



**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**

3 April 2023

Excellencies,

At the mid-way point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is time to face the facts. Without a surge in commitment, solidarity, and transformative action, we will miss the headline targets of the 2030 Agenda to end poverty, reduce inequality and protect the environment. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Summit to be held in September 2023 provides a unique opportunity to fundamentally change course. I count on your support to ensure it delivers the breakthroughs our world desperately needs.

The multiple crises of the last three years have dealt a major blow to SDGs implementation efforts. Millions have been pushed into poverty. Inequalities have risen considerably. The rights of women and girls have been under siege. And the urgent and existential business of averting climate catastrophe has been undermined. Even before these crises hit, we were not on track to meet the goals by 2030. Many critical policy changes, innovations, transitions and investments have not advanced at the speed or scale required. And on every front – COVID-19, Climate Action, SDG financing – the international community has not done enough to give the most vulnerable countries a fair chance.

Yet, the transformation envisioned by the 2030 Agenda remains both possible and essential. Throughout history, humanity has demonstrated its capacity to overcome the most severe challenges. We can also draw confidence from the fact that we have never had access to so much knowledge, technologies and resources.

What is needed now is a surge in commitment from governments and stakeholders to take implementation to the next level. Under the leadership of the President of the General Assembly, the SDG Summit provides the platform we need to secure this commitment. I therefore urge all countries to come together around a Rescue Plan for People and Planet, based on deliverables by September on three key fronts.

To All Heads of State and Government  
of Member States and Permanent  
Observers of non-Member States  
to the United Nations

First, decisive action must be taken to better support developing countries. Last October, I called on the Group of Twenty (G20) to deliver an SDG Stimulus by massively scaling up financing to at least \$500 billion per year, through long-term lending at lower interest rates, debt relief and the creation of a robust and effective sovereign debt resolution mechanism; expanding contingency financing to countries in need and driving both public and private investment towards the SDGs. Delivering on the SDG Stimulus by September is sine qua non to a successful Summit. In addition, it is essential that the Political Declaration of the Summit signal an unambiguous commitment from the international community to reform the international financial architecture and ensure an enabling environment for developing countries to actively participate in and benefit from the global economy and harness the full potential of green and digital technologies.

Second, at the Summit, I urge world leaders to convey a National Commitment to SDG Transformation. This could include clear benchmarks to reduce domestic poverty and inequality levels by 2027 and 2030, in tandem with nationally determined climate contributions. Policy commitments to drive the energy, food, digital and social transitions that will make those benchmarks possible could also be outlined. Foundational actions to align national budgets with the SDGs, mainstream gender equality and empowerment of women and girls into national development planning processes, rejuvenate public sector capacities and institutions, and strengthen national data and monitoring systems could also be addressed.

Third, delivery of the 2030 Agenda requires the strengthening of public trust and the full participation of a wide range of stakeholders. I urge all countries to fully engage their domestic constituencies, particularly civil society and the private sector, in their Summit preparations. The United Nations system will complement national efforts by mobilizing support from all partners around select high-impact initiatives and advancing a more robust embrace of the Goals by businesses, local authorities and other actors.

The SDG Summit will be the centrepiece of a suite of events that include a Climate Ambition Summit, a Financing for Development High-level Dialogue, a series of health-related meetings and a Ministerial level meeting in preparation for the 2024 Summit of the Future. The SDG Summit can become a moment for our world to pivot from fear to hope and from deepening pessimism to accelerated action. I look forward to your personal participation in the Summit and your contribution to making it a turning point for the SDGs.

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

António Guterres (signed)