

02 July 2020

Virtual SDG Moment
convened by the UN Secretary-General

High Level Week 2020

Background Note

Background

General Assembly resolution 74/4 calls on the Secretary-General ‘to organize an annual moment in the context of the General Debate of the General Assembly to highlight inspiring SDG Action’.¹

The resolution also calls on the Secretary-General ‘in the lead-up to the summit to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, to engage Governments, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders in generating solutions and accelerating action to address systemic gaps in implementation, as we embark on a decisive decade for the 2030 Agenda.’²

Scope

The 2020 SDG Moment will be organized to respond directly to these mandates and to the overall context set out in resolution 74/4, including recognition that progress on some of the Goals has been slow and that there is an urgent need to accelerate action on all levels and by all stakeholders. It will also consider the challenges facing Member States as they respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and pursue a recovery that is aligned with the SDGs.

A particular emphasis will be placed on poverty and inequality; on climate change and a healthy planet; and gender equality while cross-cutting issues such as finance, governance and technology will be discussed throughout.

Format

The 2020 SDG Moment will consist of a virtual meeting of three hours duration. The specific time and date will be determined in line with the decisions of the General Assembly on arrangements for high level week.

The virtual SDG Moment will be complemented by a major media event, a virtual SDG Action Zone and mobilization efforts at the regional and national levels.

Focus

The virtual SDG Moment meeting will seek to:

- Set-out a vision for recovering better and delivering the SDGs over the course of the Decade of Action.
- Provide an update on the trajectory of SDG progress both globally and on a region by region basis.

¹ Resolution 74/4, para

² Ibid

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- Analyze the implications of pursuing the current development trajectory and identify critical interventions to accelerate implementation at scale.
- Highlight inspiring examples of actions being taken by Member States to respond to gaps and accelerate implementation.
- Demonstrate the power and impact of action and innovation by SDG stakeholders.

Given its focus and duration, the SDG Moment will serve as a strong complement to the HLPF, the FFD Forum, the regional sustainable development forums and other important intergovernmental meetings. The SDG Moment will draw, in particular, on the annual findings of the HLPF, the voluntary national reviews, the formal statistical update on progress and the thematic reviews.

Steps will be taken to ensure coherence with the other high-level meetings scheduled to take place during high level week, including those addressing the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, the Beijing Platform for Action and Biodiversity.

Member State participation

All member states will be invited to participate in the virtual SDG Moment meeting at the level of Head of State and Government.

Given time constraints, only a small number of Member States will be invited to make a direct contribution. Recognizing the important roles of the Voluntary National Reviews and the ECOSOC HLPF, Member State participants will be selected from those countries that are presenting VNRs at the 2020 HLPF.

Selection will be made based on a stated commitment to take specific measures to accelerate SDG implementation in the coming years. Due consideration will be given to regional balance, to the diverse circumstances facing member states, to the level of participation, and to gender balance.

Stakeholder engagement

The virtual SDG Moment will be broadcast live on UN-WEBCAST and dedicated arrangements will be put in place to ensure stakeholder participation including from civil society, the private sector, local and regional authorities and academia.