Ministerial panel on Putting Well-being Metrics into Policy Action - an international workshop, Paris

On 3 October, Gabriela Ramos addressed the Ministerial panel of the International Workshop: “Putting Well-being Metrics into Policy Action”, at the OECD. In her remarks, Ms Ramos outlined the work of the OECD Framework for Policy Action on Inclusive Growth stressing the importance of assessing policies’ unintended consequences on the environment and society. She added that the OECD is working along several areas to place well-being metrics at the centre of policymaking and brought particular attention to two recent OECD studies which are promoting this work: “Accelerating Climate Action: Refocusing Policies through a Well-being Lens” and “How’s Life in the Digital Age?” In concluding, Ms Ramos also spoke about the opportunities and challenges brought on by digitalisation. In order to make the most of the digital revolution, she stressed, it will be paramount to focus on new skills in the workplace and in daily life. As such, the OECD is leading the way in this area, particularly through its work on the PISA Global Competences Framework.

Opening of the Global Parliamentary Network Meeting on Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development: Making Progress Towards Achieving the SDGs, Paris

On 10 October, Ms Ramos participated in the Opening of the Global Parliamentary Network meeting at the OECD. She addressed the session on ‘Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development: Making progress towards achieving the SDGs’.

In her remarks, Mr Ramos stated that delivering on the 2030 Agenda remains a priority and a crucial challenge with at least 730 million people – or 10% of the global population – who still need to be lifted out of extreme poverty in just over 10 years’ time. She highlighted the results of the recent OECD report “Measuring the Distance to the SDG Targets”, which shows that more than half of OECD members have made little or no progress in a number of SDG targets including: eradicating poverty; ending hunger; ensuring education; reducing inequalities; and strengthening institutions.

Ms Ramos also underlined the need to repair social mobility and to put people at the centre of policies. She concluded by providing concrete examples of the OECD’s work to achieve these goals, including through the Framework for Policy Action on Inclusive Growth, the OECD Gender Strategy, the OECD SDG Action Plan and the Global Hub on the Governance for the SDGs.

Dialogue of Civilisations Rhodes Forum 2019, Rhodes, Greece

On 11-13 October, Ms Ramos participated in numerous sessions of the Dialogue of Civilisations Rhodes Forum 2019. In her remarks at the opening plenary session, “30 Years after the Fall of the Berlin Wall: In Search of a Roadmap and a Compass”, Ms Ramos focused on the current political, economic and environmental challenges. She acknowledged the huge costs of deglobalisation and protectionism; as well as rising inequalities despite a deepening of global integration (today, the top 10% holds half of total wealth while the bottom 40% holds only 3%). She added that these inequalities translate into social and gender divides, and they also drive down trust in government. To tackle these challenges, Ms Ramos stressed the need to reshape the foundations of multilateralism and to put people and well-being at the centre of policymaking.

Ms Ramos also participated in a high-level conversation, “Toward an African Economic Miracle: Lessons learned from the East Asian Model” with the President of Niger, Mr Mahamadou Issoufou. During her remarks, she highlighted that the African continent has been experiencing strong growth for almost 20 years. This is largely owed to high public investment, a rise in regional demand and greater ties with emerging economies, such as China. She stressed, however, that important challenges persist including: high levels of poverty, a scarcity of quality jobs, large gender divides, the lack of well-being and the increasing threat of climate change – in fact, 27 of the 33 countries most at risk from climate change are in Africa. To tackle these challenges, Ms Ramos stated that it is crucial to increase investment in quality education and in particular to develop core and numeracy skills, it is also important to scale up financing among others, through remittances, foreign direct investment and blended public-private finance. Lastly, Ms Ramos outlined how African countries can further deepen their collaboration with the OECD, notably through: the Development Centre (DEV), the Sahel and West Africa Club (SWAC) and the Global Forum on Taxation.