



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

21 May 2020

Excellency,

I have the pleasure to transmit herewith a memo from my meeting, held on 21 May 2020, with the President of the Economic and Social Council, Her Excellency Ms. Mona Juul, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations in New York, as part of my commitment to strengthen collaboration and coordination between the principal organs of the United Nations.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'T' followed by a flourish.

Tijjani Muhammad-Bande

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York

Meeting between the President of the General Assembly and the President of Economic and Social Council on Thursday 21 May 2020

The President of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly, H.E Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande and the President of the 2020 session of the Economic and Social Council, H.E. Ms. Mona Juul, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations, convened their monthly meeting on Thursday 21 May 2020, as part of their efforts to strengthen relations between the principal organs of the UN and ensure close collaboration and coherence in the work of the General Assembly and the ECOSOC, in the context of the COVID19 outbreak.

The two Presidents exchanged views on recent events and developments as well as upcoming activities, in particular:

Review of ECOSOC and the follow-up and review of the HLPF:

The President of the General Assembly and the President of ECOSOC exchanged views on the ongoing intergovernmental negotiations related to the reviews of the ECOSOC and the HLPF.

The two Presidents highlighted the critical importance to be mindful of the time constraints and the need to stick to the agreed approach, which consists of postponing the substantive discussion to the 75th session, while addressing the most urgent matters, including the theme for HLPF/ECOSOC for 2021. The constructive engagement and flexibility of delegations will be key in delivering an acceptable outcome for this process.

Alignment of the agendas of the GA, the ECOSOC and their subsidiary bodies with the 2030 Agenda

The PGA informed about the intergovernmental process related to the alignment of the work of the GA, the ECOSOC and the main committees to the 2030 Agenda. The co-facilitators invited the Member States to a virtual informal meeting at the expert level, on Thursday, 28 May 2020. The objective of the meeting is to discuss the way forward, based on the submissions made by delegations as well as the concept note of the co-facilitators.

The two Presidents expressed their full support to the approach of the co-facilitators and invited Member States to extend their constructive support in order to realize a meaningful progress in this process, which will be critical for the 2030 Agenda, in particular in the context of the launch of the Decade of Action and Delivery as well as the challenges arising out of COVID-19.

Joint Event on Least Developed Countries LDCS:

Based on the latest discussions among the Group of LDCs and the main partners, on the process related to the Fifth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries in Doha from 21 to 25 March 2021, there seems to build an agreement on the need to postpone the entire process leading to this Conference. The two Presidents agreed to continue providing assistance to the Group of LDCs in the process of formalizing the postponement of the events, including the joint GA-ECOSOC event and the first meeting of the preparatory committee, originally scheduled to be held by the end of this semester and in late July, respectively.

High-level Thematic Debate on Rapid Technological Change:

The President of the General Assembly informed that he will be convening the High-level Thematic Debate on Rapid Technological Change and its impact on the SDG's and targets on the morning of 11 June. The two Presidents highlighted the critical importance of this meeting, as it will allow a fruitful discussion on our new circumstances relating to technology and focusing on the response by the UN system as it relates to the SDG's, particularly in light of the upcoming roadmap by the Secretary General on Digital Cooperation.

HLPF/High-Level Segment of the ECOSOC

The President of the ECOSOC informed about the ongoing preparations for the upcoming sessions of the High-Level Political Forum as well as the High-Level Segment of the ECOSOC and invited the PGA to address the segment on 17 July, who accepted the invitation. The format and programme has been adjusted in light of COVID-19. The latest programme has been shared with Member States and is posted on the HLPF 2020 website.

High Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity FACTI Panel:

The two Presidents exchanged views on the ongoing work of the FACTI Panel and expressed satisfaction on the progress made so far, including through the successive consultations with Member States, Civil Society as well as experts. The Panel Secretariat published a tentative roadmap for the work of the Panel. The interim Report setting out an analysis of the situation will be produced by September, while the final Report of the Panel with a set of recommendations is due in February 2021.

COVID-19 related ECOSOC events

The President of the ECOSOC informed about the ECOSOC briefing on 11 May, “Joining Forces: Effective Policy Solutions for Covid-19 Response”. The ECOSOC will also convene a Financing for Development Forum informal meeting on 2 June on “Financing a sustainable recovery from COVID-19” on concrete financing and policy solutions to respond to the pandemic and enable countries to recover better.

Business continuity

The Presidents appreciated the close cooperation and coordination between their offices on business continuity. The President of ECOSOC informed the PGA of planned meetings and processes related to ECOSOC. The present ECOSOC cycle ends on 23 July 2020 and its business is expected to continue to be conducted mainly virtually.