

**Closing Remarks by H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva,
President of the Economic and Social Council,
2023 Development Cooperation Forum
New York, 15 March 2023
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Excellencies,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

We are now concluding an inspiring, action-oriented 2023 Development Cooperation Forum.

Let me express my sincere appreciation to all of you for making these two days successful, and for underlining your continued strong commitments to adapting development cooperation for evolving needs and capacities.

I would like to thank all the panellists, moderators and lead discussants for their vital contributions. My sincere gratitude goes to the representatives of Member States, stakeholder groups and all participants for their active engagement and productive dialogue.

We have heard great concerns about the current crises and emerging realities faced by the most vulnerable worldwide. Yet, you have also shared many messages of hope, examples of innovation and proposals for change.

There was a resounding call for stronger global solidarity in support of inclusive prosperity and peace. I would like to share several compelling messages from the past two days that have stuck with me.

First, development cooperation must evolve rapidly to tackle current global crises and put a laser focus on challenges of the most vulnerable countries and people. Member States called for going beyond GDP and including more holistic criteria in assessing the needs for development cooperation in all its forms, including concessional finance. A new concept of “circular development cooperation” was also proposed by some – it would recognize the circular flow of expertise and assistance between developing and developed countries, in addition to traditional forms of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation.

Second, we heard that climate adaptation must be more effectively embedded into development cooperation. New financing commitments such as those related to loss and damage, must be operationalized quickly and be directed swiftly where they are needed most. Countries’ ownership

and leadership of their development and climate trajectory should guide and align international support efforts. Local communities on the frontline of climate change should be listened to; actively engaged; and partnered with.

Third, with over 4 billion people living without a social safety net, strong social protection systems must become a global priority of development cooperation. We have a duty to protect the most vulnerable if we want to achieve sustainable development. Multilateral fora and development cooperation can play an important role in facilitating the allocation of financial resources, supporting technical assistance and capacity building, exchanging knowledge and best practices, and setting up data and information collection systems.

Fourth, we need development cooperation actors to step up efforts to expand meaningful digital connectivity. The digital economy now accounts for over 15% of global GDP, yet the lack of Internet access persists for nearly 3 billion people from mostly developing countries – effectively shutting them out of development opportunities. The Forum emphasized the need to scale up technology transfer, financing and capacity building to support inclusive livelihoods in developing countries through opportunities facilitated by the digital economy and e-commerce.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It will be my honour to reflect your messages and recommendations in my official summary of the 2023 DCF, which will feed into the Financing for Development Forum next month and the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development in July.

With your contributions, we have begun charting the course for this important midpoint for the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, culminating in a breakthrough moment at the SDG Summit and High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development in September.

I thank you for this and urge you to sustain your active engagement in the follow-up to this DCF, which I am confident will continue to serve its important function in the global architecture to promote development cooperation that is sufficiently robust, effective, coordinated and risk-informed for our current times and beyond.

I wish you all the best in our shared efforts and a safe trip home.
