

ECOSOC YOUTH FORUM 10th Anniversary, 7-8 April

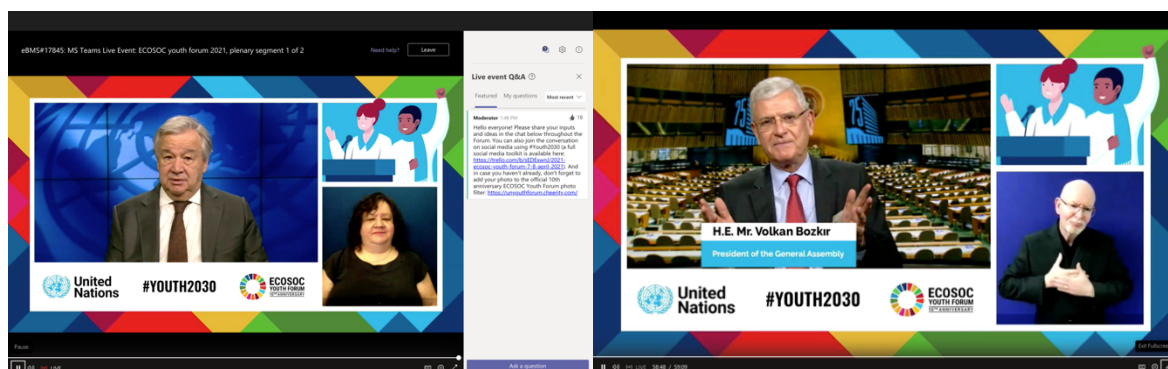
A Decade of Action: Building a Resilient Recovery

The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Youth Forum's 10th Anniversary took place on 7-8 April 2021, virtually from New York with the theme - **"Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: Building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development"**. Young people can contribute to policy discussions at



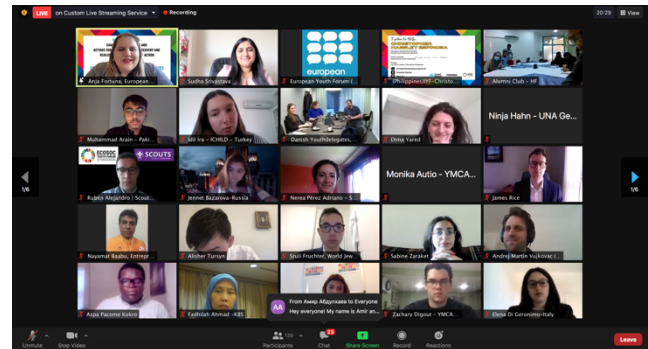
the United Nations through their ideas, priorities, solutions and innovations. The Forum has given a unique opportunity for youth to jointly address common challenges as well as advance their contributions to achieve the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. Participants were Member States, including Ministers and other high-level representatives, young people and official youth delegates, as well as representatives of regional and multilateral organizations.

I was delighted for this opportunity to join the conversation with other youth delegates from across the globe. The opening statements from the ECOSOC President, UN Secretary General, President of the 75th Session of the General Assembly on building up for a decade of action set the stage for the conversations on young people in the driver's seat to build back better following the interactive virtual roundtable plenary session on **'Achieving the SDGs WITH and FOR Youth'**. In the wake of the global pandemic in 2020, many of the existing issues impacting young people, including unemployment, education gaps, mental health, and more became exacerbated and even compounded with new challenges such as movement restrictions or virtual learning. Building back better should be an intergenerational effort, due to the historical marginalisation of young people in decision making and leadership there is a need to amplify the voices of young people and better engage them in the implementation of measures that contribute to a better future for both people and the planet. The Youth 2030 Progress report can be accessed here: https://5d962978-9e17-4b96-91be-93983605fae8.filesusr.com/ugd/b1d674_11be500dd885403680bbc2150b5b5f2c.pdf



The thematic breakout sessions: 1) A People-Centric Response SDG 2 and 3, 2) Accelerating Action for the Planet SDG 12, 3) Prospering and Thriving – SDG 1 and 8, 4) Inclusive Peace: the way forward SDG 10 and 16.

During the regional session on Europe, North America and Other States, representatives of youth organisations, youth delegates, and institutional representatives discussed ideas and knowledge on shifting economic and political systems as part of the recovery that guarantee the rights and promote the well-being and the participation of young people in line with the accelerated implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Key points on how to do it:



- Political priority in health, employment and social protection
- Need to ground the rights, norms and standards in education
- Target funds towards most left behind with gender/migration data mapping of youth
- Meaningfully involve youth to design community engagement and digital tools
- Monitor and evaluate measures- ex-anti and ex-post
- Mental health services need to be part of the solution of the pandemic
- Climate recovery and sustainable future by including youth recommendations
- Co-creation and co-management
- All countries should create youth delegate programmes and ensure they are heard
- Solidarity among youth organisations
- Resilience – everyone to be citizen of future

Significant stress was on the importance of the intergenerational approach. Concluding thoughts for strategic opportunities for youth to influence UN processes and debates, and perspectives on what to expect and what to be hopeful for the next 75 years of the UN, Amina J Mohammed, Deputy Secretary General of UN, stressed the need of better ways of bringing young people on board and connecting youth movements for the SDGs. Women and girls play a significant role in achieving SDGs for sustainable future!