

31 August 2020

SDG Moment
convened by the United Nations Secretary-General
Friday, 18 September 2020

Background Note

Context

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

The 2020 SDG Moment will 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 on achieving gender equality, while cross-cutting issues such as finance, partnership, governance, and technology will be integrated throughout.

Objectives

The SDG Moment meeting will seek to:

- Set-out a vision for delivering the SDGs over the course of the Decade of Action and recovering better from COVID-19;
- Provide a snapshot of SDG progress globally and on a region by region basis;
- Analyze the implications of pursuing the current development trajectory and identify critical interventions to accelerate implementation at scale;
- Highlight major gaps in implementation as well as plans, undertakings, and actions to address those gaps;
- Demonstrate the power and impact of action and innovation by SDG stakeholders.

A meeting programme outline is included in Annex 1.

Format, time and date

The meeting will be held virtually and will take place on Friday, 18 September 2020 from 8 to 11 a.m. (EST).

¹ Resolution 74/4

² *Ibid*

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The SDG Moment will be complemented by a major media broadcast on the SDGs, a virtual interactive SDG Action Zone, and dialogues at regional and national levels, supported by the United Nations system.

Member States participation

All Member States and Observers are invited to participate in the SDG Moment at the level of Head of State and Government.

In addition, approximately 20 states will make a direct contribution to the meeting for a maximum of three minutes each, either through a pre-recorded message or live video message. These countries have been identified following a nomination process led by the five regional groups. Interventions will focus on both identifying implementation gaps and plans and actions that will serve to address those gaps over the course of the Decade of Action.

Steps will be taken to ensure ongoing engagement of states that present each year, through connections with future Voluntary National Reviews and the annual SDG Moment reality check.

Stakeholder engagement

Dedicated arrangements are being put in place to ensure stakeholder participation including from civil society, the private sector, local and regional authorities, and academia.

Stakeholders will be requested to highlight the measures they are taking to support states to address implementation gaps and accelerate action.

Synergies with other meetings

Given its focus and duration, the SDG Moment will serve as a strong complement to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF), the Financing for Development Forum, the regional sustainable development forums, and other important intergovernmental meetings.

Steps will be taken to ensure coherence with the other high-level meetings taking place during the high-level week, including those addressing the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the Beijing Platform for Action, the United Nations Summit on Biodiversity, and Financing for Development.