



Forum of the Countries
of Latin America and
the Caribbean on
**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**
Santiago
25–28 April **2023**

Distr.
LIMITED
LC/FDS.6/6
5 May 2023
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH
23-00402

Sixth meeting of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America
and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development

Santiago, 25–28 April 2023

SUMMARY OF THE CHAIR



UNITED NATIONS



INTRODUCTION

At the thirty-sixth session of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), held in Mexico City from 23 to 27 May 2016, the member States adopted resolution 700(XXXVI), sponsored by Mexico, establishing the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development as a regional mechanism to follow up and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), its targets and means of implementation, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development.

The first meeting of the Forum was held in Mexico City, from 26 to 28 April 2017. The meeting was chaired by Mexico, in its capacity as Chair of the Committee of the Whole of ECLAC, and convened under the auspices of the Commission.

The second meeting of the Forum was held in Santiago, from 18 to 20 April 2018, chaired by Mexico, and convened under the auspices of the Commission.

The third meeting of the Forum was held in Santiago, from 24 to 26 April 2019, chaired by Cuba, and convened under the auspices of the Commission.

The fourth meeting of the Forum was held from 15 to 18 March 2021, in virtual format owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and was chaired by Costa Rica and convened under the auspices of the Commission.

The fifth meeting of the Forum was held in San José, from 7 to 9 March 2022, chaired by Costa Rica, and convened under the auspices of the Commission.

The sixth meeting of the Forum was held in Santiago, from 25 to 28 April 2023, under the theme “Accelerating the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels”. It was chaired by Argentina and open to member States of the Forum and observers, the agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, regional and subregional bodies, international financial institutions, the private sector and civil society.

The purpose of the meetings of the Forum is to share experiences and best practices among the Latin American and Caribbean countries regarding actions taken to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the region.

Opening session

At the opening session, statements were made by José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC); Paula Narváez, Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations; Amina Mohammed, Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; and Santiago Cafiero, Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina, the country serving as Chair of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development.

The Executive Secretary said that the Forum was a space for sharing experiences on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and, as part of the regional contribution to the global review process, for providing clear indications of the adjustments needed to achieve the defined thresholds. Past the midpoint towards 2030, a series of crises was hampering the achievement of the SDGs and exposing the region to the risk of a new “lost decade”. Against that backdrop, ECLAC would present a document with three main conclusions. First, in the face of the considerable lag regarding most targets, transformative action was needed to achieve the SDGs. Second, the institutions built, capacities strengthened, and mechanisms for the participation of civil society created were just some of the lasting successes of the process. Third, to pick up the pace, ECLAC was proposing a set of high-impact and transformative initiatives, in which governance played an essential role. Lastly, he said that foresight and the ability to adopt a forward-looking approach were increasingly relevant for the achievement of the SDGs and that the crisis was proof of the need to focus on the long term.

The Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council and Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations said that the commitment expressed in the 2030 Agenda represented an opportunity to transform societies. The daunting post-pandemic scenario challenged States, civil society and the international community to promote measures to bridge the gaps that had widened. The international community should identify worsening areas and redouble collaboration and resource mobilization to reverse such trends. The Secretary-General was leading an international agenda to accelerate implementation of the SDGs. The region could not remain on the sidelines of that global challenge, and instead should set priorities and establish commitments to work together to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. A culture of peace, tolerance and respect should continue to be fostered, with work on the recognition of rights and a cross-cutting and inclusive environmental agenda. Seven years from 2030, the path ahead was as important as the outcome, as it would lay the foundations for the paradigm shift needed to build the future that generations to come would inherit.

The Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations said that the document *Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration*,¹ the sixth report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean prepared by ECLAC, showed that progress towards the achievement of the SDGs had faltered and even backtracked. The cost-of-living crisis, fiscal stress and the debt burden were unsustainable, and climate-related catastrophes and biodiversity loss were aggravating the region’s social challenges. Migrants, in particular women, children and young people, were the hardest hit. Swift action was needed to get back on track. The region was at the forefront of the care systems dialogue, prioritizing gender equality, a cross-cutting issue for sustainable development. However, income inequality and the rural-urban divide persisted. Productive transformation, boosting renewable energy, bridging the digital divide, renewing cooperation models and bolstering concessional financing could help, and regional cooperation was vital. She called on all to rise to the challenge and act for a sustainable future, leaving no one behind.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship of Argentina said that it seemed that, in a context of overlapping crises, development appeared to be increasingly relegated to the back burner. The position of developing countries and resource mobilization to finance international cooperation were being weakened, leading to deeper divides between countries in the North and the South. Added to that was the weakening of peacekeeping and pro-development mechanisms. The region had borne the worst consequences of the pandemic and a transformative recovery could only be achieved through dialogue and

¹ See [online] <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2023/en/documents/halfway-2030-latin-america-and-caribbean-progress-and-recommendations-acceleration>.

cooperation that included every country. Development with social justice was needed, as were policies in the areas of agriculture, industry, science and technology that could boost agricultural output, energy supply and the diversification of productive structures to secure jobs and access to strategic goods and services. He also underscored the importance of recognizing domestic and care work and of mainstreaming the gender agenda. Human rights must be accorded central priority in all sectors and dimensions of sustainable development.

Message from Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (video message)

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights said that, 75 years before, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights had set a guiding vision in the aftermath of two world wars. Latin America and the Caribbean had long been a champion of human rights, the cornerstone of sustainable development. In a context of global crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic, the world had passed the half-way mark towards 2030. The pandemic had disproportionately affected women, Indigenous and Afrodescendent populations, older and LGBTI+ persons and refugees and migrants, pushing millions into extreme poverty in a context of fragile social security. The full realization of economic, social and cultural rights was crucial for recovery and disaggregated data was vital for designing policies that included marginalized populations. While fiscal space must be expanded, national efforts must be paired with international solidarity. His office would continue to support human rights in the region, the most powerful tool for emerging from the crisis and forging a new beginning.

Presentation of the document *Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration*, sixth report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean²

Presenting the document *Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration*, sixth report on regional progress and challenges in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Executive Secretary of ECLAC provided an overview of the sections on the cascading global shocks and the development crises facing Latin America and the Caribbean, institutional progress in the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, assessing advances towards the targets of the SDGs and proposals for acceleration, as well as final reflections. He said that, over the period 2014–2023, growth in the region had been slower than during the lost decade of the debt crisis and that the investment trend was a structural problem. The region was lagging and productivity gaps had widened. Between 2011 and 2019, job creation had reached record lows, and while poverty and inequality had lessened, they remained high. Meanwhile, the inflationary shock of 2021 and 2022 had been met by raising interest rates. Fiscal deficits were approaching pre-pandemic levels, but public debt remained high despite having fallen in 2022. In the Caribbean, lower fiscal deficits and high levels of public debt had also been recorded. With regard to institutional progress on the means of implementation for the 2030 Agenda, significant institutional capacity had been created for its implementation and follow-up (coordination mechanisms, voluntary national reviews, the Community of Practice on voluntary national reviews and the alignment of national development plans and strategies with the 2030 Agenda). There were various institutional arrangements for the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda in the region. In addition, advances continued in the territorialization of the 2030 Agenda. He highlighted the work of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) and the increasing participation of civil society in processes related to the 2030 Agenda.

² LC/FDS.6/3.

Regarding assessment of progress towards the achievement of the SDGs, he said that countries and the United Nations had strived to improve the availability of data for monitoring. He mentioned the progress made towards the achievement of Goals 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17, which was described in detail in the document presented. Looking towards the future, it was clear that the sequelae of both the pandemic and cascading crises were serving to motivate the redoubling of efforts to achieve the SDGs. Despite the setbacks, countries' efforts had left their mark on public, private and civil society institutions, a very positive outcome. One of the report's findings was that halfway to the deadline set for the 2030 Agenda, the goals were not halfway to being met: data showed that only a quarter of the targets had been or were expected to be met by 2030. Progress towards 48% of the targets was in the right direction but too slow, and for 27%, the trend was backwards. Thus, 75% of the targets were at risk of not being met unless decisive action was taken to get back on track. In order to advance, transformative initiatives were needed. ECLAC had identified such initiatives in seven areas: the bioeconomy, sustainable tourism, the digital transformation, regional economic integration, the care society and gender equality, the energy transition and related industries, and the export of modern, Internet-enabled services. A forward-thinking approach was needed, with a focus on the long term. The region suffered from a lack of institutional continuity in foresight exercises, which were disconnected from public policy decision-making processes. Prospective planning was relevant in the context of polarization, gaps in strategic decision-making and coordination through time. Lastly, he noted that the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, to be held in September 2023, and the Summit of the Future, to be held in 2024, presented new opportunities for the region to take and share effective decisions to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

Statements by delegations of Latin America and the Caribbean: “Accelerating the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels.”

The statements were moderated by Argentina, in its capacity as Chair of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development.

The representative of Chile said that recovery needed to be sustainable, inclusive and resilient, which called for the strengthening of multilateral agencies and international cooperation. A national strategy had been developed in Chile for implementation of the 2030 Agenda, doing so through a broad participatory process, as civil society should be a key part of the process. The representative of Argentina reaffirmed that last idea and insisted on the need to convey, at international forums, a joint regional vision of how to accelerate implementation of the SDGs, forged through cooperation and solidarity among the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean. The representative of Brazil mentioned the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation as an example of an institution that fostered innovation and development of knowledge and technologies and put them at the disposal of the region, because science was a vital public policy tool for realizing sustainable development. In that regard, the representative of Ecuador presented a report on the results of the country's national vaccination plan against COVID-19 (Plan 9/100), which had been a success, since it had been implemented in the first 100 days of the new government, as planned, and had enabled the country to curb infections, save lives and reinvigorate the economy.

The representative of Colombia said that the world was close to reaching a point of no return and that, in order to avoid that terrible scenario, it was imperative to achieve the social transformations that the region needed, abandoning extractivism, promoting renewable energies, ending poverty and inequality and establishing a new social compact. The representative of Costa Rica mentioned the importance of viewing development as a multidimensional process. Her country's goal was to develop a decentralized, digitalized and decarbonized economy, and to focus on regenerative agriculture, innovation and blue economy activities. The representative of Panama referred to Plan Colmena, the country's national sustainable development

strategy, which aimed to territorialize implementation of the SDGs, strengthening local governments, encouraging citizen participation, promoting joint and coordinated work by all institutions and sectors, and prioritizing the poorest and most vulnerable areas of the country, in order to lay solid foundations for accelerating progress towards the 2030 Agenda. The representative of Mexico also referred to territorialization of the SDGs, which was the only effective way to implement the 2030 Agenda. In her country, a National Council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had been established, as well as various mechanisms to align government-driven development plans and programmes with the Agenda.

The representative of Uruguay recalled that his country had always been part of the global sustainable development process. He stressed the importance of addressing the severe productivity problems in the region, which prevented growth, and the need for each country to produce its own resources, without expecting everything to come from outside. The representative of Cuba urged ECLAC to maintain its decisive role as a proactive interlocutor and advocate of the region's development priorities. She said that although progress had been made in areas such as access to water and sanitation, generation of energy from renewable sources and scientific-technical innovation projects, efforts aimed at recovery were hampered by the unilateral blockade imposed by the United States, which affected all areas of the country's socioeconomic life. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stated that his country reaffirmed its commitment at the multilateral, regional and national levels to policies for implementation and monitoring of the SDGs, and mentioned the care and protection policies implemented by his Government before, during and after the pandemic. Regarding the economic, trade and financial blockade, energy was a key pillar for development and it was impossible to overlook the importance of the loss of oil revenues as a result of the sanctions imposed on the country.

The representative of Paraguay said that her country aspired to move forward with the sustainable development agenda and faced a number of challenges in terms of legal security and social policies. The Paraguay 2030 National Development Plan was aligned with the SDGs, achievement of which was vital to meeting national development goals. It was important to work with the countries of the region and pursue joint initiatives to address the different dimensions of sustainable development. The representative of Guatemala shared his country's experience in three main areas: governance and institutions, digital transformation and modernization, multi-stakeholder dialogues and strategic partnerships for development. He also stressed the importance of the "K'atun: Our Guatemala 2032" National Development Plan and the National System of Development Councils, which helped reduce territorial asymmetries. The representative of the Bahamas said that international cooperation should be tailored to country-specific issues, as it was not sustainable to adopt a one-size-fits-all approach. In her country, the pandemic had come on the heels of the devastation caused by Hurricane Dorian. In the area of climate change, significant changes needed to be made so that the region would not be left behind.

The representative of Dominica stated that his country was on track to meet many of the SDG targets. However, climate change and a lack of a data management architecture to monitor some of the targets were obstacles to such progress; recovery from extreme weather events and the fight against non-communicable diseases were priorities for his country. The representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis reported that her country was making progress towards the SDGs, but challenges remained that could only be overcome by establishing strategic partnerships, creating innovative financing mechanisms and improving data collection and management systems. Her country was preparing its first voluntary national review, as well as a new national development plan. Lastly, the representative of the United States said that the regional forums and the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals Summit were opportunities to pivot the way SDG work was conducted; various agencies from her country had continued to partner with the region throughout the year, and decisive action had been taken in relation to Goals 6, 7, 9 and 11, which were being discussed at the Forum.

Strategies to advance implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Caribbean

The session was moderated by Diane Quarless, Chief of the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, and the panellists were Ashni K. Singh, Minister of Finance of Guyana; Shantal Munro-Knight, Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of Barbados; and Winston Dookeran, Secretary-General of Euclid University.

The moderator said that the COVID-19 pandemic had widened fissures of inequality and compounded well known pre-existing issues that undermined development, creating a perfect storm. Creative economic, productive, social and investment policies would be required to sustain the incipient post-pandemic recovery and reduce the implementation deficit. Addressing development challenges had increased debt in a subregion with high debt-to-GDP ratios. The subregion faced a steep climb to 2030 without access to long-term low cost financing to implement sustainable development and without the concerted support of the international community. ECLAC and the United Nations system could provide guidance in design and implementation of strategies and policy interventions.

The Minister of Finance of Guyana said that recent economic developments had placed his country in a position to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In the previous three years, public investment had increased fivefold and focused on transportation and energy infrastructure and social services. Two strategies had been developed to advance the national and subregional agenda in line with the 2030 Agenda: the “25 by 2025” agenda to reduce the food import bill of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) by 25% by 2025, and a second-generation low-carbon development strategy to generate revenues through the mobilization of standing forests. However, the level of investment needed to successfully implement the 2030 Agenda exceeded the fiscal resources available, and the international community needed to recommit itself to undertakings agreed with respect to mobilizing and delivering financing for the most vulnerable countries.

The Minister in the Office of the Prime Minister of Barbados said that her government focused strategies for achieving SDGs on national implementation that highlighted activities to ensure delivery at scale and at impact, and on strategic leadership at the global level, for example through leveraging of platforms to call attention to structural and systemic changes needed in the global financial architecture. Her government’s Bridgetown Initiative was built on five proposals: drawing in US\$ 5 trillion of private savings for climate mitigation, widening access to concessional finance for the climate vulnerable, expanding multilateral development bank lending for climate and SDGs by US\$ 1 trillion, funding loss and damage, and making the financial system more shock-absorbent. Other critical factors included the promotion of greater inclusivity and participation by all partners and stakeholders, and the lack of data and of access to reliable data, which stymied measurement, monitoring and evaluation.

The Secretary-General of Euclid University, underscoring the points raised by panellists and the importance of the ECLAC report for the design of future policy perspectives, said that Caribbean resilience had been tested by global crises and in light of the imperative paradigm shift, a rethink of macroeconomics for the region was required. In that regard, environmental diplomacy, financial resilience and a new convergence framework were three key areas, the mechanics of which would enhance SDG implementation. He highlighted the need for initiatives to provide sustainable financial buffers, transform social security systems and expand the region’s economic space through regional integration. The institutional footprint was key to defining forward-looking action. The Caribbean was on the edge of a major policy reset: more than a shift in public policymaking, what was needed was a redesign of the architectural drawings of public policy to achieve targets in the long term.

In the comments that followed, the representative of Costa Rica recalled that his country shared the challenges and vulnerabilities of the Caribbean, which was why it had supported the “Caribbean first” initiative, proposals for the implementation of the Caribbean Resilience Fund, the inclusion of hurricane clauses in financing documents and efforts related to access to financing. The representative of Jamaica said that the integration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development had augmented the approach to development through an enhanced framework for monitoring, follow-up mechanisms and improved means of implementation supported by international cooperation. The challenges faced were not constraints to partnership and countries could leverage their experience in responding to crises, long-term development planning and ongoing fiscal reforms to advocate for improved access to financing for small island developing States and middle-income countries, for technological transfer and for improving the terms of trade. The representative of Trinidad and Tobago said that the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic had hampered momentum in implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Robust monitoring, reporting and evaluation systems were critical to track and assess institutional progress towards SDG and 2030 Agenda implementation and strong institutional mechanisms were key. Accurate, relevant, timely, disaggregated, accessible and easy-to-use data and statistics were needed to inform and improve decision-making and the country was working with the United Nations country team to modernize the statistics ecosystem. The representative of Cuba called on the international, regional and subnational communities and the various sectors present to strengthen their partnerships with the Caribbean—a region whose challenges, in particular economic and climate-related ones, his country shared—and to build on the links established with United Nations entities, such as the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee.

Contribution of the United Nations sustainable development system in Latin America and the Caribbean - Presentation of the 2022 system-wide results report of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean

The report was presented by José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, and Michelle Muschett, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), in their capacity as Vice-Chairs of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean.

The Executive Secretary of ECLAC spoke of the policy framework governing the creation of regional collaborative platforms, as part of the reform of the United Nations development system, and referred to the five recommendations of the Secretary-General in that regard. He listed the key functions of those platforms, as established in the management and accountability framework of the United Nations development system. He also referred to the implementation of that reform in Latin America and the Caribbean in relation to the various recommendations. He outlined the main development challenges for the region in 2023, in the context of slowing economic growth in most countries. He explained that the Regional Collaboration Platform was organized into issue-based coalitions and thematic working groups on cross-cutting issues, and that the system-wide results report of the Regional Collaborative Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean 2022 was structured in the same way. He then presented the system-wide results for each of the issue-based coalitions.

The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UNDP concluded by presenting the outcomes of the different issue-based coalitions. She also outlined initiatives implemented on cross-cutting themes and additional priority areas, outcomes achieved in response to requests from resident coordinators and United Nations country teams, and engagements with various stakeholders to better support countries in implementation of the 2030 Agenda. She described the priorities of the Regional Collaboration Platform for Latin America and the Caribbean in 2023, halfway to the deadline for the 2030 Agenda. Lastly, with regard to working mechanisms, she said two new issue-based coalitions had been created and a thematic working group for populations that had been left behind, including Indigenous Populations and people with disabilities, as well as a working group focused on evaluation.

Panel 1: Clean water and sanitation

The panel was moderated by Carolina González, Undersecretary of International Affairs and Federal Cooperation in the Ministry of Social Development of Argentina, and the panellists were Pável Isa Contreras, Minister of Economic Affairs, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic; Mario Lubetkin, Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO); Daniel Tugues, Deputy General Manager of Aguas Andinas; Ruth Spencer, Yale International Alliance, Antigua and Barbuda; and Freddy Mamani, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

The moderator opened the panel discussion, noting that in Latin America and the Caribbean, there were important shortfalls in terms of water and sanitation and that significant differences remained across the various regions and between urban and rural areas. The challenge was to achieve a sustainable and inclusive water transition, in which all sectors cooperated in taking effective action.

The Minister of Economic Affairs, Planning and Development of the Dominican Republic explained that water stress was on the rise in his country and that there was a great deal of waste and inefficiency in water resource management. The relevant regulatory and institutional frameworks were weak. The goal was to establish an agreement that recognized the tripartite nature of water (as a human right and a natural and economic resource), to draft a general water act and to create regulations for drinking water and sanitation services and for managing irrigation.

The Regional Representative for Latin America and the Caribbean of FAO emphasized that water was essential for food production and that without water security, there could be no food security. In a context of widespread global water stress, one FAO priority was to improve member States' water resource management capacities. To that end, it offered technical assistance for the adoption of inclusive water governance, the promotion of agriculture that was sustainable and climate change-resilient, and the improvement of management, data and analysis capacities, as data were key for enabling appropriate policies to be set.

The Deputy General Manager of Aguas Andinas provided an overview of the management model of the company, which had been providing water to most of the Santiago Metropolitan Region in Chile for nearly two and a half decades. In 12 years, the company had managed to increase the percentage of wastewater treatment from 3% to 100%, had transformed treatment plants into biofactories, focused on resource efficiency (clean water, organic fertilizer and energy) and had invested heavily in improving the system's resilience to extreme events caused by climate change, such as excessive rainfall and drought.

The representative of Yale International Alliance of Antigua and Barbuda said that her country faced a water crisis caused both by climate change and by poor management of wetlands, and increasing the water supply was costly for the government, which needed civil society organizations to help provide solutions to the crisis. She hoped that some of the 700 voluntary commitments made at the United Nations 2023 Water Conference would filter down to the local community groups in the region, and that the experiences of countries that had seen successful outcomes could be shared.

The Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Plurinational State of Bolivia explained that, through a series of dialogues in which all sectors of society had participated, a proposal incorporating a wide range of perspectives had been reached to accelerate the achievement of Goal 6. The proposal had been presented at the 2023 United Nations Water Conference. Among other matters, it urged member States to reaffirm the essential nature of the human right to drinking water and sanitation and to establish a permanent, intergovernmental water mechanism at the United Nations for water conservation and management.

In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Brazil said that his country had made progress in creating national and local indicators for Goal 6 and in assessing their implementation. Reports published by the National Water and Basic Sanitation Agency (ANA), responsible for implementing the water resource policy and publishing statistics and indicators on water management in the country, showed a positive trend towards the achievement of Goal 6. The representative of Chile said that the comprehensive nature of Goal 6 entailed a risk for the achievement of the other SDGs and that countries should make transformative changes and act swiftly to adopt concrete measures. Noting the importance of the Escazú Agreement and the integration of the commitments adopted by countries in different forums, she then said that in Chile, where work on water security necessarily meant working on watershed management, an interministerial committee for a just water transition had been established. The representative of Guatemala presented some of his country's key indicators on the achievement of Goal 6 and mentioned fundamental issues such as environmental justice, financing for development regarding environmental matters and the active participation of various stakeholders (social organizations, academia, research centres and others). The representative of Honduras said that although water was available in the country, governance remained a problem. The General Water Act provided for the creation of watershed committees for comprehensive water resource management and included the development of a national water plan. He stressed that the government had focused on drastically improving the efficiency of local water resource management. The representative of Peru referred to the launch of the Strategic Plan for National Development to 2050, which was related to the SDGs. He emphasized the need to improve water resource management and highlighted the development of dashboards to monitor progress in that regard. The representative of Barbados said that in her country there was an integrated water management process and policy framework that brought together legislation, programmes and projects with a view to creating a full picture of how to address climate change mitigation and adaptation issues; there was also an institutional framework with a subcommittee reporting to the cabinet on the water situation and how to address it. She also said that access to concessional financing and grants to address the water issue was critical, given the country's small population and the difficulty in bringing projects to scale. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela recalled that water management was fundamental for countries' development and the well-being of the population. He said that his country, which would not privatize water and which had passed the Water Act in 2007, was firmly committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda and achieving the SDGs. The representative of Costa Rica referred to compliance with Goal 6 indicators and especially the wastewater treatment system in various cities, where infrastructure remained a challenge. A work plan had been defined for the next few years to improve wastewater treatment in households.

The representative of Mexico highlighted the National Development Plan 2019–2024, which established territory and sustainable development as a cross-cutting theme. He referred to the activities of the Puerto Vallarta Potable Water, Drainage and Sewage System (SEAPAL) and to the responsible use of water and harmonization of the rates charged in different places. The representative of the United States said that her country had accelerated efforts relating to SDG 6 through the White House Action Plan on Global Water Security announced in 2022 and additional commitments to advance water security and sanitation announced in March 2023, which strengthened global systems to meet the needs of underserved populations as part of the Biden administration's investment in equitable and climate-resilient water and sanitation in the United States and around the world. In Latin America and the Caribbean (Guatemala and Ecuador, for example), the United States was providing assistance on water issues through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). The representative of Argentina stressed the importance of the meetings of the United Nations Water Conference and of the meaningful implementation of the Mar del Plata Action Plan. It was essential to reinforce the idea that to achieve efficient management, greater access to credit was needed. The Guaraní Aquifer and the development of a cross-border water agenda were of vital importance to the country. The representative of UN-Women emphasized the importance of the Escazú Agreement for the region and of the adoption of a participatory approach. Although the ancestral

knowledge of indigenous communities was being recognized, it was not translating into public or political representation. The graduation of some countries to middle-income status was barring their access to many concessional loans. Lastly, the representative of Paraguay stressed the importance of disseminating the good practices used in the River Plate Basin so that other countries could take advantage of them.

Panel 2: Affordable and clean energy

The panel was moderated by Marisol Merquel, President of the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies of Argentina, the country serving as Chair of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, and the panellists were Walter Verri, Vice-Minister for Industry, Energy and Mining of Uruguay; Andrés Rebolledo, Executive Secretary of the Latin American Energy Organization (OLADE); Germán Carmona, Academic at the Institute of Engineering of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM); and Kaira Reece, Sustainable Development Secretary, Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (CSA).

The moderator described the degree of progress made in the region with respect to the various targets of SDG 7 and the pending challenges, which included multidimensional energy poverty, the need to consider not only coverage but quality of and access to energy by the different segments of the population, vulnerability to shocks and the need to increase energy efficiency. International cooperation was an enabling factor and fundamental to achieving all the SDG targets.

The Vice-Minister for Industry, Energy and Mining of Uruguay highlighted the region's progress with respect to SDG 7, whose indicators were among the most promising. He said that none of the SDG targets could be met without economic development, as countries needed to grow in order to provide welfare, including energy welfare. His country's achievements in that area were the result of a State policy. The more progress made, the more difficult were decisions to pursue growth, but SDG 7 was fundamental to reducing the effects of climate change.

The Executive Secretary of OLADE said that regional indicators always hid deep gaps and that a distinction should be made among countries. In terms of energy sustainability, the region was on a promising path towards meeting the targets. The area lagging furthest was energy efficiency, as there was a dearth of national legislation and binding targets were generally not included in plans. In that regard, he suggested that the countries should move towards some degree of harmonization of standards and set a common goal, which would act as a political engine for progress. Lastly, he stressed the importance of collaboration among countries.

The Academic at the Institute of Engineering of UNAM underscored the importance of public transportation, an area in which e-mobility had been shown to be financially viable. He said it was necessary to address production and operating costs and recharging infrastructure, especially in relation to renewable energies, and to move towards a circular economy. To that end, regulation was essential, as it would provide certainty and enable forms of financing, fostering domestic advances and reducing dependence on imported technology; that effort should be undertaken by academia, industry and governments.

The Sustainable Development Secretary of CSA said that without a change in the production and consumption model, proposals to reduce greenhouse gas emissions would maintain the status quo. She said energy should be considered a right and should be universally accessible and in public hands, as a priority. The trade union and social movement called for the design and implementation of fair transition plans in countries' nationally determined contributions, with social dialogue, decent work and respect for all human rights, as part of a collective construction effort.

In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Mexico said that the energy situation in his country was heterogeneous and unequal, which had an impact on the fulfilment of all the SDGs. There were urgent near-term issues and long-term changes that needed to be addressed through collaboration between States of the region and private stakeholders. It was necessary to think globally and act locally. The representative of Paraguay stated that her country's energy mix was 100% renewable and was exported to neighbouring countries; however, the country still depended on hydrocarbons for transport. In the agricultural and transportation sectors, work was being done to promote clean and renewable energies, and a national road map was being prepared for green hydrogen. The representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela said that the region had large energy reserves (such as oil, water, lithium and sunlight), but the challenges were to harness them for productive development and to defend and promote solidarity-based distribution programmes. The representative of Panama said that in her country, electricity coverage exceeded 90% of the population except in the Indigenous areas (*comarcas*), where figures were below average. The supply of renewable energy had increased and the government had continued to formulate and implement plans to expand the women-energy nexus, increase the supply of renewable energy and clean energy in transportation, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The representative of Costa Rica said that in her country the long-term aim was generation of clean energy and that more than 98% of electricity originated from five renewable energy sources: water, geothermal, wind, biomass and solar. The largest geothermal park on the continent was located in her country, and power generation from hydrocarbon plants was only complementary. The representative of Colombia said that, in his country, more than 70% of renewable energy came from water resources and he suggested that economies should not be based on the extractivist model, but rather should be decarbonized and free from coal and oil. He called for a just energy transition and for the connection of non-conventional energies to the grid to ensure the region's decarbonization. The representative of Brazil spoke of the activity of hydroelectric power plants in her country, the extensive use of ethanol in automobiles and the use of solar and wind energy, whose installed production capacity had increased in recent years. She said that the share of renewable energies in her country's energy mix was among the highest in the world.

A civil society representative read a declaration proposing a path towards post-extractivist societies and economies, structural socio-ecological transition and an end to dependence on oil, gas and coal, mining with deforestation and monocultures. It called for a decentralized, democratic and decommercialized energy mix, and a transition that would eradicate poverty and multidimensional inequality. It also called for a new social compact with life at the centre and a nature-focused development model. There was a need for a just and people-centred transition, democratic access to energy and rates that remained within individuals' and communities' ability to pay.

Panel 3: Industry, innovation and infrastructure

The panel 3 was moderated by the Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the panellists were Nicolás Grau, Minister of Economic Affairs, Development and Tourism of Chile; Perpétua Almeida, Director of the Brazilian Agency for Industrial Development (ABDI); Manuel Albaladejo, Regional Representative for Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO); Brígida Fernández Rubio, Director General of the Development Planning Committee of the State of Baja California, Mexico; Hernán Ceballos, Manager of iNNpulsa Colombia; Fernando Saiz, Director of Public Affairs and Regulation of Telefónica Chile; María-Noel Vaeza, Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women); Dulce Patricia Torres Sandoval, Member of the General Coordination Committee of Coordinadora Nacional de Mujeres Indígenas (CONAMI), Focal Point of the Continental Network of Indigenous Women of the Americas (ECMIA), Mexico; and Clelia Hernández, Director-General of the Nuevo León 4.0 Initiative of Mexico.

The moderator underscored that it was important for decision makers to be able to participate in spaces for collective peer learning through discussions on experiences, common goals, good practices and lessons learned in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The crises caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine had illustrated the importance of infrastructure. Latin America and the Caribbean, where the Internet penetration gap was very wide, was the region that invested the least in innovation, but also the one with the most unicorn companies. The aim of the panel was to explore in depth the productive challenges facing the region and reflect on policies in the light of the new opportunities that were emerging.

The Minister of Economic Affairs, Development and Tourism of Chile said that the SDGs were of vital importance to the Government of Chile. He described the budget programme for sustainable productive development, which was led by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and brought together various ministries and the Production Development Corporation (CORFO). The programme was based on three objectives: fair decarbonization, resilience and adaptation to the climate crisis, and productive diversification. Chile was making good progress in the green hydrogen industry and the government was looking to have a horizontal dialogue with the industry.

The Director of ABDI said that her country's government had attached the highest level of importance to national industry. In recent years there had been a process of deindustrialization and loss of competitiveness in the most important sectors of industry and it was necessary to implement a reindustrialization policy in consensus with the various sectors of society. The country was committed to a modern industry capable of creating good jobs and redistributing income, and at the same time sought greater environmental sustainability and aimed to play a leading role in the global decarbonization process.

The Regional Representative for Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay of UNIDO said that industry was integral to the SDGs because there was evidence of the direct relationship between industry and economic growth. The COVID-19 pandemic had shown that industry was vital for resilience and recovery. What was most worrying in the region was the high concentration of innovation and the high level of deindustrialization. It was also important to bear in mind that industrialization models had changed radically.

The Director General of the Development Planning Committee of the State of Baja California, Mexico, said that the SDGs provided language that had served as a road map for building partnerships among countries and regions with shared interests. In conjunction with different development stakeholders and levels of governance, the government of Baja California pursued public policies with people and their needs at the centre. It was a historic time to implement sustainable projects, including sustainable transportation and mobility projects, as well as green carbon projects.

The Manager of iNNpulsa Colombia stated that the relative size of the industry in the country had declined and that the government had committed to reinvigorating it. A new industrial policy had therefore been formulated, to transition from an extractive economy to a knowledge-based, productive and sustainable economy. Through technical and technological change, the aim was to link the knowledge-producing sector with the goods- and services-producing sector. Agro-industry was a key issue and it was crucial to learn from developed countries how to coordinate the productive sector with the knowledge-producing sector. It was essential to adopt new approaches and give new direction to existing instruments.

The Director of Public Affairs and Regulation of Telefónica Chile referred to the "twin transition", since there would be no green transition if there was no digital transition. Digital technologies could drive solutions to reverse the problem of environmental pollution. He stressed the importance of Internet for all in the region, and said that rather than transporting physical goods, it was necessary to transmit bits. A

paradigm shift was key: to have the fastest and most universal connectivity possible, to use renewable energies and to establish partnerships between different companies so as not to duplicate efforts and to build in a clean and efficient manner.

The Regional Director for the Americas and the Caribbean of UN-Women noted that the policies linked to SDG 9 did not have gender indicators, but that nothing prevented the creation of such indicators. She said there were gender gaps in industry, infrastructure and innovation. One in two women was not economically active because she was performing care work. It was vital to create care systems, a new industry that generated quality jobs and enabled women to work outside the home. She called for women, in their diversity, to be involved in the design of industrial policies and the building of infrastructure.

The Member of CONAMI and Focal Point of ECMIA made a series of recommendations to States on the rights of Indigenous Peoples, particularly women, and initiatives to benefit them such as recognition of traditional knowledge systems, intellectual property and biocultural heritage, consent regarding infrastructure and industry initiatives in their territories, digital security, connectivity, cultural relevance of plans, programmes and subsidies for innovation and industrial entrepreneurship, digital development, inclusion of human rights, gender and other approaches in policies, and reduction of harmful impacts on the planet.

The General Director of the Nuevo León 4.0 Initiative, Mexico, mentioned regional challenges such as inflation, insecurity and organized crime, which had an impact on activities linked to innovation, industry and infrastructure because they affected investment. She said there were infrastructure bottlenecks and manufacturing and services needed better skills and talent to address challenges such as digitalization. To achieve that, employed persons and students needed to be equipped with better skills, in areas such as problem-solving and analytical thinking.

Panel 4: Sustainable cities and communities

The panel was moderated by Santiago Maggiotti, Minister of Territorial Development and Habitat of Argentina and President of the Forum of Ministers and Highest Authorities of Housing and Urbanism of Latin America and the Caribbean (MINURVI), and the panellists were Wendy Molina Varela, Vice-Minister of Planning in the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements of Costa Rica; Elkin Velásquez, Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat); Armando Enrique Navarrete, Chief Economist of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration (CABEI); María Soledad Cisternas Reyes, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility; Augusto Du Bois Goitia, Second Vice-Chair of the Inter-American Housing Union (UNIAPRAVI); Augusto Barrera Guarderas, Director of the Centre for Knowledge Transfer and Social Innovation (CETCIS) of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador; and Arturo Noel Noyola Muñoz of the Red Nacional de Juventudes Afromexicanas of Mexico.

The moderator highlighted the commitment of MINURVI to contributing to implementation of the SDGs and said that SDG 11 in particular called for intergovernmental coordination in the region. Latin America and the Caribbean were more affected by climate change despite emitting less greenhouse gases (GHG), which represented a double inequality. Cities produced one third of GHGs and 80% of the region's population lived in urban areas.

The Vice-Minister of Planning in the Ministry of Housing and Human Settlements of Costa Rica said that her country was committed to meeting the SDGs and had established a governance model for them. Various measures, such as financing and subsidies, including the family housing subsidy, savings and loan systems and mortgage loans, had reduced the housing deficit over time. Projects were under way in the country to remove informal settlements, establish deeds for land, provide emergency housing and recycle buildings. Despite progress, there were insufficient plans on land management, climate change adaptation, gender, or human rights in housing. The current administration had set out to settle the historical debt with the city and the territory. There was a bill to merge the housing and habitat institutions and create a new ministry for housing and habitat. Construction and regularization regulations had been updated, and work was being done on the draft plan to incorporate the variables of climate change, gender and citizen participation. Lastly, the Vice-Minister thanked ECLAC for its technical assistance.

The Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean of UN-Habitat said it was important to make up for lost time in implementation of SDG 11. Work with local governments needed to be strengthened, and localizing the SDGs in municipalities and territories was a useful tool. It was also necessary to measure what was happening in municipalities and cities not only through SDG 11 indicators. Most countries had national urban policies in place to combine resources, energy and efforts, and to develop multilevel governance mechanisms. It was important to focus efforts on improving informal settlements and to realize the vision of integrated action. The comprehensive improvement of neighbourhoods required involvement of women, youth and the private sector. Improving the quality of life of citizens was part of integration. Financing was a key issue and a proposal had been made to establish a fund for green and resilient social housing, as well as other funds for financing.

The Chief Economist of CABI outlined the Bank's activities, financing initiatives and 2020–2024 strategy, which included strategic pillars such as sustainable competitiveness, regional integration and human development with a gender and environmental perspective. In Central America there was a very intense migration pattern, with rural to urban migration at a time when countries were not ready to absorb those flows. The housing deficit was both quantitative and qualitative and a quarter of the population lived in slums or informal settlements without access to basic services or safe public spaces. The Bank's resources were earmarked for pre-investment in country-level feasibility analysis, building infrastructure and equipment, capacity-building and institutional strengthening. Progress was promising, but there was still much to be done in terms of strategy and resource mobilization, as the resources were insufficient.

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Disability and Accessibility said that the right to the city was a right for all people and was linked to human dignity. Accessibility was, in fact, a set of conditions to be met by physical spaces, transportation, communications and technology, among others, to enable people to use cities as efficiently and comfortably as possible. A city that claimed to be smart was not unless it had accessibility in technology. Accessibility was a legal concept and could therefore be demanded of the State. Failure to implement accessibility was a form of mistreatment of many people and States were not complying with their universally ratified legal obligations. At least 12 SDGs required accessibility to be met. Accessibility barriers had to be removed and legal frameworks improved in order to enhance governance and democracy and to have fair, sustainable and safe cities. Accessibility had to be cross-cutting so as not to undermine human rights or fulfilment of the SDGs, or weaken democracy, which was characterized by inclusion and participation.

The Second Vice-Chair of UNIAPRAVI noted that the right to the city was a human right. Civil society should be represented in public policies. Environmental impacts and energy efficiency had to be taken into account when planning housing types and urbanization. The circular economy was a way to mitigate climate change and its consequences. He noted some problems related to construction activity,

such as depletion of biodiversity, limitation of the biosphere's biocapacity to assimilate waste and a decrease in raw materials for construction. Joint actions were needed, with various stakeholders such as development agencies and private banks, according to the specific circumstances of each country.

The Director of CETCIS of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador said it was necessary to analyse the effectiveness of public policies. Polarized urbanization was killing cities, in a context of persistent and worsening structural problems. The spatial configuration of cities depended on social structures, and if middle classes disappeared, that spatial dimension would be fragmented. COVID-19 had exacerbated management problems at different levels. The need to resolve day-to-day problems made it difficult to establish a forward-looking agenda amid the erosion of the legitimacy of policies and institutions.

The representative of Red Nacional de Juventudes Afromexicanas of Mexico said that only three indicators existed for the SDG under consideration, that national successes were not replicated at the global level, and that at the social level there was a lack of knowledge of the SDGs and a distancing from them.

Panel 5: Partnerships for the Goals

The panel was moderated by Marisol Merquel, President of the National Council for the Coordination of Social Policies of Argentina, the country serving as Chair of the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development, and the panellists were Ana Montaña Medina, Director General for the 2030 Agenda in Mexico; Christian Salazar, Director of the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR); Luciana Servo, President of the Institute of Applied Economic Research (IPEA) of Brazil; Paula Poblete, Undersecretary for Social Evaluation of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Affairs of Chile; Sebastián Miller, Lead Economist of the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in Chile; Pilar Garrido, Director for Development Co-operation of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD); Pamela Martín García, Vecinas Feministas and International Planned Parenthood Federation - Americas and the Caribbean Region (IPPF ACRO), Argentina; and Anabella Zavagno, Deputy Director General of ParlAmericas.

The moderator opened the panel by underscoring that progress on the SDGs would require a large-scale mobilization of domestic and external resources and a resource-allocation approach based on financing for environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development. Achieving that would require strengthening of partnerships, as called for in Goal 17. She then introduced the panellists, highlighting the variety of stakeholders represented.

The Director General for the 2030 Agenda in Mexico said that for a sustainable development agenda to be effective, there needed to be multi-stakeholder and multi-level partnerships among governments, the private sector, academia and civil society, in all areas and territories. In Mexico, coordination of those stakeholders was the responsibility of the National Council for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the government had forged partnerships with other countries in Latin America and the Caribbean to address the most pressing global challenges, such as the fight against inflation, climate change and youth unemployment.

The President of IPEA of Brazil, explained that the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) and IPEA were the two public institutions in charge of coordinating discussion of indicators for monitoring the SDGs. Both would be represented in the National Committee for the Sustainable Development Goals that the government would reinstate in 2023. The work of IPEA also focused on several

aspects linked to partnerships to achieve the SDGs, such as inclusive and sustainable production, various macroeconomic challenges, the global and regional development agenda, and improving the efficiency of the administration and financing of the Goals.

The Undersecretary for Social Evaluation of the Ministry of Social Development and Family Affairs of Chile described the National Council for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda, whose members represented five ministries and other stakeholders from various sectors. The Council had drafted a report on the pandemic's impact on fulfilment of the SDGs and an implementation strategy for the Agenda—which had been prepared in a collaborative and participatory manner through dialogue with more than 2,000 people—and was preparing the 2023 voluntary national review.

The Lead Economist of IDB in Chile said that while a few years earlier the SDG targets had seemed attainable, the picture had become more complex. IDB was a key partner for the region and its main source of financing for development. It invested in climate mitigation and adaptation projects, sustainable infrastructure and strengthening of value chains. However, given the vast gap between institutions' financing capacities and what the region needed to achieve the SDGs, so it was vital for countries to work together and build partnerships to find innovative ways to mobilize resources and promote sustainable development.

The Director for Development Co-operation of OECD stated that in a region such as Latin America and the Caribbean, which had limited fiscal and monetary space, the desire for green and inclusive growth had to be reconciled with the need to protect the most vulnerable and provide a resilient response to external shocks. OECD was working on a number of issues to support countries and meet their needs and requirements, to help to drive a transition to sustainable development that was just, low in emissions and with gender equality and opportunities for all.

The Director of the Field Operations and Technical Cooperation Division at OHCHR said that the SDGs were human rights in action and achieving them called for united action by multiple stakeholders at all levels. It was important to protect spaces for citizen participation and the rights of association and peaceful demonstration, among other areas. It was also vital to strengthen national and international partnerships, to expand fiscal space and mobilize the investments needed to accelerate implementation of the 2030 Agenda. An economy needed to be built that was based on human rights, with standards to guide how to invest public resources and use them for the benefit of the most vulnerable.

The representative of Vecinas Feministas and IPPF ACRO, Argentina, representing the civil society participation mechanism, stressed the need for developed and developing countries to share resources and cooperate. She said that multinational companies were still not contributing enough, and their level of influence over governments and the United Nations was increasing. The macroeconomic dimension of unpaid domestic and care work should also be recognized. She proposed the development justice model, which aimed to address all inequalities, putting people at the centre over private profit, with redistributive, economic, gender, social and environmental justice, as well as accountability, something that would be difficult to achieve with high levels of opacity and corruption and weak democracies.

The Deputy Director General of ParlAmericas said that the aim of her institution was to promote parliamentary diplomacy in the inter-American system. The 2030 Agenda explicitly recognized the role of national parliaments in ensuring effective implementation of the commitments it contained, so the institution had made the decision to make the Agenda a cross-cutting element of the work carried out by parliamentarians, and to support the efforts of regional stakeholders to implement it through meetings, workshops, publications and specific tools for legislative work.

In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Peru stressed the importance of public management and administration in implementing policies. Peru's Forum for National Agreement was a body for designing State policies and forging consensus, which brought together all ministries, business associations, trade unions and native Amazonian and Andean Indigenous communities. After referring to the 2050 Strategic Plan for National Development, he highlighted the lack of foresight tools at the global level. The representative of Paraguay said that the SDGs could only be achieved with the participation of all and noted the importance of localization and territorialization of the SDGs. Partnerships were vital for achieving the SDGs, especially in reaching out to communities. The representative of Panama spoke of the importance of sustainable coordination among national institutions responsible for designing social and economic public policies, as well as public-private partnerships for development as an incentive for private investment, social development and job creation. The representative of Honduras said that his country was seeking to rebuild the State in line with the 2030 Agenda. Collective work was important, with special emphasis on the most disadvantaged. He then called for the design of a new global financial system that would pave the way for a paradigm shift in order to achieve the SDGs.

The representative of Guatemala said that international debt reform was essential and urgently required, and stressed the importance of regional, South-South and triangular cooperation, as well as of building an economy with a human rights-based approach. The representative of Cuba said that, in view of the difficulties her country faced in accessing development financing, it was interesting to learn about the experiences of other countries in implementing Goal 17. The country was focusing its efforts, among other areas, on consolidating strategic partnerships among sectors. The representative of Colombia remarked that States, on their own, did not have the resources needed to fulfil the 2030 Agenda, and that Goal 17 could not be achieved without fostering public-private partnerships. The representative of Brazil said that it was essential to strengthen the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and revitalize the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. Efforts needed to be stepped up to combat inequalities, to strengthen financing mechanisms, to increase training and technical cooperation in developing countries, and to transfer technology to those countries.

The representative of Argentina said that strategic partnerships were no small matter and that it was vital to establish mechanisms to ensure the involvement of civil society. The representative of Uruguay said that substantial resources were needed to implement the 2030 Agenda and that his country advocated in international organizations for access to loans for upper-middle-income countries. With the support of the United Nations, a small pilot project for energy transformation was being conducted. The representative of the Fund for the Development of the Indigenous Peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean (FILAC) noted that the SDGs rarely referred to Indigenous Peoples and stressed the importance of involving Indigenous Peoples in decision-making and processes related to the SDGs at all levels. The representative of the Central American Integration System (SICA) highlighted the importance of establishing partnerships within and outside SICA, as reflected in the 2022–2026 Work Plan, and of working with other regional and subregional integration mechanisms.

Panel discussion: “Path to the SDG Summit. Transformative initiatives: creating opportunities to strengthen commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its full implementation at all levels”

The panel was moderated by María del Carmen Squeff, Permanent Representative of Argentina to the United Nations, the country serving as Chair of the Forum of Latin American and Caribbean Countries on Sustainable Development, and the panellists included José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs, Executive Secretary of ECLAC, Pedro Luis Pedroso, Ambassador, Special Representative of Cuba to the United Nations and Coordinator for Cuba's Presidency of the Group of 77 and China (G-77 and China), Paula Narváez,

Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, in her capacity as Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, and Luis Felipe López-Calva, Global Director of the Poverty and Equity Global Practice at the World Bank.

The moderator said that the panel would address the need to strengthen the commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the initiatives that would make it possible to face the enormous challenges that lay ahead. The discussion was highly relevant in the lead-up to the 2023 Sustainable Development Goals Summit in September, which would seek to provide political guidance to States to accelerate the achievement of the SDGs. The world was facing multiple crises, with more severe consequences for developing countries that compromised the achievement of the SDGs. A determined and cooperative effort would be needed to overcome them. There was a need to redouble the commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to the means of implementation adopted in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda to achieve adequate and predictable financing that could enable sustainable development. Several people from the region would be in leadership positions at the United Nations in 2023, a unique opportunity to make a significant contribution.

The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said that the shocks the world had suffered cast a shadow over the prospects for sustainable development in the region. Referring to the general possibility of achieving the SDG targets by 2030 based on the current trajectory, he said that the results of efforts to strengthen institutions had been very positive. Efforts should be stepped up, with a forward-looking approach. ECLAC had identified seven potential transformative initiatives which, if carried out at the appropriate scale, could result in synergies and foster the achievement of various SDGs: the energy transition and its impacts, the bioeconomy, the digital economy, the export of modern, Internet-enabled services, the care society and gender equality, sustainable tourism, and regional integration. To promote those initiatives, new instruments were needed, and the capacity for foresight would be essential for enabling the related opportunities to be seized.

The Ambassador and Special Representative of Cuba to the United Nations and Coordinator for Cuba's Presidency of the G-77 and China said that it was a difficult time, in particular for developing countries, which were suffering the consequences of the pandemic, reduced official development assistance (ODA) flows, geopolitical tension and conflicts in various parts of the world, market volatility, inflation, unsustainable debt burdens, and climate change, to which must be added, in some cases, the imposition of coercive, unilateral measures by developed countries. It was time to usher in a new phase of international cooperation for development and meaningful reform of the international financial architecture. Sustainable development metrics that went beyond GDP were also needed in order to redefine countries' access to financing and technical cooperation, reform the international trading system and address illicit financial flows. Those challenges called for the countries of the South to show a united front to prevent a business-as-usual approach from quashing dreams of social justice.

The Permanent Representative of Chile to the United Nations, the country serving as Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, mentioned some of the regional circumstances affecting the achievement of the SDGs, including inequality and poverty levels, which remained above pre-pandemic levels. Institutions were weak and governance was deficient, issues that must be overcome to address many of the current problems. Building a solid industrial foundation that could foster productive diversification was one precondition for progress towards more sustainable economies and societies and more inclusive growth. Strong investment flows, appropriate international financial architecture, productive employment and comprehensive social protection systems were needed. There was a need to build care systems and invest in education, which was critical for achieving many targets and avoiding "scarring" from the pandemic.

The Global Director of the Poverty and Equity Global Practice at the World Bank said that Goal 1 (end poverty) was related to the core mandate of the Bank. The goal of reducing poverty to 3% in 2030 would be out of reach if current practices continued. The question therefore was what should be done to shift the trajectory. Economic growth remained important, but not just any growth. The Poverty and Equity Global Practice emphasized the need to invest in the productive capacity of people living in poverty. Countries were being asked to effect an unprecedented technological transformation in the areas of energy, manufacturing and green jobs and financing modalities were needed to support the process. Institutional and legal changes, adjustments and instruments would be required for the private sector to be willing to cover the financing gap for the transition. The means to achieve the transition should be the outcome of national discussions and sovereign agreements. Multilateral organizations could provide support through technical assistance, information and funding.

In the ensuing discussion, the representative of Jamaica said that her country's Voluntary National Review Report 2022 identified the structural and systemic issues that hindered national development, including low human capital development, climate change vulnerability, fossil fuel dependency, high public debt, low export diversification and the need to develop social capital to translate national development at the local level. Focus must be placed on mobilizing the required resources and partnerships to design, strengthen and execute transformative initiatives and policies with significant multiplier effects. The representative of Argentina emphasized that no one was self-sufficient and said that there was a need to forge pathways to fund civil society groups, which had played a key role in communities during the COVID-19 pandemic along with local and municipal governments. The 2030 Agenda represented an important opportunity for young people. The representative of Barbados said that climate change was the overarching architecture in which the discussion on accelerating the SDGs must be framed. The United Nations system must provide more resources at the regional level to continue to deliver relevant country-driven programmes, to help countries in terms of direct implementation. The essence of moral responsibility must not be lost; developed countries were not showing the same level of moral responsibility as small developing States. The representative of Colombia said that, because all types of development were not equal, not just any kind of development would do. There was a need to fight for a new development model centred around the care economy, which would require co-responsibility between the State, society, families and communities. The representative of Honduras said that a gradual and fair productive transformation that respected the commons and aboriginal peoples was under way in his country, and noted that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda would imply advances towards revising the State and the development model.

The representative of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) said that producing medicines and health technologies in the region could improve access to health, reduce inequalities and drive equitable economic development based on knowledge, technology and innovation. It was important to continue liaising with partners, focus on people and prioritize the health of the population during the economic recovery. The FAO representative said that in the context of a reversal of development growth, a large number of agrifood systems were unstable and prone to collapse. The transformation to achieve sustainable, equitable and resilient agrifood systems should receive priority attention while accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In the region, FAO had reinforced permanent dialogue with governments and other cooperation agencies to help governments to face food security and agrifood systems challenges. The representative of UN-Habitat emphasized three topics: the territorialization of the SDGs and the need to promote voluntary local reviews, improvements to residential areas and progress in forging subregional partnerships to address issues such as urban poverty, and the importance of networks for joining forces. The representative of UN-Women said that it was impossible to speak of growth without speaking of women and giving central importance to the care economy. At the high-level political forum on sustainable development, it would be critical to assert that creating comprehensive care systems would boost the achievement of the SDGs. Lastly, she underscored that the issue of comprehensive care systems was not merely a technical one, but rather a matter of political will.

Civil society declarations

A representative of the Civil Society Children, Adolescents and Youth Group in the Sustainable Development Agenda and the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development read a declaration.³

Lastly, the representatives of the Mechanism for civil society participation in the Forum of the Countries of Latin America and the Caribbean on Sustainable Development read a declaration to the Forum.⁴

Closing session

At the closing session, the Chair of the Forum remarked that there was a huge challenge ahead. The panels had addressed the issues of clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, industry, innovation and infrastructure, sustainable cities and communities and partnerships for the Goals. Topics such as the energy transition, the digital transition, promotion of modern service exports, the care society, food security, sustainable tourism and regional integration had been discussed. The exchange of ideas had covered cross-cutting issues such as the human rights perspective, the gender approach, the importance of data disaggregation and territorialization of the 2030 Agenda, mobilization of economic, financial and technological resources, and the efforts of the various stakeholders who, with different common but differentiated responsibilities, were committed to achieving the SDG targets. Forging partnerships was a vital tool that would enable fulfilment of the paramount aims of the 2030 Agenda, putting the dignity of all at the heart of the actions taken. The Sustainable Development Goals Summit to be held in September 2023 would allow participants to take stock of what had been achieved and what remained to be done, in order to identify the crucial and high-priority steps to be taken, thus renewing efforts and commitments. The Summit was an opportunity to build a shared democratic future, with peace, justice and equity and without discrimination.

The Executive Secretary of ECLAC said that more than 650 people had participated in the Forum, including some 170 government representatives, more than 300 representatives of civil society, including academia and the private sector, and some 150 representatives of the United Nations system and resident coordinators. The document *Halfway to 2030 in Latin America and the Caribbean: progress and recommendations for acceleration* had been presented, and the various discussion and analysis panels had highlighted the need to step up efforts to meet the SDGs. Some of the topics addressed included water being a vector of sustainable development and key to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; the need for energy shortages to be considered from a multidimensional perspective, taking into account regional and territorial inequalities and specificities; the region not having undergone inclusive and sustainable industrialization; and the region being the most urban in the developing world, with problems and solutions that were largely urban in nature. Most of the countries in the region did not qualify for official development assistance, significantly restricting their ability to mobilize external resources to meet Goal 17. The international community had to come together to mobilize investments for the SDGs and create a new international financial architecture that supported just, inclusive and equitable transitions for all countries. Governments had reaffirmed and strengthened their commitment to the 2030 Agenda, multilateralism, gender equality, the protection and promotion of human rights, and the need for new financing arrangements to support developing countries that were particularly vulnerable to the harmful effects of climate change. Efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda had left a promising institutional footprint in the region, with public, private and civil society institutions. In closing, the Executive Secretary applauded the invaluable

³ See [online] https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2023/sites/foro2023/files/youth_declaration.pdf.

⁴ See [online] <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2023/en/programme/reading-civil-society-declaration>.

commitment of civil society and the academic sector, which were drivers of innovation and creativity for the SDGs, and said that ECLAC, on its seventy-fifth anniversary, was redoubling its commitment to continue working for a more productive, inclusive and sustainable future.

Adoption of the intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations

In accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 700(XXXVI) of ECLAC, the Forum adopted intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations,⁵ and the present Summary of the Chair of the sixth meeting of the Forum was prepared.

⁵ See [online] <https://foroalc2030.cepal.org/2023/en/documents/intergovernmentally-agreed-conclusions-and-recommendations-sixth-meeting-forum-countries>.