



**Executive Training for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development  
22-26 March 2021**

**Opening Remarks  
Mr. PARK Chun Kyoo, Head of Office,  
United Nations Office for Sustainable Development**

Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished speakers and colleagues,

Welcome and thank you all for joining Executive Training for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development organized by the United Nations Office for Sustainable Development.

I would like to welcome especially our **distinguished speakers**:

- Mr. Amson Sibanda, Chief, National Strategies and Capacity Building Branch, Division for Sustainable Development Goals, UN DESA, who has delivered the Opening Remarks on behalf of Mr. Alexander Trepelkov, Officer-in-Charge, Division of Sustainable Development Goals (DSDG), UN DESA;
- Ms. Irena Zubcevic, Chief, Intergovernmental Policy and Review Branch, Office of Intergovernmental Support and Coordination for Sustainable Development, UN DESA; and
- Ms. Eun Mee Kim, President, Ewha Womans University, in the Republic of Korea; Member of the Independent Group of Scientists for Global Sustainable Development Report, 2019.

This is the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of the Executive Training for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which we have been holding every year since 2014. Unfortunately, we were not been able to hold the annual Executive Training Course for Policymakers in person in Incheon City, last May, as we normally do, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

This pandemic has struck us at a time when the peoples of the world were already faced with other major challenges, for instance, enduring

poverty and hunger in many countries, worsening effects of climate change, and stark and often widening inequalities.

In 2015, world leaders came together at the United Nations in New York to ratify and adopt the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as our agenda for addressing these and other challenges in the coming years.

Four years later, the SDG Summit held in September 2019 marked the first four-year review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. During the meeting convened by the General Assembly, Heads of State and Government adopted a political declaration to accelerate delivery of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs in the remaining decade.

The political declaration for a Decade of Action reaffirmed the commitment to leave no one behind that is at the core of the 2030 Agenda.

It also recognized that a systemic and holistic approach taking into account the interlinkages between Goals and targets —as promoted by the Global Sustainable Development Report (GSDR) — offers a realistic solution to accelerate fundamental transformation towards sustainable development.

As we were just entering the Decade of Action, however, the novel coronavirus began to emerge and develop into a global pandemic, going far beyond a health crisis as it upended all aspects of our lives and societies.

The COVID-19 pandemic has suddenly confronted the world with unprecedented challenges, exposing and exacerbating weaknesses of health systems, governance challenges, lack of policy coherence and coordination between national and subnational governments, to name a few.

The pandemic has also disrupted the focus from the SDGs and even reversed some of the sustainable development gains we had achieved since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Yet, the Agenda remains the best approach we can take and our roadmap to overcome this crisis,

recover better, and build resilience of our societies to prepare, respond and recover from similar crises in the future.

We now have only a decade to achieve our goals, and we know that this same decade is absolutely critical for bold action if we are to avert the worst effects of global temperature rise on our livelihoods, our health and our well-being.

We are now in the Decade of Action and Delivery for the SDGs, and we must plot a course of action to tackle the most pressing problems we face. In the poorest countries, ending extreme poverty and sustaining inclusive economic development are surely the most pressing challenges.

This Executive Training Course for Policymakers is, once again this year, aligned with both the overarching theme and the SDGs that will go under in-depth review during the forthcoming High-level Political Forum (HLPF) in July 2021.

It is meant to help you, the policy makers and shapers, to prepare for and better contribute to the reviews of progress on SDGs that are regularly taking place in your respective countries at the national and sub-national levels.

It is, of course, also strongly anchored in the reality of the COVID-19 pandemic and other ongoing challenges such as the global economic recession and climate change, from which it aims to support sustainable and resilient recovery efforts while, at the same time, aiming at advancing the Decade of Action and delivery for sustainable development.

As you have seen in the programme, and as mentioned in Mr. Trepelkov's Opening Remarks, this edition of the Executive Training for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development is focusing on 5 of the SDGs that will go under in-depth reviews during the forthcoming HLPF.

I am very impressed by the list of scholars, professionals and practitioners who are part of the presenters and speakers throughout the week.

I would like to thank them for generously sharing their knowledge, expertise, and experience with us.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Ms. Lichia Yiu, who has

been involved in the preparation, and who is our guide for this very important Training Course during this whole week.

I hope that the presentations and discussions during the week will help you support the SDG implementation and reporting process in your countries and beyond.

I wish you a successful Course and I look forward to follow the presentations and discussions during the week, hoping we can soon gather together again in Incheon for the next Executive Training Course for Policymakers on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development or other related activities.

Thank you.