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COVID-19: Building back better in the UNECE region

**Olga Algayerova,
Executive Secretary, UNECE
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The impact on SDGs is largely negative



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Loss of income, vulnerable segments of society to fall below poverty line



Disruption of food production and distribution



Devastating effect on health outcomes



School closures; challenges of remote learning



Progress at risk; increased levels of violence against women.



Supply disruptions; lack of access to clean handwashing facilities



Disruptions in access to electricity



Economic consequences of lockdowns



Risk of COVID-19 exposure related to population density



Temporary reduction of emissions; reduced attention to climate action



Conflicts prevent effective measures for fighting COVID-19



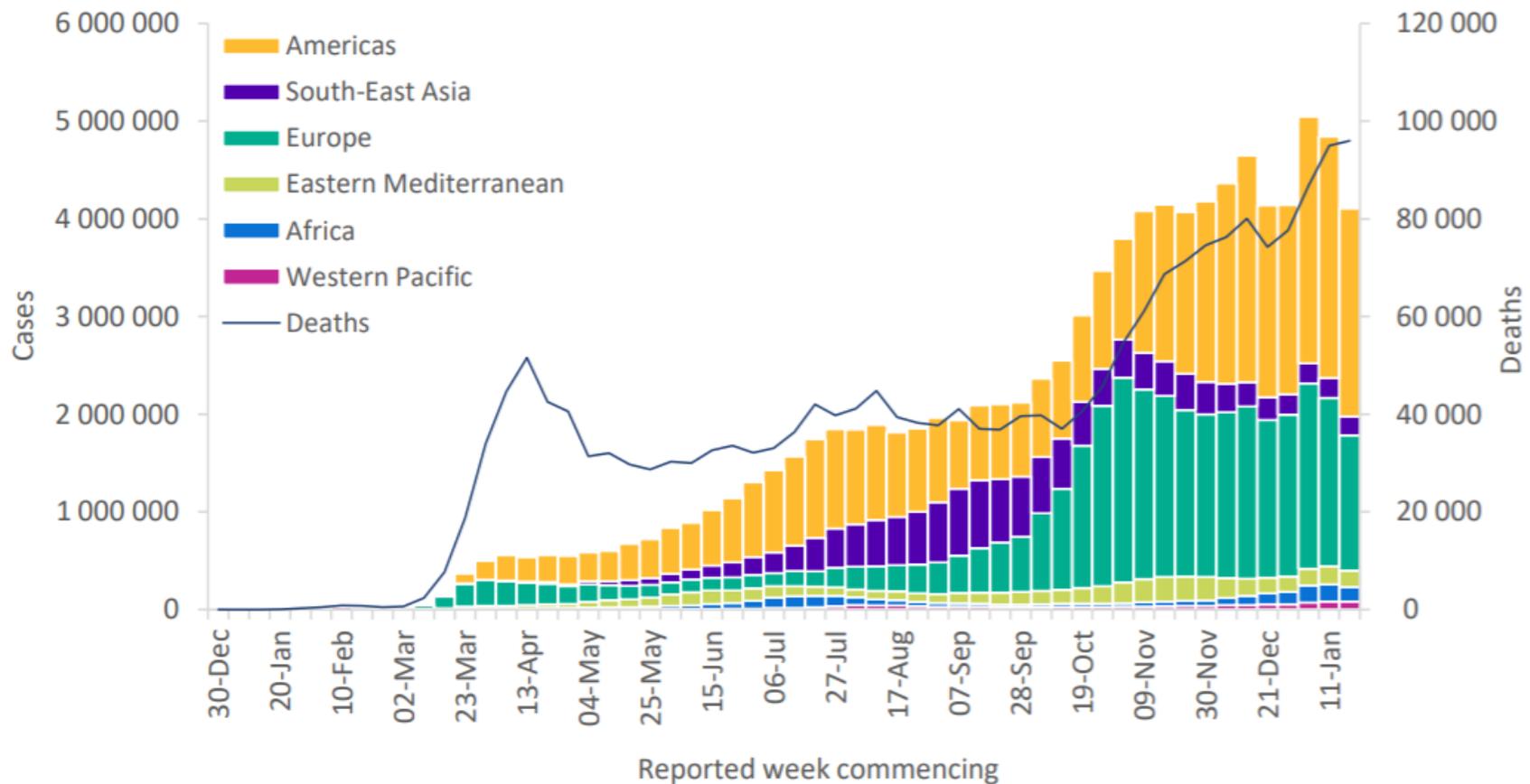
Backlash against globalization; growing international cooperation on public health

The UNECE region has been strongly hit by COVID-19



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Figure 1: COVID-19 cases reported weekly by WHO Region, and global deaths, as of 24 January 2021**

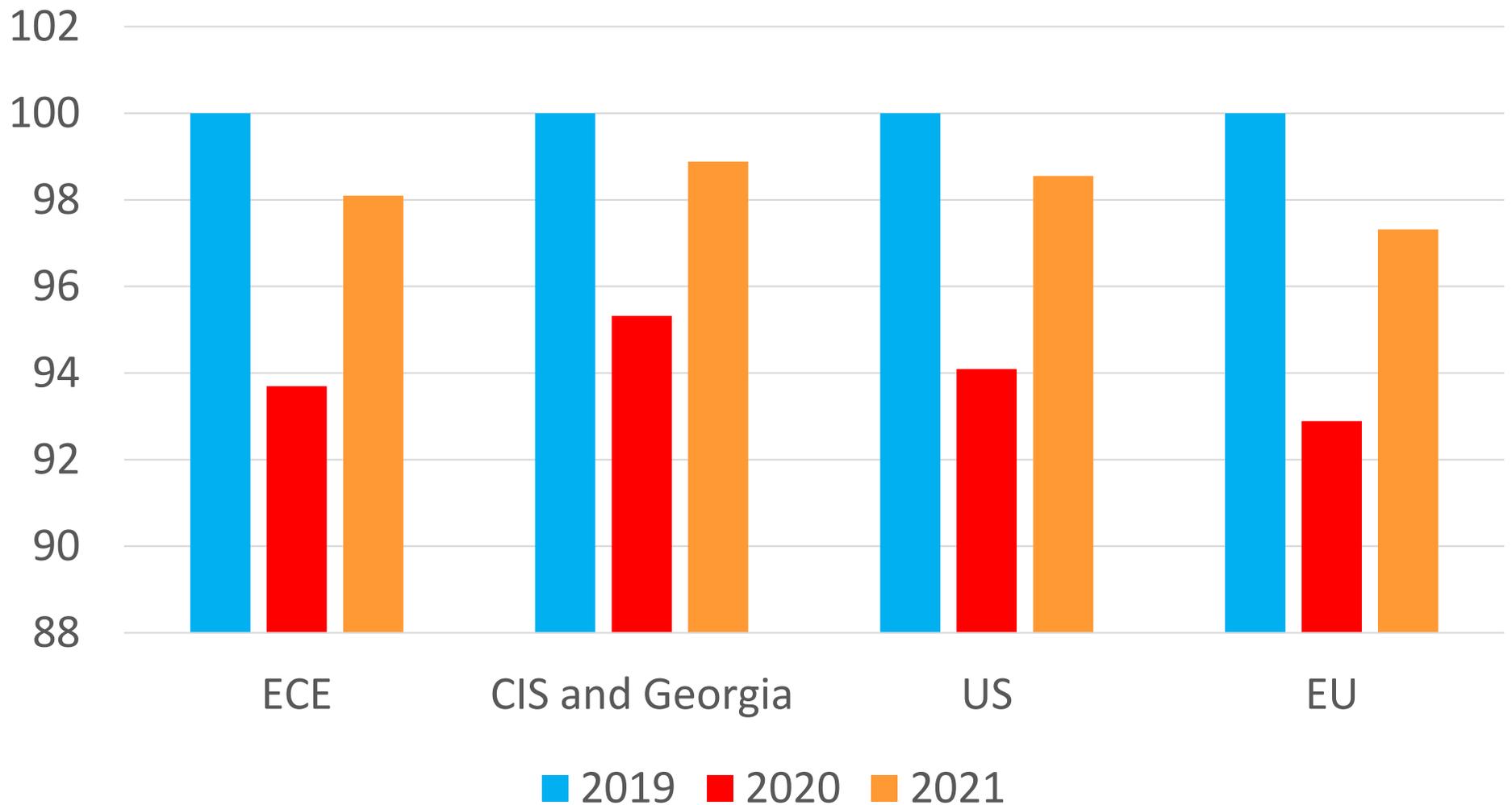


Source: WHO

Economic contraction expected in all UNECE subregions...



Projected GDP levels, 2019=100

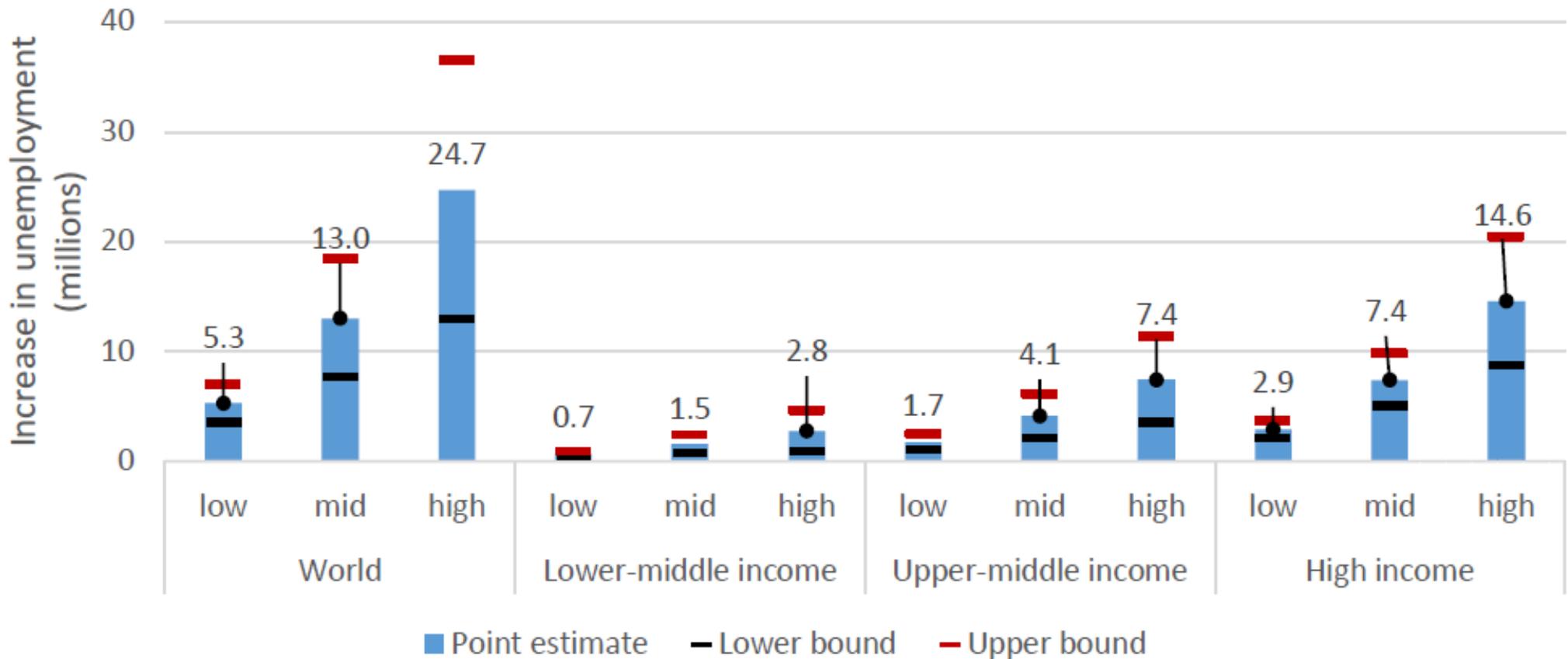


Source: IMF projections, ECE aggregation

...with dramatic falls in employment worldwide



Increase in unemployment on three different scenarios, world and income groups, millions



UNECE increased engagement at the regional and country levels



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- The **SG report** on the COVID-19 response : importance of **regional coordination** and the preservation of **connectivity**
- UN framework for the **immediate socioeconomic response** is based on five pillars
- Emphasis on **integrated, coordinated** interventions that are **aligned with SDGs**

Pillars of the UN Development System Response

1  **HEALTH FIRST:**
Protecting health services and systems during the crisis

2  **PROTECTING PEOPLE:**
Social protection and basic services

3  **ECONOMIC RESPONSE & RECOVERY:**
Protecting jobs, small and medium-sized enterprises, and the informal sector workers

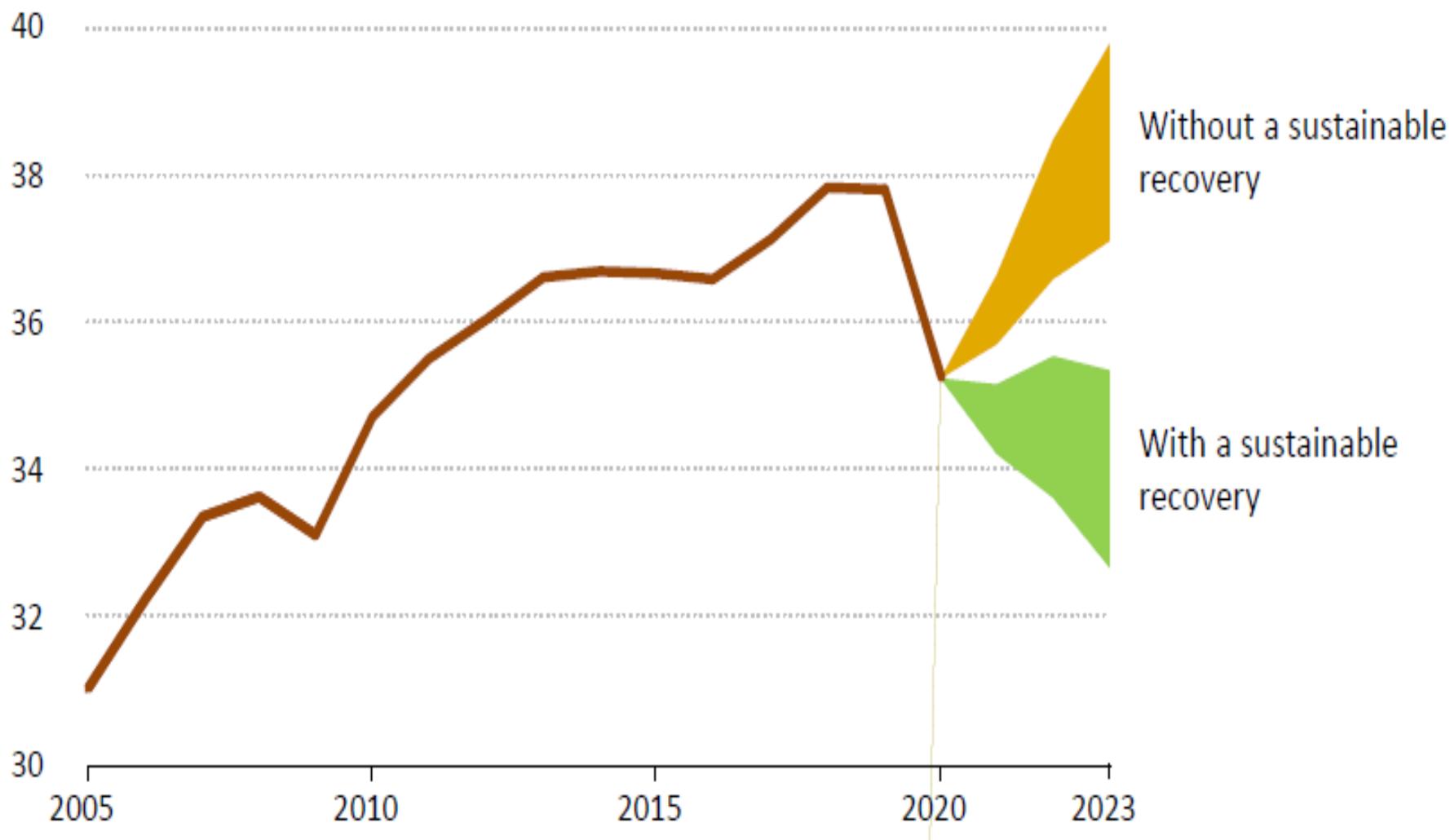
4  **MACROECONOMIC RESPONSE AND MULTILATERAL COLLABORATION**

5  **SOCIAL COHESION AND COMMUNITY RESILIENCE**

Recovery packages need to accelerate the energy transition



Energy sector GHG emissions, Gt CO2 equivalent



Source: IEA

UNECE's response: policy tools



Facilitate connectivity	Address transboundary and other risks	Support a green and resilient recovery
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance cooperation and implementation of a harmonized regulatory framework for border crossing • Promote digital implementation of existing legal transport instruments • Facilitate trade through the exchange of electronic information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of existing multilateral environmental agreements to deal with various risks. • Foster transparency, traceability and risk management through the use of standards • Promote and enhance statistical frameworks to improve the basis for decision-making, including in relation to disasters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance resilience and efficiency through improved resource use, including through circular economy approaches • Address the implication of the crisis in urban centers and engage cities as drivers of the recovery • Promote sustainable infrastructure, including through private sector participation



What needs to be done?

- **Reduce uncertainty** – This is the time to re-commit to existing frameworks for cooperation. Trust on concerted action must be strengthened.
- **Re-build** – Persistent economic damage is likely, requiring continued policy support. This reconstruction agenda needs to connect with the green transformation and the SDGs.
- **Re-connect** – The disruption to trade and transport needs to be addressed.
- **Re- think-** New approaches for resiliency and efficiency, such as the circular economy, should be used
- **Regionalise-** As globalisation is being eroded, the prominence of the regional level to deal with cross-border problems will increase



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Thank you!

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