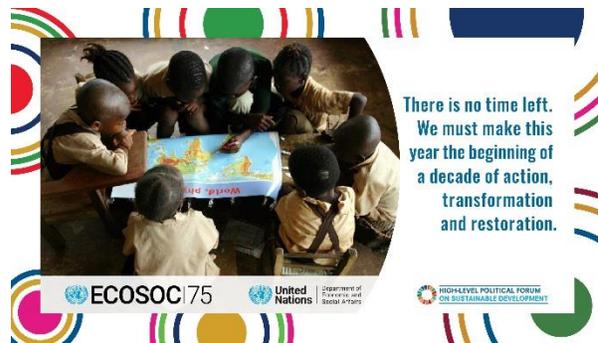


In his opening address, United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres pointed to the sobering reality that “rather than progress, we are moving farther away from our goals.” The Prime Minister of Pakistan stressed the need for universal and affordable access to the Covid-19 vaccine as well as addressing the structural problems in the international financial and trade regime. The President of Indonesia underscored the importance of prioritizing health, social and sustainable development while the Chancellor of Austria highlighted the importance of leaving no one behind in the global recovery effort. This was also underscored in the address of the Vice President of Columbia. The representatives of Youth called on the international community to act urgently to ensure that everyone has access to health services, including mental health, affordable internet access and urged that the climate crisis be addressed with a sense of urgency.

During the ECOSOC-focused day of the High-level Segment, a high-level dialogue was held on “*Strengthening ECOSOC at its 75th anniversary for sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 and advancing the 2030 Agenda*”. A Fireside Chat was moderated by Ms. Elizabeth Cousens, President and CEO of the UN Foundation, with the participation of H.E. Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and of Defense of Ecuador and former President of the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly; H.E. Mr. Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, Chief Executive Officer of the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD) and Co-Chair of FACTI Panel; Ms. Jayathma Wickramanayake, Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth; Mr. John Frank, Vice President for UN Affairs of Microsoft; and Mr. Jeffrey Schlagenhauf, Deputy Secretary-General of OECD. Over 20 ministers and vice-ministers made interventions. The main message was that ECOSOC must remain the main UN deliberative body for sustainable and resilient recovery from Covid-19.

During the two-week hybrid gathering, the HLPF brought together 10 Heads of State and Government, **150** Deputy Prime Ministers, Ministers and Vice Ministers, and 180 speakers who participated in the various HLPF townhall meeting, panels, and fireside chats. In addition, 10 special events provided platforms for different communities to engage around the 2030

Agenda, attracting over 34,000 viewers and participants across 12 virtual exhibitions, 276 side-events and 17 Voluntary National Review Labs. [The SDG Media Zone](#) brought together influencers, experts on the SDGs and eminent personalities to further amplify the topics discussed at the HLPF. The content prepared on the [Trello Board for the HLPF](#) reached tens of thousands of social media users around the world.



OTHER ECOSOC POLICY DIALOGUES

2021 ECOSOC Integration Segment



The [2021 Integration Segment](#), chaired by H.E. Mr. Juan Sandoval Mendiola, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council (Mexico), took place on 2 July 2021. The Segment brought together key messages from ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and the UN system on the main theme of

the Council and the HLPF, *“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: Building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development.”* Several Chairs of functional commissions and expert bodies of the Council, as well as Heads of specialized agencies and representatives of the United Nations system, participated as panelists during the three interactive discussions; Chairs and members of Groups of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs), the Like-Minded Group of Countries Supporters of Middle-Income Countries, and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) participated as lead discussants.

The Integration Segment built on the key messages and takeaways emanating from the three Integration Dialogues, convened as part of the preparatory process by the ECOSOC Vice-President. The ten key messages that emerged were shared with participants at the opening of the HLPF, namely: the need to regain trust in institutions and strengthen the social contract; leave no one unvaccinated; eliminate inequalities; economic recovery must protect planet and people, adopt a new, more equitable and sustainable development model; reduce the fragility of vulnerable countries; leave no one disconnected; promote science, technology and innovation for a resilient recovery; ensure reliable data; and, consolidate a new more effective and deliberative ECOSOC. Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, Mr. Liu Zhenmin, highlighted the urgency of ensuring fair, broad, and equal access to vaccines and addressed existing crises that have been worsened by the pandemic, such as conflicts, disasters, and climate issues. He reiterated the call for global solidarity during these crucial times to ensure that the world recovers better from the crisis and delivers on the promise of the 2030 Agenda.

2021 ECOSOC Humanitarian Affairs Segment



The [2021 Humanitarian Affairs Segment \(HAS\)](#) took place from 23 to 25 June in Geneva and was chaired by H.E. Pascale Baeriswyl, Permanent Representative of Switzerland under the theme, *“Strengthening humanitarian assistance to face the challenges of 2021 and beyond: mobilizing respect for international humanitarian law, inclusion, gender, innovation and partnerships.”* Participants

noted key trends that have caused humanitarian needs to soar in 2020, including prolonged conflict, climate change, and the COVID-19 pandemic. These developments combined to transform the humanitarian operating landscape and compound risks and exacerbating inequalities and vulnerability. Disturbing trends unfolded, including the shadow epidemic of gender-based violence, increased protection challenges, rising displacement, escalating food insecurity and the resurgent threat of multiple famines.

Panelists highlighted the need to mobilize collective action to mitigate the short- and long-term impacts of COVID-19 while building forward, engaging humanitarian, development, disaster risk reduction, climate and peace actors and investing more in anticipatory and early action, preparedness, early warning, and monitoring systems to prevent and mitigate the worst impacts of humanitarian crises.



Recommitment to full respect for international norms – international humanitarian law, human rights law, and refugee law – and the centrality of protection, and respect for humanitarian principles is urgent. Urgent action is also required to implement the Secretary-General’s calls for a global ceasefire and humanitarian pause and greater investment in prevention, as well as the global call for an end to violence against women, eradicate the scourge of famine, catalyze climate action, ensure women’s full participation in all humanitarian decision-making, and reignite progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

2021 ECOSOC Management Segment ([More information on agenda and adopted resolutions](#))



The [2021 Management Segments](#) took place on 8 and 9 June and 21 and 22 July 2021. The Management Segment is structured around actions that ECOSOC is expected to take on the reports of its subsidiary bodies and around the consideration of the UN system coordination issues. The reports of the

regional commissions, the Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti (AHAG), the NGO Committee, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPJ), Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CTSD), UN Group of Experts on

Geographical Names (UNGEGN), and other related bodies were presented, with adopted resolutions and decisions.

The Council also adopted a decision on the proposed dates for its meetings and segments in 2022 and held elections and appointments on regular and outstanding vacancies for its subsidiary and related bodies. Members were elected for the Committee of Experts on Public Administration (CEPA), Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters, Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR), Executive Board of UNICEF, Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, Committee for the United Nations Population Award, Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission. The results will be contained in a Council decision 2021/2022 F.

OTHER EVENTS

High-level Meeting on Middle-Income Countries

High-level Meeting Middle-Income Countries

17 June & 2 July 2021
United Nations, New York



On 17 June and 2 July 2021, a [High-level meeting on Middle-Income Countries](#) was convened by the President of the General Assembly Volkan Bozkir and held in the General Assembly Hall at UN Headquarters in New York. The panels focused on the economic dimension of sustainable development, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the required support to middle-income

countries from the UN Development System, and the global economic ecosystem including international financial institutions and the private sector.

During the opening session, ECOSOC President, Munir Akram, noted that “crippling debt, global economic inequalities, vulnerability to the effects of climate change and natural disasters have eroded prospects for growth in the lower echelon and even the upper echelon of middle-income countries.” Panelists highlighted effective debt relief and other stimulus programs along with social protection as key ways to mitigate the socioeconomic challenges these countries face.

World Environment Day



Convened by UNEP, World Environment Day 2021 was held on June 5 under the theme “*Ecosystem Restoration*.” Hosted by Pakistan, World Environment Day 2021 oversaw the launch of the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration.

ECOSOC President Munir Akram stressed the critical nature of the climate crisis and its relationships to other sustainable development goals, noting: “If current trends of biodiversity loss and degradation continue, it could increase the risk of further zoonotic disease and jeopardize global food security.”

STORIES FROM THE FIELD

The United Nations in Action



Meet women scientists at the forefront of COVID-19 research

Left to right: Tatenda Zinyemba, Racky Balde
Source: Meet women scientists at the forefront of COVID-19 research | United Nations

- Women researchers have been at the forefront of the fight against COVID-19, with female scientists across the globe playing pivotal roles, from advancing knowledge on the virus to developing vaccines. At the United Nations University-MERIT (UNU-MERIT), female researchers play a key role in working on the 2030 Agenda.
- Following the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, UNRIC interviewed Racky Balde and Tatenda Zinyemba, two PhD fellows at UNU-MERIT, who have both been studying the impact of COVID-19 in Africa.
- "Social norms have to be tackled, and it starts at home. Parents should educate both girls and boys to understand that women and men share the same abilities and that no gender is above another. At school, girls should be encouraged to have a career in science. There should be social protections for impoverished parents to prevent them taking girls from schools to make them work or marry them off." - Racky Balde, from Senegal
- "We found that COVID-19 exacerbates gender gaps, because women are the main caregivers within their families. COVID-19 restrictions may therefore affect the sales of women entrepreneurs more than men, as women entrepreneurs will have to look after their children and have other caregiving or family obligations." - Tatenda Zinyemba, from Senegal



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