



THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

12 February 2021

Excellency,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a letter dated 12 February 2021 from H.E. Mr. Alexander Marschik, Permanent Representative of Austria and H.E. Mr. Cheikh Niang, Permanent Representative of Senegal, the co-facilitators for the intergovernmental negotiations for the review process of the Economic and Social Council and the High-level Political Forum as per General Assembly resolution 74/298 of 12 August 2020 entitled “Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/290 on the high-level political forum on sustainable development, resolution 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level and resolution 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council”.

Following the virtual consultation held on 5 February, the co-facilitators have prepared the zero draft of the resolution for the HLPF/ECOSOC Review which is attached. It is the intention of the co-facilitators to convene a virtual consultation on 19 February 2021 at 10 a.m. to discuss the zero draft. Connection details for the meeting will be provided by the Department of General Assembly and Conference Management in a subsequent correspondence.

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

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Volkan BOZKIR', written over a grey rectangular background.

Volkan BOZKIR

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

12 February 2021

Excellency,

We write to you in our capacity as co-facilitators of the intergovernmental negotiations related to General Assembly resolutions 74/298 on the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 67/290 on the high-level political forum on sustainable development, 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level and 72/305 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council.

We wish to thank you for your active engagement and the concrete proposals you shared, elaborating on the contributions you presented in the informal consultation held thus far during the 74<sup>th</sup> and 75<sup>th</sup> sessions of the General Assembly.

As announced during the informal consultations on Friday, 5 February, we have the honour to circulate herewith a zero draft of the resolution we propose for adoption during this General Assembly session. We have listened to your views and reflected them in a way that we believe would facilitate reaching a consensus agreement. We hope that this zero draft could serve as a basis for moving forward.

We also wish to note that, for the format of the zero draft, we have done our best effort to reconcile the two different approaches proposed during the informal consultations. Some delegations proposed two different texts, some proposed a single text. In order to bridge these views, we submit to you, as a possible compromise, one resolution containing two separate annex texts, one on ECOSOC and the other on the HLPF, reflecting that there are two distinct reviews being conducted, while a common chapeau at the beginning highlights the interlinkages between ECOSOC and the HLPF and demonstrates that they are being conducted in conjunction with one another, as mandated by General Assembly resolution 74/298. We wish to request your consideration and flexibility regarding this proposed format.

We will convene the next virtual informal consultations on Friday 19 February, at 10 am. The technical details for the virtual meeting w-3(s)-g12 0 61tcnd t4(1 )-11(Asse)4(mbl)-3(y)] 86.4/F2



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**Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 67/290 on format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* its resolutions 74/298 of 12 August 2020 and 72/305 of 28 July 2018 and all previous related resolutions on strengthening the Economic and Social Council,

*Recalling also* its resolutions 67/290 of 9 July 2013 and 70/299 of 29 July 2016,

*Reaffirming further* its resolution 70/1 of 25 September 2015, entitled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, and reaffirming our unwavering commitment to achieving this Agenda and utilizing it to the full to transform our world for the better by 2030,

*Reaffirming* its resolution 74/4 of 15 October 2019 entitled “Political declaration of the high-level

bodies and platforms of the United Nations system, to implement the measures contained therein in an expeditious manner;

3. *Decides* that the arrangements contained in the present resolution and its annexes shall be reviewed at its seventy-eighth session and that subsequent review cycles shall continue to review the Economic and Social Council in conj2 11.04 Tf1;-102(and )20JETLETLETLo0(eve)-2hETLETLei



4. ECOSOC should provide integrated policy guidance on the follow-up and operationalization of the findings and outcomes of the HLPF, notably its thematic reviews and Voluntary National Reviews, bearing in mind the unique role of ECOSOC as a Charter body entrusted with the

the theme, major issues and future trends addressed during the high-level segment. It will be focused on the exchange of ideas and action-oriented proposals



*[High-level segment]*

14. The ECOSOC High-level Segment should be further reinforced as a preeminent forward-looking, political and agenda-setting platform for Ministers, Heads of international and regional



22. The coordination segment will furthermore provide guidance to the ECOSOC subsidiary bodies and the UN system on the main theme and develop action oriented assessment and recommendations so that those bodies best contribute to the preparations for the thematic review of the HLPF;
23. The Council will hold a discussion on its existing coordination-related agenda items in the new coordination segment. These will include:
  - i. Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system;
  - ii. Implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B, 57/270 B, 60/265, 61/16, 67/290, 68/1 and 72/305 on strengthening ECOSOC;
24. The Council should fully implement its authority to take final decisions on the activities and calendar of its subsidiary bodies and on other matters relating to its system-wide coordination and overall guidance functions in the economic, social and related fields;

*[Segment on operational activities for development]*

25. Through its Operational Activities Segment, ECOSOC serves as a platform to ensure and enhance accountability and oversight for and the acceleration of system-wide performance and results in relation to the 2030 Agenda, as well as to provide guidance and overall coordination of the United Nations development system. *[A/RES/75/233, OP79]* including on the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system;
26. The Council will also consider, at its operational activities segment, (i) the detailed performance report, including on progress made and remaining challenges and obstacles encountered, as well as on the operational, administrative and financial aspects of the activities of the Development Coordination Office; and (ii) the work of regional assets of the United Nations development

system in support of the 2030 Agenda, with a view to enhancing transparency, accountability, efficiency, coordination and results-based management at the regional level;

27. Arrangements should be put in place to strengthen the linkages between the governing bodies of specialized agencies and ECOSOC, including through presentation of the outcomes of ECOSOC to their annual sessions by the respective Executive Head or the President of ECOSOC, to promote a coherent and coordinated approach in supporting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda;
28. The Council, during its operational activities segment, will also promote support required by developing countries to address the challenges identified in the VNRs, in order to mobilize other countries, the United Nations system and other stakeholders;
29. The operational activities segment should be held for three days to enable the Council to review and provide recommendations to the General Assembly on the expanded reporting and reviews mandated under General Assembly resolutions [71/243](#) of 21 December 2016; [72/279](#) of 31 May 2018; and ECOSOC resolutions [2019/15](#) of 17 July 2019 and [2020/23](#) of 22 July 2020;
30. The one day Transition Meeting will be convened back to back with the Operational Activities for Development Segment. The Transition Meeting will be enhanced to better reflect the nature of challenges to humanitarian action and development assistance and to re-emphasize the need for a whole-of-system response, including greater cooperation, coherence, coordination and complementarity among development, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and sustaining peace, to deliver better results on the ground, with a focus on countries in post-conflict situations and countries facing humanitarian emergencies, including complex emergencies. The Council will also consider the report of ECOSOC Ad Hoc Advisory Group on Haiti, support to South Sudan, sustainable development in the Sahel region and African countries emerging from conflict during its Transition Meeting for in-depth discussion to guide coordinated support at country-level;

*[Humanitarian Affairs Segment]*

31. Through the Humanitarian Affairs Segment, the Economic and Social Council should continue to contribute to strengthening the coordination and effectiveness of United Nations humanitarian assistance and support and complement international efforts aimed at addressing humanitarian emergencies, including natural disasters, in order to promote an improved, coordinated response by the United Nations. The Humanitarian Affairs Segment should continue to be held in June and alternate between Geneva and New York;

*[Coordination with the Peacebuilding Commission]*

32. The Economic and Social Council should strengthen its cooperation with the Peacebuilding Commission, in support of promoting coherence and complimentary between the United Nations peace and security efforts and its development, human rights and humanitarian work. *(based on A/RES/70/262)* The ECOSOC President and the Peacebuilding Commission Chair are encouraged to explore ways to improve the annual joint meetings of these two bodies and reinforce their impact on the situation at country level;
33. The Economic and Social Council could furnish information to the Security Council and assist the Security Council upon its request, as envisioned in the Article 65 of the UN Charter. To this end, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council are encouraged to increase their interactions on issues of common interest and on countries and regions on the agenda of both Councils to help promote sustainable development and sustaining peace;

*[Management segment]*

34. The Management Segment will focus on the adoption of procedural decisions, sequential consideration of the recommendations of subsidiary bodies as well as the introduction of reports and consideration of draft proposals submitted unde

36. Dedicated management meetings will continue to be held to conduct elections to fill regular and outstanding vacancies in subsidiary bodies of the ECOSOC and related bodies, normally in the first half and last quarter of the year;

*[Subsidiary bodies]*

37. The Economic and Social Council should continue to improve its outcomes and the outcomes of its subsidiary bodies, making them more relevant, coherent and solution-oriented to address challenges to the implementing the 2030 Agenda and ensuring their follow-up so as to strengthen the impact of the work of the Council;

38.

41. While retaining its intergovernmental nature, the Economic and Social Council shall seek to promote the active participation of non-governmental organizations, local governments, Member of Parliaments, other relevant major groups and stakeholders and international and regional organizations in the activities of the Council and its functional and regional commissions;
  
42. The Economic and Social Council should further promote the integration of youth into its deliberations, building on the past positive experiences of the informal youth forums.

## **ANNEX 2:**

### **Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 67/290 on format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and 70/299 on the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level**

#### *[Introduction]*

1. In accordance with the Political Declaration of the SDG Summit, the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the global level should support the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 sustainable development goals through the Decade of Action and Delivery for sustainable development;

#### ***I The HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC:***

2. We reaffirm the role of the Forum established in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and General Assembly resolutions 67/290 and 70/299 and its central role in overseeing follow-up and review at global level. In preparing the Forum, the President of ECOSOC and the Bureau, Member States and the Secretariat will strengthen the focus of the Forum on peer learning and implementation, by providing sufficient time for exchange of experience and advice, encouraging interaction among countries before, during and after the



issues, and the principle of Leaving No One Behind. It will continue to involve Governments as well as parliamentarians, the United Nations system and other international institutions, local authorities, indigenous peoples, civil society, business and the private sector, the scientific and academic community – and other actors;

5. For the remainder of the current cycle of the high-level political forum, the themes shall be:

a. For 2022: **Recovering better from COVID-19 while keeping SDGs**



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19. Countries having already conducted a VNR are also encouraged to highlight trends, areas of progress, remaining challenges and measures taken since the last VNR, along with, as much as possible, the impact of measures taken;
  
20. The President of ECOSOC and the Bureau are encouraged to make the sessions interactive and conducive to discussions and peer-learning. Based on the VNRs, countries at the HLPF are encouraged to share constructive feedback, proposals and targeted recommendations to accelerate progress, including in written form. Countries conducting VNRs may also decide to provide written answers after

Countries are also encouraged to fully integrate the Goals and targets in their monitoring and reporting systems and sharing of best practices in this regard;

26. Countries are furthermore encouraged to consider the Secretary-General's voluntary common reporting guidelines as a suggested framework in preparations for voluntary national reviews, bearing in mind the voluntary and country-led nature of the VNRs;
27. The Secretary-General is requested to regularly update these guidelines, as appropriate, and taking into account feedback from countries participating in the high-level political forum, with a view to strengthening analysis and evidence-based reporting;
28. Countries are also encouraged to engage in the various preparatory processes for the VNRs organized by the United Nations Secretariat and other partners, as well as to engage in the VNR labs and other side-events during the HLPF so as to continue the interaction on their VNRs or discuss specific themes from the VNRs with other countries;
29. To improve the follow-up to the VNRs, countries and major groups and other stakeholders are invited and encouraged to launch partnerships and provide support, including capacity building, to VNR programme countries at their request in order to help them address the challenges related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Countries could consider continuing to exchange experiences and to support one another after the HLPF through informal voluntary twinning arrangements, notably between countries of the same region. The UN development system is invited to support the follow-up to the VNRs in developing countries, including by focusing on addressing gaps and challenges in implementation identified by the VNRs and by building on their findings in developing and implementing United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Frameworks and Common Country Assessments where possible;
30. Countries are also encouraged to consider using the voluntary national reviews as a rigorous, voluntary, effective, and integrated follow-up and review framework to report to all their citizens on their implementation of the 2030 Agenda, maximize and track their progress and promote fulfilment of their commitments and accountability to their citizens;

*[Regional level follow-up and review]*

31. Countries are encouraged to use the regional forums on sustainable development convened by the regional commissions for discussing new issues and ideas, preparing the thematic reviews of the HLPF and discussing regional challenges and approaches. The forums can also discuss and follow-up on issues arising from the voluntary national reviews, while avoiding overlap with the HLPF;
32. The high-level political forum should continue to strengthen the attention given to the outcomes of the regional forums in its proceedings and declaration, with inputs from the regional commissions and other regional and sub-regional entities as needed, while improving cross-regional dialogue and incorporating regional dimensions in its reviews. The regional forums are encouraged to submit their respective outcomes as early as possible to ensure a timely and full reflection by the high-level political forum;

*[Local level implementation and review]*

33. Countries are also encouraged to use the regional forums to discuss trends and findings from voluntary local reviews, and the high-level political forum should continue to strengthen the attention given to efforts to bolster local action to accelerate SDG implementation and to encourage the use of, and support for, open and inclusive space for review mechanisms at the local level;

*[New issues]*

34. The Forum shall also give greater attention to new and emerging issues that impact the implementation of the SDGs;

*[Reports]*

35. The meetings of the high-level political forum under the auspices of ECOSOC shall continue to be informed by a Secretary-General's annual progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals and all other relevant inputs, with the *Global Sustainable Development Report* presented to the high-level 7(m)-4(ed )-164(b)11(y )-162(a)JTJo.7-4(i)6(t)-4(i)6(es)-3( )-1olev612 792 reW\*n2.ities 7Pgh

