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DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**The Deputy Secretary-General's
Message on the occasion of the
High-level Policy and Financing Dialogue on the
Global Accelerator on Jobs and Social Protection for
Just Transitions
Date: 18 April 2023**

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for joining us.

Today the world faces multiple crises: climate chaos, soaring prices and tightening debt, all on top of COVID-19.

These have brought our fragility to the forefront and exposed the lack of a comprehensive, global safety net to support people through crises.

And they have shown the urgent need to invest in sustainable, inclusive jobs that provide decent wages and quality working conditions.

Yet around the world, 4 billion people remain without adequate social protection benefits. While hundreds of millions of people will feel the impact of job losses due to COVID-19 for years – if not generations – to come.

This must change.

First, we must ensure that people's lives and livelihoods are protected during shocks – particularly as we head into a future increasingly marked by climate catastrophe, crises and pandemics that might strike without warning.

Second, we must get our economies to create far more decent jobs and drive a transition from informal to formal employment, including in emerging sectors.

And lastly, we must invest smarter in our societies so that our social protection systems are shock-absorbent, inclusive, and accessible to all.

The task before us is daunting. But we can tackle many of these issues simultaneously and, in so doing, accelerate and achieve just transitions towards a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economy.

Investing in the care economy, for example, would generate 280 million jobs globally by 2030 and a further 19 million by 2035.

Investing in the green and circular economy could generate 100 million jobs by 2030.

The fourth industrial revolution also presents enormous opportunities, including job growth.

These jobs will create revenue.

That revenue can fund social protection systems.

Those social protection systems can further support job creation.

And those jobs, in turn, can create new opportunities for all –and break cycles of intergenerational poverty.

We can, in short, create a virtuous circle, a positive feedback loop, that benefits individuals, communities and countries. But this requires planning, foresight and careful investment to capitalize on the opportunities available while minimizing risks.

This integrated approach to social protection and decent job creation – an approach that helps create virtuous cycles of sustainable development – is the value of the Global Accelerator.

The Global Accelerator recognizes that the transition to a resilient, sustainable, and inclusive economy requires an integrated approach that addresses universal social

protection and decent job creation together, including in the care, digital, and green economies.

It recognizes that investments in these areas are not only critical to achieving the world that we want but will yield long-term economic rewards that far outweigh the short-term costs.

And it understands that success will require a collective effort that is supported by the whole of government and engages the private sector, trade unions, civil society, and more.

These issues are at the heart of the Secretary-General's call for a new social contract, as outlined in Our Common Agenda report. But they are far too often overlooked, even though achieving them is a pre-requisite to achieving the SDGs.

This is why, the Secretary-General will continue to call for investments in these areas, including in the upcoming

Paris Summit for a “New Global Financial Pact” in June, and the SDG Summit and High-Level Dialogue on Financing for Development in September.

Today, I urge you to make a real difference in the lives of people around the world, particularly those who are most vulnerable, by announcing concrete policy and financial commitments to the Global Accelerator.

Three years after the start of COVID-19, I urge you not to lose sight of the fact that investing in these areas is absolutely essential to protect populations during crises while seizing future opportunities.

I urge you to think about the future and remember policy-makers are at the forefront of shaping the difference we make in people’s lives.

Let’s keep the promise of the SDGs.

Thank you
