High-level political forum on sustainable development
Convened under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council
10–19 July 2023
Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
Accelerating the recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19)
and the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda
for Sustainable Development at all levels

Compilation of main messages for the 2023 voluntary national reviews

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat transmits herewith the main messages of the voluntary national reviews of 36 Member States and the European Union, in connection the high-level political forum on sustainable development at its 2023 meeting, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 67/290, 70/1 and 70/299.**
Bahrain

Institutional Alignment

The Kingdom of Bahrain maintains deep-rooted institutional alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); as evidenced by its Constitution and National Action Charter which promote peace and tolerance, advocate for the protection of the disadvantaged, ensure gender equality, guarantee access to universal healthcare and free education for all, and seek to protect the environment and natural resources.

Bahrain’s overarching strategy – the Economic Vision 2030, launched in 2008 – is also strongly aligned with the 2030 Agenda. “Sustainability” and “fairness” constitute two of the Vision’s three guiding principles, and its sustainability aspirations extend beyond the economic sphere to human capital, innovation, technology, the environment, and cultural heritage.

Accelerating SDG Implementation

This Voluntary National Review (VNR), at the mid-point of the 2030 Agenda, reflects the Kingdom’s commitment to accelerating the achievement of the SDGs. In 2022, the Ministry of Sustainable Development was established to coordinate and promote sustainability efforts for the SDGs and beyond. Moreover, the 2023-2026 Government Plan, titled “From Recovery to Sustainability,” further integrates SDGs into government projects.

Response to COVID-19

Bahrain adroitly managed the COVID-19 pandemic through affective preparedness, offering free testing, treatment and vaccinations to all citizens and residents, maintaining uninterrupted essential health services, avoiding full lockdowns, and protecting those hit hardest by the pandemic. Notably, Bahrain granted mothers in the public sector and spouses of frontline female staff the opportunity to work remotely. The Government limited the economic fallout and boosted recovery through a USD 12 billion stimulus package that supported households and corporations, stabilized markets, and restored confidence in the financial system.

This whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach was documented by the World Health Organization in a case study\(^1\) as a guide for preparedness and early response, and for adopting innovative approaches to strengthen health systems’ resilience. Health and economic decisions were data-driven, with professional research institutionally integrated into policy, allowing the Government to tailor its interventions to specific stakeholder needs. Also critical to the Kingdom’s success were volunteers who made pivotal contributions to the pandemic response, reflecting the vibrancy of Bahrain’s civil society.

Achieving Net Zero by 2060

The 2018 VNR cited environmental challenges facing Bahrain due to its geographical characteristics. Today, the environment is at the forefront of future sustainability plans. In 2021, the Government announced its commitment to reach net zero emissions by 2060. To date, the Kingdom registered promising results; enacting the Law on the Environment, exceeding its afforestation targets, and collaborating with the highest emitting sectors and industries to achieve its commitments.

**Sustainable Economic Growth**

The Economic Recovery Plan, launched at the end of 2021, aims to place Bahrain in the best position to benefit from the global recovery and achieve fiscal and economic sustainability. The Plan comprises five pillars and 27 programs and includes strategies for the six sustainability-aligned sectors (tourism, logistics, financial services, manufacturing, oil, and ICT); all of which promote the deployment of digital technology. In 2022, Bahrain registered the highest non-oil economic growth in a decade, with a 6.2 percent GDP growth year-on-year.

**Private Sector Partnerships**

In line with the 2030 Agenda and at the core of Bahrain’s plans is the principle of partnerships; and in 2022, the Government issued a guide regulating public-private partnerships (PPPs). Bahrain has a long history of successfully promoting PPPs to complete strategic projects, including in electricity generation and sewage treatment. One of Bahrain’s biggest successes is in housing, where innovative subsidized mortgage financing solutions enable thousands of eligible Bahrainis, including low-income families, widows, and people with disabilities, to become homeowners through the creation of an attractive market for private construction companies. Bahrain’s 2021 national report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda emphasized the importance of partnerships to drive housing service development.

**Key Challenges**

A key challenge facing Bahrain is achieving fiscal sustainability. Much progress has been made under the Government’s Fiscal Balance Program, nevertheless, further improvements will unleash the transformative investments required and reinforce Bahrain’s reputation as a trailblazer and thought leader in the region. Furthermore, to tackle the data challenge, government agencies are working collectively to make available accurate, timely, relevant, and quality data to measure progress and inform future decisions.

In conclusion, Bahrain reaffirms its commitment to the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda and is dedicated to working with the global community towards building a sustainable, equitable, and resilient future for all.

**Barbados**

[Original: English]

*Creating a Sustainable Future for Generations*
The global ambitions of Barbados cannot be contained within its 437 sq. kilometers. As a small island developing state, and also a large ocean state, which recognizes our commitment to the global community and the importance of collective action toward the achievement of common goals, our 2023 Voluntary National Review signals the commitment of the Government and People of Barbados to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Our VNR process encompassed stakeholder engagement within and across the private and public sectors as well as civil society, affirming our commitment to leave no one behind.

Our major SDG initiative, The Barbados Economic Recovery and Transformation (BERT) Plan 2.0, aims to restore macroeconomic stability and place the Barbados economy on a path of strong, sustainable and inclusive growth, while safeguarding the financial and social sectors. This home-grown plan is transformative in its design, using fiscal policy to facilitate increased social protection by shifting the burden of responsibility away from the most vulnerable. Barbados has increased investments in health, education and other social services which impact positively on well-being and reduce inequality and poverty. We are certain that investment in home-grown initiatives for national transformation which are being developed and implemented, like The Declaration of Mission Barbados, will further progress in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda.

Our journey towards sustainable development has been challenging given our vulnerabilities to the prevailing and often concurrent crises we face. The COVID-19 pandemic suppressed and stalled economic activity, resulting in increased levels of unemployment, particularly in the tourism sector. The Government of Barbados’ effort to combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus led to rapid increases in public sector spending, which left the public sector debt stock at US$ 6.5 billion, equal to 150.3% of GDP, representing a sharp increase from a debt-to-GDP ratio of 126.9% in June 2020 and resulting in considerable widening of our fiscal deficit. In spite of these challenges, Barbados remains committed to fighting the pandemic and protecting the most vulnerable in our community. The current debt to GDP ratio as of March 2023 is 119.6%.

Hurricane Elsa in 2021, the first hurricane to hit Barbados in 65 years, resulted in structural damage to homes and buildings costing the government over US $33 million in repairs thus far and expecting to rise to US$60 million. The triple crises of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the climate crisis and the war in Ukraine exacerbated our socioeconomic vulnerabilities, compelling us to adopt more sustainable, equitable and inclusive ways of building and producing.

To develop our national resilience to increasingly severe weather events, and encourage community and nature-based approaches and solutions to sustainability, the Roofs to Reefs Programme (R2RP) and the Revised Physical Development Plan are being implemented. Our approach calls for mitigation of climate crisis and adaptation to the unavoidable impacts. These policies reflect a deliberate integration of the SDGs into national programmes and policies as reflected in the 92% alignment of SDG targets with national policies in the 2023 Rapid Integrated Assessment for Barbados.

Small states are challenged to collect quality disaggregated data and report on the work being done to achieve the goals. This is one of our main impediments in measuring SDG implementation. Furthermore, as a high/middle income developing country, Barbados is constrained in accessing the finances necessary to fund SDG-promoting initiatives. Access to resources to facilitate the advancement of the Goals and ensure that no one is left behind is critical. Our collaborative effort to confront the climate crisis and the attainment of the SDGs by 2030, The Bridgetown Initiative (BI), seeks to overcome the shortcomings of mobilizing finance for climate vulnerable developing states; to normalize natural disaster and pandemic clauses in all lending
instruments; to provide funding for loss and damages as a result of the climate crisis and; to widen access to concessional financing.

As we press towards accelerating the implementation of the SDGs, we recognize the importance of prioritizing holistic development and prosperity for our people. We have the opportunity to learn from each other, highlight the work countries are doing and mobilize global support to implement meaningful change to achieve the goals. Barbados remains a champion of change creating a sustainable future for generations to come.

**Belgium**

[Original: English]

**Belgium’s Voluntary National Review – a collaborative process**

The decision to present a second VNR is part of a long-standing commitment to multilateralism and sustainable development of the federal state of Belgium. Since 2007, sustainable development has been enshrined in the Belgian Constitution, ensuring that all policy levels pursue the objectives of sustainable development in its social, economic and environmental aspects in their respective competences.

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs requires a whole of society approach and besides governments, other important stakeholders including civil society and the private sector have mobilized around the Global Agenda 2030.

The process of the Second Review was established taking into account this whole of society approach. This joint report is the result of a collaborative effort of various policy levels and stakeholders and summarizes how these various policy levels in the federal state of Belgium contribute to the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs. Since the last VNR in 2017, the Court of Auditors has also conducted an analysis of the implementation, monitoring and reporting by public authorities in Belgium (Preparedness Review) in 2020.

In order to make the process as inclusive as possible, the Federal Council for Sustainable Development (CFDD-FRDO) was tasked to serve as the focal point for engaging various social groups: worker and employer organizations, science and research, youth and "Leave No-One Behind". These were involved in two phases. In the first phase a summarized overview of the SDG implementation of these groups was compiled after which a significant space was devoted to it in the VNR itself. In a second stage, a joint opinion by several advisory councils was requested on the preliminary draft version of the VNR.

The full contributions from all actors who have participated (governments & stakeholders) can be found at sdgs.be.

**Strengths, challenges and policies**

Governments in Belgium start from a privileged position given, among other things, the strong institutional framework regarding sustainable development. With a strong economy, high-quality education and relatively low income inequality, governments have the opportunity to pursue sustainability initiatives, both internally and externally. Through international actions, governments in Belgium are
contributing to achieving the SDGs abroad. Global sustainable development has long been a shared commitment: promotion and protection of human rights, effective and inclusive multilateralism, international solidarity, eradicating poverty, combating climate change and reducing inequalities. This commitment was reflected, for example, in the Belgian response to the COVID pandemic, as well as the sixth Belgian mandate in the UN Security Council in 2019-2020 and the focus on climate security and children in armed conflict. Queen Mathilde's role as an SDG Ambassador also illustrates this commitment.

This second VNR illustrates that governments in Belgium have adopted many policy initiatives that contribute positively to the SDGs, yet many challenges also lie ahead of us.

National statistics show that time is running out. In 2022, Belgium was on track to meet the targets for only 20 of the 51 indicators examined. An annex to this VNR shows the evolution since 2000 for a comprehensive list of indicators in more detail, at the national and regional levels.

Key challenges for implementing the 2030 Agenda include, of course, the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the theme of this year's HLPF, as well as increasing geopolitical uncertainty, the climate crisis and biodiversity loss, social inequalities, the link between digitalization and sustainable development, and the central role of education. These challenges can also present opportunities that must be seized.

In their contributions, civil society groups ask for, among other things, greater coherence in the way that different policy levels monitor the implementation of the SDGs and their targets. This means not only regard for internal Belgian policy coherence, but also coherence with the European and international context, given the economic, ecological and social impact across borders.

This VNR shows that the various governments in Belgium and actors involved remain committed to the SDGs by continuing and strengthening existing efforts to live up to the Decade of Action of Sustainable Development as called for by the Secretary-General of the UN.

**Bosnia and Herzegovina**

[Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to be committed to the transformation and modernization of the entire society in accordance with Agenda 2030 with a view to achieving good and efficient administration and public sector management, a society of equal opportunities and smart growth.

Since the European Union (EU) accession process is the main political goal of the country, it is very important to emphasize that there is full synergy in the implementation of both agendas. Therefore, better results in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda means stronger progress towards full membership in the EU.

After the last VNR presented at the High-Level Political Forum in New York in 2019, Bosnia and Herzegovina adopted the most important document for the
implementation of Agenda 2030 - the SDG Framework. Thereafter, most of the key development strategies at different levels of government were harmonized with it.

Unfortunately, there has been a significant setback due to the new challenges the world has faced in recent years, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine. With the resulting rising rate of inflation, especially rising energy prices, some achievements in poverty reduction are reversed.

Nevertheless, strong efforts are still being made to improve vertical cooperation between different levels of government, as well as horizontal exchange of best practices, especially between local communities and different stakeholders. This is especially challenging given the very complex federal structure of the country. While the ambitious programme of the SDG localization process was launched a year ago, additional efforts are being made to engage the private sector, citizens and academia for the purpose of achieving tangible results on the ground.

It is generally recognized that better and more efficient administration and infrastructure upgrades could significantly improve the position of the most vulnerable groups and the fulfillment of the “Leave No One Behind” principle, but it was also realized that it would be almost impossible to achieve this without further involvement of the local communities.

Fully aware of the fact that public funds are insufficient for the implementation of the Agenda, the SDG Financing Working Group, which was established two years ago, made recommendations on how to mobilize other resources and proposed the introduction of innovative ways of financing that would bring us closer to achieving the set goals by 2030. We expect that the implementation of these proposals will begin in the period after the presentation of the VNR. In addition, the progress made in digitalization, energy transition and efficiency brings new job and environmental protection opportunities.

With the aim of strengthening sound competition and greater commitment to achieving the SDGs, the SDGs Business Pioneers Award was established to recognize the efforts of private sector to achieve sustainable development, and similar awards have since been established for the most prosperous local communities and the academic sector. BiH is even leading a project within the South-East European cooperation process that initiates the annual Regional Award for academic researchers for the best innovations in the implementation of the SDGs.

Furthermore, through the online platform and the e-consultation process launched to create this Voluntary National Review, a wider group of civil society organizations and citizens were involved in this exercise.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has been very active in promoting regional cooperation. Several very important initiatives and meetings were organized with the aim of improving the exchange of experiences, addressing the bottlenecks and similar challenges. Some of them include the meeting of the states of the EU Adriatic-Ionian macro-region focusing on a mid-term evaluation of the progress in achieving the SDGs, the annual meetings of the Western Balkan experts, launched at the end of 2021, activities within the Central European Initiative, and active participation in the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development in Geneva.

We must be fully aware that in the second half of the SDG implementation period, we may encounter many unpredictable and unpleasant events and phenomena, which we have already faced in recent years. Therefore, we must make every effort to build resilience and to respond better and faster in order to overcome such situations as best as we can.
Brunei Darussalam

Brunei Darussalam remains committed to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in line with its National Vision, Wawasan Brunei 2035, progressing the nation towards its goals of having a highly skilled and educated population; a high quality of life; and a dynamic and sustainable Economy. The Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) is timely, as a reflection of the SDG journey following global disruptions. Developed through a participative multi-stakeholder approach, this VNR highlights several developments within the SDGs ecosystem including mainstreaming of SDGs with Wawasan Brunei 2035; enhancements in institutional arrangements; improvements in evidence-based monitoring and timely reporting of progress. Whole-of-nation partnerships coupled with international cooperation, substantiate the findings of SDGs progress and the identified opportunities to address gaps for the remaining 7 years.

National Progress and Challenges

As a country with a high Human Development Index with a value of 0.829, Brunei Darussalam continues to strengthen efforts in several dimensions. The nation remains resolute in maintaining several key areas in particular the commitment to Universal Health Coverage with improvements in health infrastructure, equipment, medicines, and personnel. This has contributed to a low maternal and child mortality rate, a high proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel, and a high percentage of routine vaccination coverage rates. The resilience of the health system was tested by the COVID-19 pandemic but through aggressive action including regular public communications and a strong sense of solidarity, a low death rate with a high recovery rate was achieved.

Economic diversification has made a good stride of progress in stimulating economic growth and more importantly, creating job opportunities. People’s livelihood is further improved by significant investment in better infrastructure, improved food, and nutrition security as well as full access to basic needs, particularly electricity, water, and sanitation. Free education at all levels and lifelong human capital development remain important drivers to maintaining a prosperous society, among others, with high youth and adult literacy rates; good enrolments rate, and stable gender parity. There are also more innovative efforts, especially in the provision of social protection from poverty and hunger among vulnerable groups. The Brunei community also continues to prioritise efforts in climate change, addressing biodiversity loss, and maintaining natural ecosystems. Renewable energy is currently being explored, with initiatives to improve energy efficiency and promote sustainable livelihood.

There are however areas for improvement. At present, data gaps remain a significant challenge. As such, there is only a partial assessment of SDG progress, even though the SDG National Tracker established by UNESCAP, has greatly improved data monitoring and reporting. For example, even though there are aggressive climate change actions through the National Climate Change Policy (BNCCP), more data is needed to effectively monitor outcomes and impacts for Goal 13. There are also other additional compounding factors. For example, whilst there have been improvements in Goal 4 in uplifting the quality of teachers and responding to the needs of special needs students, the education system now has to deal with
learning loss due to school closures during the pandemic. Another area of concern is actions needed to support transformations in human consumption behaviours, such as increasing the uptake of recycling and sustainable practices. Strong partnerships are therefore essential to accelerate progress and scale up interventions.

**The Way Forward**

Brunei Darussalam is confident that the SDGs can be achieved through solidarity and building synergies in efforts with strength and resilience. Brunei Darussalam will continue its efforts to strengthen key areas including investments in human capital; progressing in quality of life which includes governance, social and environmental areas; and accelerating economic diversification to reduce poverty, inequalities and improve social and economic resilience. Ongoing efforts will also be continued through strengthening statistical capacity to better identify vulnerable populations; develop evidence-based policies; strengthen collaboration with all relevant stakeholders and through deeper policy coherence and implementation. These would be particularly relevant in designing and mobilising behavioural changes needed for a deeper change toward sustainable development. Together with a stronger multilateralism approach to SDG, action to the 2030 Agenda will further transform the future of the planet and its people. Brunei Darussalam will continue its SDG journey with resilience, adaptation, and partnership.

**Burkina Faso**

[Original: French]

Le Burkina Faso se prête à nouveau à cet exercice en 2023, après celui de 2019. En s’engageant à la production du deuxième Rapport national volontaire (RNV), le Gouvernement s’oblige, malgré les multiples chocs auxquels le pays fait face, à rendre compte de la mise en œuvre des ODD.

Ce RNV constitue une opportunité pour le pays de s’interroger sur les efforts à fournir pour être au rendez-vous de l’agenda 2030. Il a été préparé selon une approche participative, interactive et inclusive.

La mise en œuvre des ODD s’est faite dans un contexte difficile marqué, par la persistance de la crise sécuritaire et les changements dans la gouvernance politique au niveau national, et au niveau international par la survenue de la Covid-19 et la guerre entre la Russie et l’Ukraine.

Par ailleurs, la situation sécuritaire a occasionné une crise humanitaire sans précédente, avec un nombre de Personnes déplacées internes estimé à 1 999 127 à la date du 28 février 2023 dont 58,42% d’enfants, 23,97% de femmes et 17,61% d’hommes.

Malgré ce contexte difficile, l’économie burkinabè s’est montrée résiliente. En effet, le taux de croissance de l’économie a évolué à un rythme annuel moyen de 5,2% sur la période 2016 -2022. Toutefois, les effets de la COVID-19 ont été ressentis en 2020 par une perte de croissance (-3,8 points de pourcentage), un repli des recettes fiscales (-3,4 %) et un creusement du déficit budgétaire (-5,2%).

Aussi, l’évaluation de la mise en œuvre des ODD 6 et 7 montre que des résultats satisfaits ont été atteints. Ainsi, le pays enregistre une amélioration de l’accès à l’eau potable, qui passe de 71,9% en 2016 à 76,3% en 2021. Ces avancées ont été portées par l’initiative « zéro corvée d’eau » lancée en 2016 qui a permis de booster les interventions et de disponibiliser ainsi un grand nombre d’ouvrages hydrauliques. Le pays enregistre également une amélioration de la couverture géographique en électricité (33,32% en 2015 à
49,29% en 2021) et du taux d’accès à l’électricité au niveau national porté par l’énergie solaire. En 2018, les ménages ayant accès à l’électricité étaient estimés à 53,4% (24,4% pour l’électricité réseau et 29,0% pour l’énergie solaire ou groupe électrogène). Il est aussi à noter une amélioration des énergies renouvelables dans la production totale d’énergie/electricité réseau (9,4% en 2015 à 24,29% en 2021) grâce au développement des projets solaires.

Cependant, l’évaluation des ODD 9 et 11 restent mitigés. Il est à noter une dégradation du réseau routier en dépit des efforts de réhabilitation entrepris depuis 2017 (30% de route en bonne état en 2016 contre 25% en 2021) et une baisse de la contribution de l’industrie manufacturière dans le PIB. Quant à l’urbanisation croissante, elle a eu une incidence sur le développement de l’accès de tous à un logement et des services de base dans les villes.

Le pays doit relever un certain nombre de défis pour l’accélération des objectifs de développement dont le principal demeure la crise sécuritaire qui a affecté sévèrement les progrès réalisés par le Burkina Faso dans la mise en œuvre des ODD. À ce défi majeur, peut-on ajouter :

- la maîtrise de la démographie pour l’atteinte du dividende démographique ;
- la mobilisation des ressources internes et externes pour répondre aux besoins sécuritaire, humanitaire et de développement de plus en plus croissants ;
- la réduction des inégalités et des disparités persistantes malgré les politiques publiques mises en œuvre ces dernières années ;
- le renforcement d’action en vue de promouvoir la recherche dans la mise en œuvre des ODD ;
- la dynamisation des secteurs porteurs pour l’économie et les emplois.

En dépit du contexte difficile, l’engagement des autorités à poursuivre la mise en œuvre des ODD s’est renforcé avec le l’élaboration du plan national de développement économique et social (2021-2025) dont l’opérationnalisation se fait actuellement à travers le Plan d’Action pour la Stabilisation et le Développement (PA-SD) bâti autour de quatre piliers : pilier 1 : lutter contre le terrorisme et restaurer l’intégrité territoriale ; pilier 2 : répondre à la crise humanitaire ; pilier 3 : refonder l’État et améliorer la gouvernance et pilier 4 : œuvrer à la réconciliation nationale et à la cohésion sociale.

Cambodia

[Original: English]

Cambodia’s development goals, vision and LDC graduation

Cambodia's second VNR assesses progress on the 17 SDGs and its additional goal of eliminating mines and ERW.


Achieving the SDGs is crucial for Cambodia's aspirations to become an Upper Middle-Income Country by 2030 and a High-Income Country by 2050. Having met
for the first time all LDC graduation criteria in 2021, Cambodia may potentially graduate from the LDCs as early as 2027 if progress continues.

Progress on the Goals and leaving no one behind

Cambodia has made significant strides in enhancing the well-being of its population, working diligently to ensure that no one is left behind. This progress is evident in various sectors, including 7) Affordable and clean energy, 11) Sustainable cities and communities, 12) Responsible consumption and production, 4) Quality of education, 5) Gender equality, 10) Reduced inequalities, 17) Partnership for the goals, and Cambodia’s own goal, and 18) End the negative impact of mines and ERW.

The government also recognizes the need to make further efforts in 8) Decent work and economic growth, 9) Industry, innovation, and infrastructure, and 15) Life on land, and to make additional data available to assess progress in 1) No poverty, 2) Zero hunger, 3) Good health and well-being, 6) Clean water and sanitation, 13) Climate action, 14) Life below water, and 16) Peace, justice, and strong institutions.

Furthermore, Cambodia has made significant strides in enhancing the well-being of its population, with a focus on ensuring that no one is left behind in this progress. For example, from 2010 to 2022, access to basic drinking water and sanitation more than doubled, while access to electricity, clean fuel, and bank accounts more than tripled for average households at national level, but with greater progress observed in households furthest behind, closing the gap in terms of inequality of opportunities in Cambodia.

In children’s health, prevalence of stunting almost halved from 40% in 2010 to 22% in 2022. However, children living in poorer households are left behind as stunting prevalence reaches 30% among them. Prevalence of wasting remained stagnant at 10% on average and at 14% for the furthest behind, while prevalence of overweight children doubled from 2% in 2014 to 4% in 2022.

As regards women's health, there has been an overall improvement in birth attendance. However, 5% of economically disadvantaged women, those with lower education levels, and those with more than three children, still lack access to skilled birth attendance. Additionally, although there has been a 20% increase in the proportion of women with access to modern contraceptives from 2014 to 2020, nearly 40% of women aged 15-49 still have unmet needs for family planning. This figure rises to almost 50% for younger women in urban areas, who, as of 2022, represent the most underserved demographic in this regard.

Among adults aged 20-35, completion of secondary education jumped from 15% in 2014 to 23% in 2022, while tertiary education attendance almost doubled from 7% in 2014 to 13% in 2022. Although, poorer women aged 25-35 are furthest behind in secondary completion as only 7% of them have completed secondary education in 2022.

Road ahead

Cambodia is determined to accelerate its recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact of the Ukraine war while proactively addressing current and emerging challenges such as climate change. The nation will redouble its efforts to achieve all its goals by implementing targeted corrective measures, allocating budgets, and mobilizing resources from diverse sources in collaboration with development partners and stakeholders.
The forthcoming long-term Pentagon Strategy and the National Strategic Development Plan 2024-2028 will be strategically aligned to accelerate progress towards SDGs achievement, economic recovery, inclusive, sustainable and resilient development, as well as shared prosperity for Cambodia and the World to leave no one behind.

Canada

[Original: English]

Canada is making significant progress in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its second Voluntary National Review (VNR) evaluates progress since 2018 and focuses on efforts to advance five national priorities: SDG 1 (No Poverty), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The remaining SDGs are reviewed in summary. The VNR was developed in consultation with governments at all levels, Indigenous Peoples, civil society, academia, and individual Canadians. It is underpinned by data and reflects whole-of-society actions, achievements, and challenges.

By fostering partnerships and collaboration, Canada is advancing the SDGs to build a more prosperous, healthy and sustainable future. It is working to accelerate progress for those left furthest behind, including Indigenous Peoples, racialized and religious minorities, 2SLGBTQI+ people, those with a disability, official language minority communities, and other groups in vulnerable situations.

Significant progress has been made on reducing poverty (SDG 1). Canada has met its interim target of a 20% reduction in poverty. However, recent data reflect the emergence of new challenges, including the end of COVID-19 emergency benefits and high inflation. Still, Canada remains well-positioned to achieve a 50% decrease in poverty by 2030, based on 2015 levels. Canada contributes to global efforts to eradicate poverty and increased its total international assistance resources to $8.4 billion in 2021-2022.

Ensuring access to quality education (SDG 4) is an important measure to tackle poverty. Canadian educational outcomes are among the highest in the world. Provinces and territories are working to support students, parents, and education staff with academic assistance and ensure student well-being. The Government of Canada made an historic five year, $30 billion investment to build a Canada-wide, affordable, high quality and inclusive early learning and child care system. Canada continues to demonstrate global leadership in investing in and ensuring access to quality education.

Canada has a longstanding commitment to gender equality (SDG 5) and is taking concrete action to support women, girls and the 2SLGBTQI+ community. This includes ensuring equal pay for work of equal value in federally-regulated workplaces. The National Action Plan to End Gender-based Violence helps those affected access reliable and timely protection and services. Globally, Canada is the top OECD ranked donor for the share of aid supporting gender equality, and is among the top-ranked for investments supporting women’s rights organizations.
Canada is taking bold action on climate change (SDG 13), as it works to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by forty to forty-five percent below 2005 levels by 2030, and reduce carbon pollution to net zero by 2050. In 2022, Canada launched the most comprehensive emissions reduction plan in its history. The Government of Canada has also invested more than $8B in adaptation and disaster response to protect communities and build resilience to climate change impacts. In 2021, Canada committed $5.3 billion in climate financing to help low and middle-income countries transition to sustainable and climate resilient development.

Partnerships (SDG 17) are at the heart of advancing the 2030 Agenda. The Government of Canada committed up to $60M to support whole-of-society stakeholders advance the SDGs. Canada plays a leading international role on the development of global indicators as part of the United Nations inter-Agency Expert group on SDG indicators. Canada also mobilized $33B through its Total Official Support for Sustainable Development abroad from 2018 to 2021. These investments are matched by Canada’s high-level commitment to global action, with Prime Minister Trudeau currently serving as co-chair of the United Nations Secretary General’s SDG Advocates Group with Prime Minister Mottley of Barbados.

Canada’s international assistance continues to improve the lives of millions of people around the world by supporting programs that tackle hunger and malnutrition (SDG 2), invest in quality education (SDG 4), advance human rights (SDG 16), enhance global health (SDG 3) and promote gender equality (SDG 5). Canada’s assistance has reached more than 4 million girls and women globally and over 900 women’s rights organizations.

Canada has made good progress to achieve the SDGs. More remains to be done. Canada continues to note health inequalities for many populations, including gaps in health outcomes of Indigenous Peoples. Data continues to point to the scale and impact of gender inequality and disability status on the realization of many other SDGs. Many Canadians face growing food insecurity and housing affordability challenges as rising prices outpace income growth, exacerbating existing lower socio-economic outcomes for vulnerable populations.

Yet, Canada remains steadfast in its commitment to enabling and accelerating progress to achieve the SDGs in an inclusive, whole-of-society approach to ensure no one is left behind.

Central African Republic

[Original: French]

1- La République Centrafricaine s’est engagée à mettre en œuvre les ODD en adoptant le Plan National de Relèvement et de Consolidation de la Paix (RCPCA) sur la période 2017-2023. La priorisation des cibles des ODD réalisée de manière inclusive en juin 2018, a démontré que les trois piliers du RCPCA portant sur : (i) soutenir la paix, la sécurité et la réconciliation nationale (ii) renouveler le contrat social entre l’État et la population et (iii) assurer le relèvement économique et la relance des secteurs productifs, sont alignés sur 43% des cibles des ODD retenus (6, 7, 9, 11 et 17).

2- La mise en œuvre du RCPCA, renforcée par la signature de l’APPR en 2019 et la feuille de route de Luanda en 2021, a permis de stabiliser et de renforcer les capacités des
institutions républicaines, restaurer l’autorité de l’État, rétablir la sécurité et la réconciliation nationale, améliorer la fourniture des services sociaux de base à la population et relancer l’économie.

3- Cependant, les mesures sanitaires restrictives liées à la pandémie de COVID-19 et la crise humanitaire ont fortement impacté la situation économique et sociale, et exercé une pression considérable sur la poursuite des travaux de reconstruction du pays.


6- **Sur le plan environnemental**, le cadre de vie dans certaines villes du pays s’est nettement amélioré avec la réalisation des grands travaux d’infrastructures de voirie et réseaux divers. L’assainissement s’est amélioré grâce aux effets de collecte et d’évacuation des déchets solides et du drainage des eaux pluviales. La proportion des populations urbaines vivant dans des taudis est revenue de 68% en 2017 à 62% en 2021-2022 et celle ayant des installations sanitaires améliorées a atteint 29,2% en 2021-2022 contre 21,8% en 2018-2019.

7- En dépit des efforts déployés grâce aux appuis multiformes de la communauté internationale, des défis restent à surmonter pour la réalisation des progrès vers l’atteinte des ODD à l’horizon 2030. La dégradation des infrastructures routières, l’insécurité dans certaines régions, le réchauffement climatique, la déforestation, les inondations, la baisse du débit et la pollution des cours d’eau ont affecté non seulement le système de production agricole mais aussi les secteurs sociaux de base. Car, la baisse du débit des cours d’eau et les difficultés de dragage sur le fleuve Oubangui, réduisent considérablement les délais de navigabilité, perturbant ainsi, le ravitaillement du pays en produits pétroliers et de première nécessité à des coûts abordables.

8- La persistance de la guerre Russo-ukrainienne et de la crise énergétique continue d’avoir des impacts défavorables sur la croissance économique et la mobilisation des ressources intérieures et extérieures. Toutefois, des actions énergiques sont nécessaires à entreprendre par le Gouvernement et les Partenaires Techniques et Financiers pour accélérer les travaux de reconstruction et garantir l’atteinte des agendas 2030 et 2063.
Chile

Chile reafirma su compromiso con la Agenda 2030, los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) y el multilateralismo, como la mejor vía para avanzar en los desafíos globales, sin dejar a nadie atrás.

Desde nuestro segundo Informe Nacional Voluntario (INV) el 2019, la implementación de los ODS se ha visto gravemente afectada por los efectos de la Pandemia COVID-19, la crisis económica, medioambiental y las tensiones geopolíticas.

Para enfrentar estos retos, Chile ha impulsado consensos y acciones colaborativas hacia la sostenibilidad. Un hito de este renovado compromiso ha sido la adopción de la Estrategia Nacional de implementación de la Agenda 2030. La Estrategia representa un amplio acuerdo a nivel país para definir una hoja de ruta del 2030. La estrategia consideró varios mecanismos de participación que incluyó la activa participación de representantes de diversos sectores de la sociedad, a lo largo de todo el país.

En ella se plasma la visión del Estado de Chile, que transciende los ciclos gubernamentales, hacia un país sostenible e inclusivo, donde se equilibran las dimensiones social, ambiental y económica, en paz, justicia, poniendo en el centro a las personas, los derechos humanos y con un enfoque transversal de género. Todo esto, con un fuerte componente de territorialización de la Agenda 2030, como estrategia de apropiación y fortalecimiento de las alianzas locales.

El desarrollo económico y social de Chile de las últimas décadas ha implicado una drástica disminución de la pobreza, elevando el estándar de vida de millones de personas. Hoy los desafíos nos obligan a construir consensos que se orienten en el largo plazo y que se hagan cargo de la desigualdad, el cambio climático y la erosión del tejido social.

Para ello, la hoja de ruta de Chile se centra en las personas, en donde buscamos promover políticas públicas para reducir las distintas vulnerabilidades sociales y fortalecer el sistema de protección social.

También incorpora la preocupación por el Planeta, enfrentando la denominada triple crisis, climática, de pérdida de biodiversidad y de contaminación global, transformando la relación entre los seres humanos y la naturaleza, para lograr una transición socioecológica justa. En esta línea, estamos implementado importantes planes, estrategias y legislación en el ámbito medioambiental, que se orientan en diversas áreas como la gobernanza del agua, ciudades sostenibles, la protección de nuestro océano, el avance hacia una economía circular y la acción climática.

Para avanzar en la senda del desarrollo sostenible, tenemos que enfrentar los desafíos en el área de productividad e innovación. Chile ha asumido la transformación de la matriz energética como una política de Estado, con proyectos de desarrollo de capacidades e infraestructuras en áreas claves, como la industria del Hidrógeno Verde y el Litio, sentando las bases de una economía verde que se levanta con equidad territorial, igualdad de género y trabajo decente, contribuyendo como país a las imperiosas metas que la comunidad internacional se fijó en el Acuerdo de París.
Sin embargo, no hay desarrollo sostenible sin una cultura de paz, con instituciones sólidas y con una democracia plena. Chile aspira a construir una sociedad justa e inclusiva, abordando temas como la seguridad ciudadana, la violencia y la discriminación. Los retos relacionados con el desarrollo integral, que incorpora agendas que representan la diversidad del país, como la de los pueblos indígenas, la protección de la infancia y la adolescencia y de nuestras personas mayores, deben ser fruto de acuerdos nacionales entre múltiples actores, construyendo alianzas a nivel global, regional y local.

A través de este INV, Chile se mira a sí mismo, identifica sus logros y sincera sus desafíos, reafirmado una ambiciosa hoja de ruta en el marco de la Agenda 2030, consciente que las metas se alcanzan en colaboración con la comunidad internacional, con la mirada puesta en las personas, la prosperidad y el planeta.

Comoros

[Original: French]

Les Comores évaluent les progrès accomplis depuis 2020 et partagent ses réussites et ses défis dans la réalisation des ODD.

Etat des réalisations des ODD


Des progrès ont été observés dans l’économie numérique notamment du fait des investissements réalisés et des innovations comme le lancement des mobiles Banking pour améliorer l’offre des services, ce qui contribue à l’accélération de la pénétration du numérique. Des progrès ont été également enregistrés en matière de développement de l’économie bleue à travers l’amélioration de la sûreté et de la sécurité maritime, la connectivité inter îles et la relance du processus d’industrialisation du secteur de la pêche.

S’agissant du principe de « ne laisser personne de côté », le pays a initié le renforcement de son système de protection sociale contributive et non contributive Une loi en faveur de l’emploi des jeunes a été promulguée. Le pays a adopté de nouvelles lois notamment un nouveau code pénal qui renforce la législation relative à la violence contre les enfants et les femmes. Des efforts restent à faire dans l’inclusion des personnes vivantes avec un handicap, la promotion et la protection de leurs droits.
Le pays a mis en place et opérationnalisé son institution nationale de droits de l’homme et des libertés publiques.

La Couverture Sanitaire Universelle a été instituée. Grâce à un fort engagement communautaire, le taux de couverture vaccinale contre la COVID-19 a dépassé 50%, inscrivant les Comores dans la liste des pays africains les plus vaccinée contre cette pandémie.

Les Comores ont choisi une approche intégrée mettant en cohérence le Cadre de Sendai pour la réduction des risques de catastrophe (RRC), l’Agenda 2030 et l’Accord de Paris. Un processus d’élaboration d’un Plan National d’Adaptation couplée avec la révision de la Stratégie Nationale de RRC est en cours. Le gouvernement poursuit ses initiatives visant à augmenter la capacité des énergies renouvelables à 40% en 2030.

Le pays dispose d’une stratégie nationale de mobilisation des ressources dans le cadre national de financement intégré des ODD. Des efforts sont consentis pour la mobilisation des ressources de financement innovantes. En matière de préservation et de restauration des écosystèmes terrestres, la superficie des sites pour la biodiversité terrestre a été étendue à 163754 hectares avec la création de nouvelles Aires Protégées. Le pays est passé du seul Parc Marin de Mohéli à actuellement 6 parcs terrestres et marins. Le nombre d'accords de cogestion signés entre les parcs et les communautés pour la gestion des ressources marines est actuellement de 72 contre 17 en 2015.

Les défis majeurs

La COVID-19 et la guerre d’Ukraine ont ébranlé une économie nationale très dépendante de l’extérieur. Les défis consistent notamment à la mise en place et la modernisation des infrastructures économiques et l’amélioration de l’environnement des affaires. D’autres défis majeurs concernent l’appropriation nationale des ODD et le renforcement des capacités de gestion du développement incluant la coordination des partenaires, la mobilisation des ressources et leur absorption, la consolidation du système statistique national, la gestion des déchets et le renforcement du système de protection sociale.

Un autre défi concerne.

Les domaines d’appui

Le pays aurait besoin d’un appui technique et/ou financier dans les domaines ci-après :
- Énergie propre,
- Sécurité alimentaire,
- Économie bleue,
- Renforcement de capacités de gestion du développement incluant les statistiques et la planification du développement
- Parité homme/femme dans l’enseignement supérieur, professionnel et technique.

Croatia

[Original: English]

Progress towards achieving SDGs
Sustainable development is one of Croatia's priorities, considering that Croatia belongs to the Mediterranean, one of the regions of the world that will be hardest hit by climate change, increasing aridity, floods and rising sea levels. This is particularly reflected in national policies, initiatives and strategies to achieve the SDGs at national and global level.

While increasingly closing its economic gap with developed EU economies, Croatia strives to do so without sacrificing its climate commitments, which it pursues in parallel. Thus, the country aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 65% until 2030 compared to 1990 levels, and to increase the production of electricity from renewable sources to more than 35% by 2030. With 31% of its primary energy consumption coming from renewable energy sources, Croatia ranks 8th among EU countries, with an average of 22%.

Like the rest of the world, Croatia faced several serious challenges in 2020. In addition to the threats posed by the consequences of climate change, the global crisis triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic led to a significant decline in economic activity, although the Government opted for targeted health measures preserving individual freedoms as much as possible. Croatia was also struck by two devastating earthquakes in the capital Zagreb and the region of Banovina. Great damage was caused and the consequences of earthquakes, several times greater than the impact of the pandemic, will take years to repair. The Croatian economy has also been affected by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, to which Croatia nevertheless has provided humanitarian, economic, political and military assistance from the outset of the war.

Despite all these challenges, Croatia maintained social cohesion and was able to sustain economic growth throughout these challenging times.

Looking back at the VNR 2019, Croatia has made and continues to make significant progress towards achieving the SDGs. Improvement is particularly evident in the areas of economic and social fairness, labour productivity and macroeconomic stability.

Other areas where significant progress has been achieved are energy transition to climate neutrality, the protection of the environment and nature, reducing the risk of poverty, improving living standards and promoting equality.

Croatia also promotes sustainable social and economic development through the implementation of policies that support the national economy in this demanding period, with the aim of ensuring that no one is left behind and that the most vulnerable social groups are supported. Furthermore, with its reforms and investments Croatia fosters three parallel processes – digital transformation, demographic renewal and green transition, which includes better waste and water management, efficient public services and results in a better living standard across the country.

**Incorporation of SDGs into national processes and policies**

The National Development Strategy of the Republic of Croatia until 2030 (NDS 2030) was adopted in February 2021 and is in line with the 2030 Agenda and other multilateral commitments. The strategic goals and the coordinated implementation of the policies defined in the NDS 2030 are largely in line with the implementation of the SDGs and aim to help Croatia better realise its potential, eliminate the economic and social damage caused by the global crisis and promote recovery.
After the adoption of the NDS 2030, the comprehensive integration of sustainable development into sectoral policies and strategic planning acts at the national, regional, and local levels began.

Laws and regulations have been adopted to address sustainable development issues and to ensure the protection of the environment, natural resources and human rights.

Additionally, Croatia promotes sustainable development through the implementation of various projects and programmes. This includes active cooperation with other countries, organisations and institutions with the aim of sharing experience, knowledge and best practice in the field of sustainable development.

The strategic planning process has been improved through reforms within the National Recovery and Resilience Plan, which also streamlines the implementation of public policies, including those related to the achievement of the SDGs. It also supports the decision-making processes, ensures the efficiency and transparency of public policies and enables a more efficient coordination in the implementation of the SDGs.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

[Original: French]

La République Démocratique du Congo n'est pas sur une bonne trajectoire pour atteindre les ODD. La COVID-19 est venue davantage retarder, voire annihiler des progrès enregistrés. Ainsi, pour répondre de manière efficace aux défis liés à la mise en œuvre des ODD, le Gouvernement s'est engagé dans des transformations structurelles et la mise en œuvre des solutions guidées par les ODD.

Sur le plan social, the DRC met en œuvre la réforme sur la couverture sanitaire universelle. Pour un pays où les dépenses catastrophiques de la santé sont très élevées, cette réforme constitue un tremplin pour sortir des millions des Congolais de la vulnérabilité. Des actions d'envergure ont été menées pour lutter contre les maladies massives telles que le Paludisme et le VIH, avec une attention particulière sur la prévention. Des mesures idoines sont aussi prises pour renforcer la protection sociale.

Dans le secteur de l'éducation, afin de récupérer des millions d'enfants autrefois omis du système suite aux frais très élevés, la RDC a rendu effective la gratuité de l'enseignement de base et des mesures ont été prises pour renforcer cette gratuité.

L'accès à l'eau et l'électricité reste dans des proportions inquiétantes en RDC, principalement dans les milieux ruraux. Pour répondre de manière efficace à ces défis, le Gouvernement a libéralisé les deux secteurs. Contrairement au secteur de l'eau où des avancées restent très timides, des progrès majeurs sont enregistrés dans le secteur de l'électricité. La part des privés reste croissante au cours des trois dernières années et les perspectives sont bonnes. Malencontreusement, la pauvreté endémique dans les milieux ruraux n'encourage pas les initiatives privées. Et c'est là où se concentre actuellement l'action de l'Etat.

La dépendance aux ressources naturelles constitue l'un des traits caractéristiques de l'économie de la DRC. La croissance reste en grande partie imputable à la bonne tenue des cours. La reprise d'après COVID-19 en est une illustration. Cela constitue une réelle faiblesses en exposant le pays à la volatilité des...
cours des matières premières. Pour diversifier l'économie et doter le pays d'un tissu industriel dynamique, compétitif, responsable en matière d'environnement et de développement durable, la RDC a lancé la mise en place des six Zones Economiques Spéciales (ZES) à travers le territoire national répartis en six zones industrielles.

Il ne fait nul doute que la DRC constitue un acteur majeur dans la lutte contre le changement climatique ; Un pays-solution avec des réels atouts. Le Gouvernement œuvre pour la sauvegarde des forêts et la lutte contre les changements climatiques. Dans le cadre de la COP 26, la DRC a revu ses engagements de réduction des émissions de gaz à effet de serre passant de 17 à de 21% d'ici à 2030. Néanmoins, il est clair que pour plus d'efficacité, le Gouvernement devra investir dans le système de collecte des données et informations.

Le Gouvernement congolais reste conscient que les actions et stratégies de développement doivent avoir leur ancrage au niveau local pour plus d'efficacité. Dans cette perspective, le Gouvernement a lancé le Programme de Développement des 145 territoires (PDL-145T). Il s'agit d'un Programme ciblant les 145 territoires afin d'accroître l'offre publique des services sociaux de base, améliorer la résilience des populations locales et renforcer les institutions publiques au niveau local.

La mise en œuvre des ODD en RDC se fait dans un contexte de conflits et d'instabilités, principalement dans la partie Est du pays. Plusieurs groupes armés y opèrent à ce jour, dont les principaux sont le M23, les ADF et la CODECO. Ces groupes ont été à la base de plusieurs incidents : morts violentes, enlèvements, destruction du tissu économique locale, destruction des infrastructures critiques et autres biens, déplacement massif de la population, etc.

L'activisme de ces groupes armés a aussi fortement détérioré la situation humanitaire. Et cela a entraîné l'augmentation des besoins de la population en aide humanitaire. The proportion of the population en besoin d'aide humanitaire a connu une hausse significative de plus de 73%, passant de 15,6 millions in 2019 à 27 millions in 2022. Avec un nombre de déplacés internes dépassant les 5 millions, la RDC reste l'un des pays ayant une forte proportion de déplacés internes sur le continent africain.

Il convient de noter que des efforts au niveau national, sous-régional et régional sont en entrepris pour mettre un terme aux conflits dans la partie Est de la RDC. Il est clair que dans le contexte actuel, l'atteinte des ODD reste hypothétique.

**European Union**

[Original: English]

The EU reaffirms, by adopting the first EU Voluntary Review (EUVR), its commitment to the full and timely implementation of the 2030 Agenda, through its internal and external action, as a shared global roadmap. Building on the concept of ‘whole-of-government’, the EU implements the 2030 Agenda in an integrated approach which places the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the core of EU policy. All EU actions and policies contribute to the implementation of the SDGs. The EU aims at a high standard of ambition through deeply transformative policies and strategies, such as the European Green Deal, which are inherently linked to the pursuit of the SDGs and promoting global transformation to a sustainable and peaceful world.

Progress towards the SDGs at global level has proven insufficient so far – a challenging trend confirmed by the latest UNSG’s Report on the SDGs. The achievement of
the SDGs has been hindered by the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, conflicts, growing inequalities, climate change and increasing levels of environmental degradation and the impacts of Russia’s war of aggression against Ukraine. The EU’s response to the various ongoing crises is based on, and aims to support, the implementation framework of the SDGs. While the EU has made progress across a large majority of the SDGs since adoption of the Agenda, this has not always been even. More progress is needed in the EU on many SDGs, in particular on those related to the protection and sustainable use of natural resources.

The Commission priorities are closely interconnected with the ‘5 Ps’ of the preamble of the 2030 Agenda. The Commission pursues the implementation of the SDGs by advancing its headline ambitions through concrete initiatives set out in the annual Commission Work Programmes. The SDGs are thus mainstreamed in EU policies and orient policy and law-making in the EU. A central element of the Commission’s approach to policy coherence for sustainable development is the revised Better Regulation framework, which contains several improvements to enhance the EU law-making process. This now requires that the impact assessment of every legislative proposal identifies how the EU action will contribute to the implementation of the SDGs.

The EUVR contains a strategic overview of the EU commitments and targets to progress towards the SDGs, including, where applicable, quantified targets for 2030. It provides a comprehensive summary of EU internal and external actions in support of the implementation of the SDGs, as well as considerations on policy coherence between action at both levels, including potential synergies and trade-offs, having regard to impacts on partner countries. The EUVR also includes orientations on actions to be undertaken to take the implementation of the 2030 Agenda further.

This determined EU action cannot be achieved without engaging with partner countries and at multilateral level, and is thus being taken further through EU’s international partnerships. The EU is committed to global recovery by supporting partner countries in developing resilient societies and economies aligned with the SDGs.

Global Gateway is the EU’s offer and effective contribution to strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership. This strategy will directly contribute to the implementation of a range of interlinked SDGs. The EU will continue to actively integrate the SDGs in the projects undertaken through Global Gateway, notably in relation to sustainable infrastructure for energy, transport, and digitalisation. Together with Member States in a Team Europe approach, this will leverage multiple sources of funding including private sector investments in support of the SDGs.

SDGs can only be achieved by getting all stakeholders on board. The EUVR was carried out with the help of a broad consultation process involving stakeholders at all levels –EU institutions and bodies, national, regional and local authorities, civil society and the public at large. The EUVR includes detailed information on the overall consultations process as well as civil society views on the achievements and challenges of SDG implementation at EU level.

EU implementation of the 2030 Agenda is aligned to UN principles, values and guidelines, particularly the universality of human rights, all the more important as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

France

[Original: French]
La France présentera en juillet 2023 son deuxième examen national volontaire. Cet exercice permettra de constater les progrès réalisés vers l’atteinte des objectifs de développement durable (ODD), ainsi que les défis restant à relever à mi-parcours de la mise en œuvre du Programme de développement durable à l’horizon 2030.

La France est attachée à ce que cet état des lieux soit d’une part l’exercice de bilan des politiques publiques mises en œuvre depuis la dernière RNV présentée en 2016 ainsi que la mise en exergue des réalisations de la société civile (entreprises, collectivités territoriales, ONG, associations, secteur de la recherche…) engagée en faveur de la réalisation des ODD.

La préparation de la revue s’est déroulée selon une approche partenariale. L’administration a proposé dès l’automne 2022 à l’ensemble de la communauté Agenda 2030, rassemblant les acteurs français engagés dans l’atteinte des ODD, de traduire leurs enjeux et de proposer des actions phares à faire connaître. Une conférence contributive spécifiquement dédiée aux partages des contributions des acteurs est prévue en mai afin qu’émergent des initiatives fortes à valoriser sur les cinq ODD passés sous revue cette année lors du Forum politique de haut niveau. Les axes de travail proposés par la société civile pour poursuivre les efforts communs pourront être soulignés et intégrés dans le document de la revue nationale française. Une Commission 2030 a été constituée spécifiquement pour ce sujet : 15 experts sont rassemblés par l’Institut Open Diplomacy, association dont la mission est de sensibiliser les citoyens aux enjeux internationaux, pour animer la conférence contributive.

En 2019, la France s’est dotée d’une Feuille de route pour l’Agenda 2030 fixant le cap pour une nation entreprenante, solidaire et écologique autour des six enjeux suivants :

- Agir pour une transition juste, en luttant contre toutes les discriminations et inégalités et en garantissant les mêmes droits, opportunités et libertés à toutes et à tous,
- Transformer les modèles de sociétés par la sobriété carbone et l’économie des ressources naturelles, pour agir en faveur du climat, de la planète et de sa biodiversité,
- S’appuyer sur l’éducation et la formation tout au long de la vie pour permettre une évolution des comportements et modes de vie adaptés au monde à construire et aux défis du développement durable,
- Agir pour la santé et le bien-être de toutes et tous, notamment via une alimentation et une agriculture saines et durables,
- Rendre effective la participation citoyenne à l’atteinte des ODD et concrétiser la transformation des pratiques à travers le renforcement de l’expérimentation et de l’innovation territoriale,
- Œuvrer au plan européen et international en faveur de la transformation durable des sociétés, de la paix et de la solidarité.

Le rapport de la France fera son bilan des progrès réalisés et des voies d’amélioration dans la mise en œuvre de l’Agenda 2030 au prisme de ces six axes transversaux, qui permettent d’envisager de manière globale les transformations nécessaires vers plus de durabilité, de justice et de résilience. Les résultats ODD par ODD y seront détaillés sur la base des 98 indicateurs du cadre de suivi national de l’Agenda 2030, définis de façon concertée dans le cadre du Conseil national de l’information statistique (CNIS) et suivis de manière indépendante par l’Institut national des statistiques et des études économiques (INSEE).
La France demeure pleinement engagée avec ses partenaires européens pour mettre en œuvre les transformations nécessaires à l’atteinte de nos engagements collectifs à l’horizon 2030, au plan national et international, en s’assurant que personne ne soit laissé de côté. Parce que les grands défis qui structurent notre monde ne connaissent pas de frontières, la France rappelle son attachement aux solutions multilatérales, seules à même de garantir la préservation des biens publics mondiaux.

Guyana

One Guyana, Achieving Low-Carbon, Sustainable Development for All

Guyana’s national development plan – the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030 - sets out a vision of a fair, inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous Guyana, that simultaneously creates a model for avoiding deforestation and maintaining forest coverage while growing the economy five-fold over 10 years and keeping energy emissions flat. These carbon services represent a flagship initiative in domestic resource mobilisation, which is critical to financing the realisation of the SDGs. Key to achieving the SDGs have been (i) localising the SDG targets through their integration into the national budget process and (ii) incorporating key drivers of accelerated development such as increased technological solutions across major sectors.

Guyana’s Second Voluntary National Review focuses on an in-depth examination of the thematic Goals for this HLPF and signals our continued commitment to the implementation of Agenda 2030. Our VNR process included multi-stakeholder engagements which led to sharing of experiences and lessons learned and underscored the need to strengthen inter-agency collaboration and data systems. Further, urgent and decisive actions are needed at the global level to make the 2030 Agenda attainable.

Goal 6: Targeted and progressive actions to improve the supply, reliability, and quality of water include expanding water and sanitation infrastructure for coverage, treatment, reduction of non-revenue water, and strengthening partnerships at both national and international levels. Increased focus on aquifer studies and integrated water resource management will remain critical to achieving sustainable management of water sources.

Goal 7: By using natural gas as a bridge from heavy fuel oil and expanding solar, wind, biomass and hydropower, Guyana will transition the grid towards clean and renewable energy at over 80 per cent by 2030. In addition, we will have the installed capacity to cater for a five-fold increase in energy consumption with greenhouse gas emissions remaining approximately flat – resulting in one of the highest levels of decoupling of economic growth from fossil fuel use.

Goal 9: Substantially expanded investments in infrastructure are underway across all major sectors including transport – road, water and air connectivity resulting in cost and time savings for both citizens and businesses.
Historically hindered by the high cost of energy, the manufacturing sector is slated to expand following recent investments to harness natural gas, which is expected to substantially reduce energy-related operational costs, thereby increasing competitiveness. Further, as Guyana seeks to enhance its national research capability and mobile connectivity, it will continue to place a high value on technology transfers and partnerships with countries with longstanding expertise in these areas.

In 2021, Guyana introduced the “Made in Guyana” stamp to complement other interventions to support small-scale industries such as business incubators.

Goal 11: Heightened emphasis is placed on implementing sustainable urban practices and land use planning, the provision of affordable housing, regularising informal settlements and strengthening interagency collaboration. Interventions have focused on low- and middle-income earners - many of whom are female applicants - who have benefitted from subsidy programmes aimed at promoting affordable housing and home-financing options and removal of taxes from several construction materials. Acceleration of the housing programme has resulted in the allocation of over 24,000 lots at a subsidized cost of land. Expanding population centres and businesses have increased solid waste pressures by almost 50 per cent, requiring the upgrade and expansion of the capacity of landfills and other facilities.

Moreover, Guyana is vulnerable to the effects of climate change made worse by its geography. Resiliency mandates robust disaster preparedness and management consistent with the Sendai Framework.

Goal 17: At the core of the means of implementation and global partnerships for sustainable development, lies the longstanding unfulfilled commitment of 0.7 percent GNI. Limitations on the national capacity to raise public resources persist and have worsened post-COVID-19. The existential crisis of climate change and related shocks to the economy further constrain the pace of development. Unless the commitments of ODA are fulfilled swiftly and consistently, the means of implementation of the SDGs and the concept of global partnership are both in jeopardy.

Further, Guyana’s graduation to upper-middle income status has made concessional lending from traditional partners scarcer and substantially increased the cost of borrowing. The use of a single statistical artifact – per capita GDP - in a multidimensional development context severely undermines considerations around sustainable development. The need for the global community to recognise a multidimensional vulnerability index in assessing countries is both urgent and overdue.

Guyana’s President H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has consistently championed the concept of “One Guyana”. In his 2020 inauguration address, he stated: “From this day forward, we must, each of us, become our brother’s and sister’s keeper, ensuring that in our journey to progress and prosperity, no one is left behind.” A message that is equally applicable to us as a community of nations.

Iceland

Iceland confirms its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals and Agenda 2030 in its second Voluntary National Review. The review builds on progress
from 2019, when Iceland presented its first VNR, new institutional mechanisms, more extensive stakeholder involvement and consultation and relies on more data than before. However, challenges remain, not least due to the dire impacts of climate change, COVID-19, the Russian aggression in Ukraine and a growing number of conflicts around the world.

**VNR process**

Iceland’s second VNR includes chapters written by stakeholders, the SDG Youth Council, Iceland’s UN Youth Delegate for Sustainable Development, civil society organizations, The Institute for Sustainability Studies at the University of Iceland and the Association of Local Authorities. Extensive consultation on the VNR was also conducted with various stakeholders through in person meetings with CSOs, through online consultation and with the Future Committee of the Parliament.

Parallel to Iceland’s second VNR, a Voluntary Subnational Review (VSR) will be conducted by the Icelandic Association of Local Authorities. The aim of the VSR process is to integrate local governments further into Iceland’s work with Agenda 2030. The results of a survey sent out to all municipalities show that their core obligations align with the SDGs, but their biggest obstacle in working strategically with the SDGs is a lack of financial and human resources.

**Progress on the SDGs**

The VNR provides an assessment of Iceland’s current progress towards each of the 17 goals, as assessed by specialists from all ministries. A detailed version of this assessment is available on an online dashboard. For the first time, this overview now includes both a government assessment as well as an assessment from civil society of each goal. Iceland’s first VNR in 2019 then reported data for 30% of the UN SDG indicators. The coverage is now up to 70% in this second VNR.

In addition to the SDG indicators, 39 well-being indicators have been established, monitoring the quality of life in Iceland and well-being by looking at factors beyond economic measures such as GDP. These national well-being indicators are based on the three main pillars of sustainable development. Out of the 39 indicators, 34 are reported as the measurement instruments for those five remaining indicators are still under development. 60% of the reported well-being indicators have been moving in the right direction while 40% of them either remain stagnant or are moving backwards.

**Means of implementation**

National implementation of Agenda 2030 and the SDGs is coordinated by the Prime Minister’s Office in close cooperation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In 2022 a new cooperation platform, Sustainable Iceland, was established. Its purpose is to formulate a national strategy for sustainable development and coordinate the work of the government with various stakeholders. The strategy will use the SDGs as guiding principles and will define measurable goals, as well as an action plan to reach them. This will include roles and responsibilities within the government and society at large.

The backbone of Sustainable Iceland is the National Sustainability Council. Its members include all ministers of the government, representatives from each party of the parliament, municipalities, the business sector, social partners and civil society organizations. The Icelandic government acknowledges that to achieve a just and
inclusive transition, leaving no one behind, a comprehensive social dialogue and stakeholder engagement is needed.

Challenges

One of Iceland’s main challenges in achieving the SDGs is its spillover effects, i.e., when one country’s actions affect other countries' abilities to achieve the goals. Iceland ranks high when it comes to implementing the SDGs but simultaneously generates one of the largest negative spillover effects. Iceland is therefore working on developing a comprehensive overview on its spillover effects to understand, measure and carefully manage them.

For the formulation of a national strategy for sustainable development, seven focus areas have then been defined to address its challenges and outline key targets and an action plan:

1. Economy and circularity
2. Equality, health and well-being
3. Education, culture and science
4. Infrastructure and regional issues
5. Food, land and water
6. Energy and climate
7. International cooperation

Ireland

[Original: English]

Ireland is proud to have played a significant role in the development and adoption of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development. We continue to show leadership as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are implemented, nationally and internationally, and will be leading consultations and co-facilitating negotiations on the outcome document of the Political Declaration of the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, in September 2023.

Ireland’s Voluntary National Review (VNR) is based on the theme of Building Back Better While Leaving No One Behind. In this context, and to amplify the voices of those furthest behind, civil society stakeholders have contributed chapters. In January and April 2023, National Stakeholder Fora were held, to further promote meaningful engagement with civil society, including youth representatives. As active global citizens and shapers of society, young people are key, equal stakeholders of Agenda 2030, and made a valuable contribution to the Fora giving voice to their generation.

Ireland is progressing well in achieving the SDGs and the National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022 – 2024\(^2\) demonstrates the continued commitment to the 2030 agenda through a ‘whole-of-government’ approach and mainstreaming SDGs across national policies.

Agenda 2030 and the SDGs also strengthens the linkages between Ireland and our global engagement through our overseas development assistance programme. Since our last

VNR, *A Better World: Ireland’s Policy for International Development* (2019) has been published, fully integrating the SDGs, setting out our contribution to realising them not just at home, but abroad. Headline priorities include reducing humanitarian need, supporting climate action, promoting gender equality, and strengthening governance, while reaching the furthest behind first. These priorities align with the SDGs, and the 2030 Agenda. Ireland’s work also continues in traditional areas of strength such as food security, education, and health.

As in every country around the globe, the COVID-19 pandemic has had an extraordinary impact on Irish people’s lives and brought unprecedented disruption to our society and economy.

A Cabinet-led approach ensured a whole-of-Government response to the crisis, with recovery from the pandemic shaped by a number of overarching national framework policies, to address longstanding challenges and needs while preparing the economy and labour market for the challenges and opportunities of the future.

Many of the measures through which Ireland will achieve the SDGs will be actioned in the context of policies such as the Economic Recovery Plan developed in alignment with the National Recovery and Resilience Plan which is part of NextGenerationEU - a €750 billion recovery package for the European Union. We have placed a particular focus on advancing the twin green and digital transitions, and significant policies and work programmes are being advanced to drive progress in these areas, allowing Ireland to build back better, ensuring a just transition for all.

The eleven dimensions of our national *Well-being Framework* (designed to help improve our understanding of quality of life) have been mapped to the SDGs demonstrating the synergies across both initiatives. Embedding the Well-being Framework into the policy-making process further supports progress towards achieving the SDGs. The Equality and Well-being frameworks are being integrated into the budgetary process to better inform policymakers with associated impacts on areas such as income, health and education.

Our planet is facing unprecedented pressure from the triple planetary crisis of Climate Change, Pollution, and Biodiversity Loss. *Ireland’s Climate Action Plan* sets a legally binding framework for national climate targets and commitments, and ensures the necessary structures and processes are embedded on a statutory basis to achieve our obligations in the near and long term. The SDGs offer us a pathway to seize the opportunity to create a better, greener, and safer world, and a just transition that transforms every sector of our economy, while leaving no one behind.

In this context Ireland’s VNR demonstrates how we are accelerating action towards achieving the SDGs, calling out the contribution being made across Government on climate action and the circular economy, employment, education, health, housing, and Ireland’s international support of the SDGs in order to build back better, determined to not settle for surviving the climate crisis, but thriving despite it.

Ireland is committed to delivering its second VNR to the 2023 session of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

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3 Policy for International Development - Department of Foreign Affairs (irishaid.ie)
Kuwait

In 2015, Kuwait made an all-embracing decision to integrate Agenda 2030 within the country’s long-term Vision. Vision 2035 – New Kuwait, which consists of seven broad pillars, fully endorses and structurally integrates all 17 SDGs and 169 targets, along with their indicators. Ever since, the state has been leading extensive national awareness, implementation and coordination efforts within the triple premise of social, economic and environmental sustainability, aiming to realize the ultimate ambition of Leaving No one Behind.

As was the case with the first voluntary review report in 2019, Kuwait has opted for a Whole-of-Nation Approach (WNA) in the preparation of VNR2. The aim was to enable a range of national actors and stakeholders at the public, private, the academic and civil society levels, to participate in the Review process and to report on their respective achievements, ongoing programmes, as well as the challenges being confronted; making Kuwait’s VNR2 a true national report.

Through a well-researched and well-documented account, Kuwait’s second VNR has provided an authoritative record of many significant accomplishments made so far, and outlined the remaining challenges under the cross section of the goals and targets. It has depicted and portrayed with robust and itemised data and substantiation, Kuwait’s unrelenting policy and institutional efforts in diligently pursuing implementation of all Goals and Targets, in spite of the many challenges, including the adverse effects of COVID-19.

Like so many countries, Kuwait witnessed a significant shift in the development priorities with the spread of the global pandemic. The outbreak exerted an unanticipated pressure on the health system, disrupted the economy and adversely affected all walks of life. VNR2 documented Kuwait’s comprehensive, effective and widely integrative response to the pandemic. It recorded the many lessons learned from the pandemic in matters of health, food security, social protection, welfare system, the environment, climate change and others, and highlighted the ensuing short to mid and long-term policy decisions and program engagements that were made, and which aimed at achieving sustainability and building back better. Beyond the national boundaries, VNR2 recorded Kuwait’s contributions in terms of delivering emergency aid packages to developing countries and its support at the GAVI COVAX Advance Market Commitment Summit. In the wake of the pandemic, Kuwait initiated several mega projects that were designed along integrated, mutually beneficial sustainable development vectors and policies. Many projects have been completed; others are underway.

One of the structural challenges in the country was the limited availability of data and statistics. As of 2019, sustained investments and capacity development programs have been implemented to overcome the systemic, institutional and technical dimensions of the data limitations. As a result, the data challenges reported in VNR1 have translated into concrete achievements in VNR2. Indeed, significant and persistent progress has been accomplished over the last few years at the institutional, managerial, technical, data gathering and information sharing and dissemination level. Accordingly, authoritative, robust and regular data can now be generated and used for targeting, tracking, and monitoring different goals and targets. VNR2 has provided evidence of this quantum leap in the meaningful and illustrative data and statistics that have been used, and which have added a significant policy and prospective value to the analysis and reporting therein.

VNR2 has also reflected across the different goals and targets the rising interest countrywide in Agenda 2030, and has highlighted the mounting support of a cross-section of
national constituencies and stakeholders. It has shown how a growing number of actors, partners and community groups, including many layers of policy, implementing and oversight government agencies, the academia, civil society and corporate and private sector partners have now significantly engaged in incorporating, defending, promoting and regularly reporting on different components of sustainability. Indeed, sustainability and the three SDGs foundations are increasingly gaining ground in the country, and gradually permeating Kuwaiti public policy making, culture and society.

Through the narrative analysis, pages, figures, and tables and through an in depth and thorough assessment of the 2023 Review and non-2023 Review goals and targets, VNR2 has documented the country’s commitment to an all-inclusive, equal opportunity and dignifying human development for all, and to achieving the triple SDGs objective of economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

VNR2 reiterates Kuwait’s ratification of most relevant global and regional environmental agreements. It has acknowledged the country’s unwavering commitment to furthering its prominent position regionally and internationally, in the fields of international human development, and in advancing global and sustainable wellbeing, and fostering human rights and well-being, diplomacy and cultural exchange.

**Liechtenstein**

[Original: English]

"Shaping Liechtenstein together, sustainably and reliably" - this is the Government's overarching goal for the legislative period 2021-2025. Sustainability is therefore at the very centre of the Government's current activities. The Government considers the implementation of the SDGs to be essential in preserving a liveable country and planet for future generations. The SDGs are more than an international obligation. Liechtenstein has a vested interest in their implementation.

**National implementation**

Overall, the implementation of the SDGs in Liechtenstein is developing positively. As the report shows, several SDGs are well implemented, in particular SDGs 1 (Poverty), 2 (Hunger), 3 (Health), 4 (Education), 6 (Water), 8 (Work), and SDG 16 (Peaceful Societies). The COVID-19 pandemic clearly demonstrated the strong crisis resilience of the state, the economy, and society, as well as the central importance of cross-border cooperation for crisis response.

Even so, the report also highlights a clear need for action:

- Reconciling family and career as well as political participation of women must be improved to achieve de facto gender equality.
- Mobility in Liechtenstein is currently not sustainable and continues to develop negatively, with increasing motorised individual transport.
- Climate protection develops positively, but needs further strengthening through effective measures to achieve climate neutrality by 2050.
- Despite increasing recycling quotas and decreasing energy and CO₂ intensity of the economy, resource use remains too high due to current consumption and production patterns.
The ODA percentage falls short of the international target of 0.7, although expenditures have been significantly increased.

Since the 2019 report, several strategies and concepts for improving sustainability have been adopted, all of which were developed with broad stakeholder involvement. These strategies partly build on each other and reflect the interrelationships between the various SDGs:

- The Education Strategy 2025+ aims towards an education system supporting people in all age groups to develop their individual potentials and to enable them to participate actively, responsibly and self-determinedly in a humane, open and democratic society.
- The Climate Vision 2050 formulates the goal of climate neutrality for Liechtenstein by 2050, which was consequently enshrined in law. Concrete measures were defined in particular in the Energy Vision 2050, the Energy Strategy 2030, the Mobility Concept 2030, the Climate Strategy 2050, and the Agricultural Policy Report 2022. In 2023, the target for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 was increased from 40% to 55% compared to the reference year 1990.

Implementation is accompanied by regular monitoring reports to the Parliament.

In order to increase policy coherence, the Government committed itself in 2022 to subject all new draft legislation and international treaties to an SDG analysis. The SDGs are thus a fixed component of all consultation reports as well as Government bills submitted to the Parliament.

Contribution to global implementation

Through international solidarity, Liechtenstein provides support to developing countries in implementing the SDGs. The focus is on poverty reduction (SDG 1), access to education (SDG 4), food security (SDG 2), promotion of human rights and the rule of law (SDG 16), environmental and climate protection, and migration (SDG 10). Due to the crises and conflicts, expenditure on international solidarity has been significantly increased: Total ODA (Official Development Assistance) spending in 2022 increased by about 22% compared to 2018, reaching a new record of CHF 31.5 million.

The private sector and civil society also show a high level of international solidarity. Particularly the philanthropy sector makes contributions that clearly exceed the public ODA expenditures.

The guiding principle of Liechtenstein's engagement in international organizations is the conviction that international challenges can only be solved through multilateral cooperation. This is reflected in the commitment to more effective environmental and climate protection, but also in Liechtenstein's long-standing commitment to the protection and promotion of human rights, to combating impunity for the most serious violations of human rights, to international humanitarian law, and to the crime of aggression.

Participation of civil society

There is growing public awareness on the importance of the SDGs or sustainable development in general. The drafting process for this report was accompanied by a consultation with various stakeholders. The high response rate underlines the great interest in the implementation of the SDGs.
Lithuania

[Original: English]

INCLUSIVE VNR PREPARATION

Second Voluntary National Review (VNR) of the Republic of Lithuania is based on the implementation of Agenda 2030 and its SDGs since 2018. This VNR not only analyses our progress but is also aimed at further accelerating and strengthening implementation and cooperation activities in Lithuania, to achieve the SDGs on time.

Second VNR is the result of an inclusive and collective process. Aiming for an objective evaluation of institutional mechanisms and progress made, as well as for impartiality and indication of necessary way forward, the preparation process of Lithuania’s VNR has involved many relevant actors from governmental institutions, municipalities, NGOs, youth, scientific institutions and business, who provided their input from the first VNR draft phase to its approval.

GLOBAL CONTEXT AND TIMING

Peace and security are essential conditions for sustainable development. Lithuania strongly condemns Russian Federation’s illegal, unprovoked, and unjustified military aggression, which is supported by Belarus, against Ukraine and considers it a violation of international law. Lithuania reiterates solidarity with Ukraine and Ukrainian people and commits to provide economic, humanitarian, and social assistance as long as it is required.

Recent geopolitical context – the COVID-19 pandemic, war in Ukraine and global energy crisis, have posed new challenges related to social, economic and environmental aspects of sustainable development in Lithuania. 2023 marks a halfway point for the implementation of Agenda 2030 and with all its challenges brings the possibility to objectively assess, reset and reinforce our commitment to full and timely implementation of all 17 SGDs.

NEW STRATEGIC BASIS

Important changes have been made in the strategic planning and management system of Lithuania that ensured SDG links with key strategic planning documents and scaled up the relevance of Agenda 2030 in the national regulatory and financial framework. In 2020 a new overarching strategic document – 2021-2030 National Progress Plan (NPP) – was approved.

The implementation of strategic goals of NPP must ensure holistic approach and harmony of social, economic and environmental aspects. To achieve that, the NPP has enshrined three horizontal principles: sustainable development, innovation (creativity) and equal opportunities for all, which aim to form and promote important values, desired changes in behaviour and attitude for the progress of society.

Even though new strategic system has contributed to better integration of SDGs into national policy decisions, giving higher importance to the implementation of SDGs in the political agenda, a more proactive approach is needed and strategic public communication about Agenda 2030 should be improved.
PORTAL FOR SDGs INDICATORS

New interactive SDGs indicators portal has been developed in Lithuania. Data on SDGs and their indicators is regularly updated and published openly for the public and institutions. It allows to effectively track and evaluate progress on specific SDGs and selected indicators.

SDGs: ON TRACK, BUT SOME CHALLENGES REMAIN

Agenda 2030 implementation assessment has revealed that country’s progress could be divided into two phases: before the COVID-19 pandemic and during it. Since 2018, economic growth and positive trends for SDG indicators have been noted. COVID-19 has slowed down progress and contributed to challenges in reducing poverty, social segregation, income inequality, promoting employment, overburdened education and health services. These problems became even more relevant in 2021 with the influx of migrants at the Belarus borders with the EU and in 2022 with the illegal Russian military invasion of Ukraine, as well as the start of a global energy crisis.

Despite negative impacts of these emergencies, progress is visible for most of the SDGs in Lithuania. Lithuania made significant progress for poverty reduction (SDG 1), implemented structural reforms that contributed to better quality of education at all levels (SDG 4), encouraged transition to energy from renewable sources (SDG 7), along with growing GDP improved indicators for employment and salary increase (SDG 8), focused on sustainable and comprehensive urban planning (SDG 11), increased forestry and protected natural areas in the country (SDG 15).

However, in some cases, positive trends are short-term. Notably, sustainable and responsible economy (SDG 12), which is inseparable from circular and climate neutral approach, remains an important long-term challenge for the country.

Therefore, it is essential to constantly assess the added value of specific measures, update national SDG priorities, maintain political focus on sustainable development and strengthen interinstitutional, public and international cooperation.

Maldives

Maldives is one of the most uniquely dispersed and geographically fragmented countries in the world. The island nation is scattered across 1,192 low lying small islands of which only about one percent is land. The geographic distribution of 515,122 people across dispersed small islands is a major challenge for equitable development and shared prosperity across all islands of the Maldives.

As a country heavily dependent on tourism, Maldives was one of the worst-hit from the unprecedented COVID-19 shock. When the country’s border closed and tourism stopped, many people experienced devastating consequences from income and livelihood loss. Women in informal sectors and youth were disproportionately affected. Income and business support programmes, a successful nationwide information and vaccination campaign prioritizing the tourism sector workers and the vulnerable, with over 80 percent vaccination coverage helped the Maldives overcome the COVID-19 impacts and reboot the economy.
Meanwhile, the country’s fiscal and climate vulnerabilities have magnified. Climate change poses an existential threat to the Maldives, while threat from pandemics and disasters pose significant risks to income and livelihood loss, and food security. Growing fiscal deficit is a serious concern and fiscal adjustments are needed to sustainably manage the high capital expenditure, subsidies, and welfare spending. Resilience of the economy and society depend heavily on our natural resources. Maldives is increasing investments in renewable energy and has set an ambitious commitment to achieve NetZero by 2030.

**Maldives has made remarkable progress in reducing poverty.** Economic opportunities and social protection programmes have improved the quality of life for the vulnerable. However, income inequality persists, and 59 percent of the population reside in the atolls, where income and multidimensional poverty are more prevalent. Disparities in access to quality education, health care and living standards are barriers for equal socioeconomic progress for people resident in the atolls.

**Physical and digital connectivity can accelerate socioeconomic progress in the Maldives.** The Integrated National Public Ferry Network project has been initiated to connect the Maldives through affordable, regular, high-speed public ferries and improve access to services, opportunities and reduce inequalities for people resident in the atolls. This is in operation in the northern region of the Maldives by connecting people in 41 islands. Majority use it for health care services. Likewise, rapid transformation towards digitization is ongoing. The pandemic necessitated digital acceleration through online education, telemedicine, e-payment systems, and other digital uses. Expansion of digital connectivity across the country, combined with a sustainable public ferry network can improve access and opportunities and enable SDG acceleration.

**Maldives has achieved significant strides in the health and wellbeing of its people.** Maternal, neonatal and child mortality have decreased, and life expectancy has improved to 79 years. However, Non-Communicable Diseases are a major disease burden needing immediate attention, and mental health and cancers are growing concerns. Furthermore, Maldives is moving towards an ageing population and needs better social protection planning and targeting.

**Progressive changes in the education sector have enabled the Maldives to build human capital.** Although gender parity in primary and secondary education has been achieved, inclusive education and access to quality higher secondary and tertiary education in the atolls remain to be challenges. To empower youth with skills needed for the workforce and entrepreneurship, skills development programmes are being planned in targeted locations across the country.

**Furthermore, women’s involvement in decision making has increased.** One third local council seats, and 33 percent of the current Ministers comprise of women. Likewise, first women justices to the Supreme Court were appointed in 2019. Women, however, are still underrepresented in leadership and the Parliament and women’s participation in the formal economy is low. Women’s empowerment, engagement, and participation is crucial for SDG progress.

**Continued political commitment, long term planning, social dialogue, and partnerships will drive the Sustainable Development Agenda forward.** Maximizing on decentralization, building economic and climate resilience, improving human wellbeing, ensuring gender equality, and expansion of connectivity for improved access to services can enable SDG acceleration in the Maldives.

**Nonetheless, access to international finance mechanisms and concessional financing terms are major development challenges for the Maldives.** Given the
Budgetary constraints for development needs and growing climate vulnerabilities, urgent international finance is even more crucial for the Maldives to address climate adaptation, mitigation and ensure sustainable development.

Mongolia

[Original: English]

Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

One. Introduction

Mongolia presented its first Voluntary National Review in 2019 and hereby presenting its second review.

This review assesses the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Mongolia for each indicator, the policies, processes, and efforts made at the national level, and the results of applying recommendations from the first review. In addition to considering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical conflicts, this assessment aims to highlight the groups left behind in development and determine how regional development disparities affect sustainable development.

Two. Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals

Following the recommendations of the first review, the policy, planning, and legal framework has been improved by revising the Law on Development Policy and Planning and its Management and by establishing an integrated policy and planning institution. As a result, the “Vision-2050” long-term development policy was adopted and is being implemented in line with the Sustainable Development Goals.

In addition to expanding partnerships for sustainable development, public and private sector initiatives have increased, the participation of civil society organizations is becoming more active, and multilateral cooperation continues to strengthen.

The 17 goals and 169 targets of global sustainable development have been formulated into 16 goals and 134 targets in accordance with national characteristics. A total of 191 indicators have been defined, of which 156 are global and 35 national, thus improving the implementation assessment tool and emphasizing the results documented by data based compared to the first review.

Mongolia has made progress at a certain level on 15 goals, and the implementation of one goal, poverty reduction, was assessed as regressive.

The COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical conflicts have had a significant negative impact on Mongolia’s economy and the implementation of the SDGs. For instance, before the pandemic, real gross domestic product per employed person was increasing, and real economic performance was improving, but in 2020, the economy contracted by 4.6 percent. However, as a result of policy measures taken by the government to revive the economy quickly, the economy grew by 4.8 percent in 2022.
Despite the lack of preparedness for public health emergencies, Mongolia’s rapid response reduced the negative impact of the pandemic. However, a lack of resources and supplies to provide quality and timely services affected access to other health services.

In recent years, access to education has increased, and innovative teaching methods have been introduced, improving the e-learning environment during the pandemic. However, educational inequality has increased.

Disparities in social development, education, and household living standards among different territories are reasons for being left behind in development. Specifically, populations living far from the capital city often have limited access to basic social services and are most at risk of leaving behind in development.

Progress has been made in protecting surface water resources and river headwaters, increasing the forest fund, and protecting plant and animal resources. However, greenhouse gas emissions from traditional agricultural and energy sector activities have not decreased. For example, the share of renewable energy in total final energy consumption has not increased significantly.

### Three. Further Actions

To accelerate the further implementation and achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is crucial to ensure the fundamental principle of sustainable development through various efforts, including:

1. Improving the monitoring and reporting system and the quality of assessment to ensure the implementation of the SDGs in line with medium- and short-term policy priorities;
2. Clarifying the financing and investment environment for the implementation of the SDGs and using it as a means to stimulate multi-stakeholder participation;
3. Strengthening basic social and economic capacities, including expanding international partnerships and regional and local cooperation aimed at reducing the negative impacts of global conflicts, infectious diseases, natural disasters, and climate change, managing risks and adapting to change, and ensuring the availability of resources; and
4. Reducing disparities between rural (regional and local) and urban development by upholding the principle of leaving no one behind, creating transport infrastructure and logistics networks aimed at increasing the production and export of mining and non-mining products, and ensuring equal access to basic social services for the entire population.

We, therefore, encourage support for Mongolia's efforts and participation to achieve sustainable development, expand cooperation, and strengthen partnerships.

### Poland

Poland reaffirms its commitment to the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, ensuring that no one is left behind. Sustainable development in economic, social, and environmental dimensions should be fair and responsible.

Interconnections and interactions between the SDGs are the key asset of the 2030 Agenda. Poland also reaffirms the need to create synergies of activities at the international level, including between foreign and security policy and the global consensus on sustainable development. This is especially needed due to threats to international development arising
from conflicts, including the Russian attack on Ukraine, which has had major repercussions on food, finance and energy systems worldwide.

- In terms of the social dimension, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, public health considerations and patient safety remain a priority for Poland. Similarly, the development of new technologies in the health sector, such as digitalization of health services, is a new priority for Poland.

- The principle of “leaving no one behind” remains the guiding principle for Poland in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It is a long-term government policy to support poor and socially vulnerable groups.

- Poland attaches great importance to supporting the professional activation of women and men, including persons with disabilities, promoting employment of people aged 50+, counteracting age discrimination on the labour market, as well as further coordinating the social security system.

- Invariably, but now with particular emphasis, Poland underlines that the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is a key factor in maintaining peace, and at the same time only peace will make it possible to achieve the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

- Strengthening international law as an element of the implementation of SDG 16 is the top priority since Poland’s membership in the UN Security Council in 2018-2019.

- Peace and democracy are prerequisites to achieve progress towards sustainable development. Poland spares no effort to oppose Russian aggression against Ukraine, which is also directed against democracy and the rules-based international order.

- In the face of the current geopolitical situation and the war against Ukraine, Poland's food security, as well as ensuring good quality and food safety, remain critically important.

- Poland is aware of the importance of climate-related challenges and is taking measures to reduce emissions in all sectors that emit greenhouse gases. These activities are accompanied by social policy measures to protect the most vulnerable social groups and people working in high-emission sectors from the effects of energy and climate policy.

- Poland is on the path to a low-carbon economy, mindful that it requires a fundamental restructuring of critical economic sectors and in these efforts is guided by the principle of leaving no one behind. Poland’s State Energy Policy 2040 (PEP2040) specifies three priorities: just transition for all citizens, a new, emission-free energy system based on RES and nuclear power, and improving air quality. This policy will be supplemented by the fourth pillar focused on ensuring Poland’s energy sovereignty/security due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the intention to cut off energy supplies from Russia.

- Financing for development is a key issue of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Despite the economic crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic or the ongoing conflicts in Poland’s immediate neighbourhood, the state budget allows for the implementation of Poland’s social, development and investment policies, in accordance with the “Strategy for Responsible Development”. However, the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs requires not only the involvement of public funds, but above all the mobilization of private capital.

- Cooperation and building partnerships remain crucial for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Poland. We are focusing on enhancing the participation of numerous stakeholders from various backgrounds. Business is a key partner in achieving the SDGs.
The full implementation of Agenda 2030 requires the transformation of the current model of public administration and civil service, in order to enhance its capacity to respond to various types of challenges and mobilize resources at all levels. To that aim, Poland is currently implementing the "Programme for developing the capacity of public administration to support the implementation of actions for the SDGs and sustainable development", together with the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and with the support of the European Commission.

Portugal

Portugal remains committed with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and dedicated to eradicating poverty, fighting inequalities, promoting a fair, inclusive, and equitable global sustainable development based on human rights and dignity and the ‘build back better’ and ‘leave no one behind’ (LNOB) principles.

A NEW GOVERNANCE MODEL

To reinforce the national approach, the Portuguese Government adopted a new inter-institutional mechanism. The coordination of the Agenda, at national level, was repositioned at the centre of the Government, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, while on an external level remained the responsibility of Foreign Affairs. A High-Level Monitoring Committee was also created, including representatives from these two Government areas, Regional Governments, Local Authorities, the Economic and Social Council, and prominent members of civil society.

AN INCLUSIVE VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW

To ensure a broader and inclusive participation in this Voluntary National Review (VNR), several stakeholders, including civil society, were involved in ex ante consultation procedures, such as Town Halls and workshops. Later on, the VNR was subject to public consultation.

On a domestic level, nationally and regionally, the planning of public policies has gradually incorporated the 2030 Agenda. In 2022, significant steps were taken towards aligning high-level planning instruments, e.g., the Portugal 2030 Strategy, the 2022 National Reform Programme, the Major Options Plan for 2022-2026 and the Portuguese Cooperation Strategy 2030.

Furthermore, the LNOB principle stands out in the different planning instruments and policies, where economic conditions, human rights, and gender equality are transversal in its implementation.

The 2030 Agenda is also present on public policies on a regional/local level, in scientific research and production, and in strategic business plans. This is shown in the increase of platforms to present and monitor initiatives and encourage partnerships to accomplish the SDG.

On the external dimension and with its international development cooperation, Portuguese foreign policy has continually supported the 2030 Agenda, particularly through active participation in international forums. The commitments undertaken in the UN Climate
Change Conferences, its active role in the Global Pact for Migration as a ‘Champion Country’, and its commitment in the UN Ocean Conference are an example of this.

The Portuguese Cooperation Strategy 2030 pursues three key commitments on an international level: the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing sustainable development, and the Paris Agreement. This Strategy’s priorities are Cooperation for Development, Education for Development, and Emergency and Humanitarian Action.

Portuguese priorities in cooperation for development are also aligned with the Agenda’s Ps – People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace, and especially Partnership – fundamental for accomplishing the SDG, but also the LNOB principle, reflected in the priority given to least developed countries, Small Island Developing States, fragile countries and in the process of graduation.

PROGRESS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGENDA

The Instituto Nacional de Estatística (National Institute of Statistics) – through its annual statistics publication on the SDG – particularly endeavoured in socio-demographic and spatial disaggregation providing a clearer view of the progresses.

The national indicators currently cover 69% of the Agenda, having increased 17pp since 2018. In comparison to 2015, 59% of indicators show a positive trend, 17% with an opposite trend, and no change in 2%.

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE STEPS

The VNR is an opportunity for an interim evaluation of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda making it possible to analyse progress, identify gaps, and define future actions.

Public policies have sought to respond to challenges like climate change and demographic dynamics; however, due to emerging crises – the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine –extraordinary measures were necessary to protect families and the most vulnerable, as well as businesses. In this context, systemic challenges related to the consistency between public policies and the analysis of trade-offs and spillover effects remain.

The conclusions of this VNR will be incorporated in a ‘National Roadmap for Sustainable Development 2030’, in response to the challenge of the UN Secretary-General for the SDG Summit in 2023. This Roadmap will focus on four areas: i) consistency and alignment between public policies; ii) engagement and participation of stakeholders; iii) a common communication strategy on SDGs; and iv) awareness and capacity building of the relevant stakeholders.

Romania

[Original: English]

Humankind is facing unprecedented challenges today. The 2015 United Nations' adoption of programmatic policies to steer sustainable development was a crucial step towards addressing these challenges. However, halfway through the timeline, we have fallen short of meeting our objectives. Yet, there still is a chance to shift course if we act collectively as change-makers.
Besides institutional efforts, it has become clear that we must create a critical mass committed to transforming mindsets and embodying the values outlined in the 2030 Agenda. These governing principles have been present throughout history, and we can draw on various sources of wisdom and inspiration to guide us.

Since 1992, the year of Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, the five crucial attitudes for sustainability highlighted in the book Beyond the Limits: Global Collapse or a Sustainable Future were: Truth-telling, Visioning, Connecting, Learning, Love. Travelling in time, 16 years later, the five ways to happiness and wellbeing were identified as Notice!, Be Active!, Connect!, Learn! and Give!. And because sustainable development is all around us, Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical, Caritas in veritate, outlined five essential human development dimensions: Embrace reality; Uphold Justice/Solidarity; Foster Community and Cooperation; Encourage Intelligence/Innovation; and Practice Love.

Achieving sustainable future rests on our ability to actualize a holistic vision embodying these principles, through leadership and cooperation.

Romania reaffirms its strong commitment to pursuing SDGs and its dedication to being a proactive partner and a regional hub. The Department of Sustainable Development, established in 2017 and placed under the Prime Minister's authority, serves as a robust entity for coordinating the national implementation of the 17 SDGs.

Following the release of its first VNR in 2018, Romania took a comprehensive approach to sustainable development, addressing all 17 SDGs, by adopting the National Strategy for Sustainable Development 2030. In 2022, Romania developed the National Action Plan to implement the Strategy, providing a 2030 roadmap, prioritizing strengthening and improving governance framework, raising awareness through education and training, promoting sustainable development principles, monitoring and evaluating the progress.

To monitor and evaluate Romania's progress in implementing the Strategy, 99 national indicators are overseen by the National Institute of Statistics. These indicators are linked to EUROSTAT indicators or correspond to global indicators of the 2030 Agenda.

To facilitate the implementation of sustainable development principles in the business sector and fulfill the targets outlined in the Strategy, Romania has developed in 2022 the Romanian Sustainability Code. Moreover, an open-data platform has been established to enable reporting entities to share reports and sustainability best practices.

Romania has established a comprehensive governance structure to pursue SDGs, based on multi-level decision-making and cross-sectoral collaboration, which has been endorsed by the OECD.

The highest level of decision-making is represented by the Interdepartmental Committee for Sustainable Development, comprising all ministers and presided over by the Prime Minister, inter-institutional structure overseeing the implementation, monitoring, and review of the Strategy.

For interlinkage and policy coherence, Romania has established 22 sustainable development hubs in all ministries, composed of 90 specialists, which are the same regardless of the electoral cycles. The sustainable development expert for
public administration is officially recognized in Romania, a unique approach at the EU level. The first 150 experts completed the training program in 2022, and the target is to train 2,000 experts by 2026.

The Consultative Council for Sustainable Development, composed of 34 specialists from academia, research, and civil society provides guidance to the Department for the Strategy implementation and indicators monitoring.

The Coalition Sustainable Romania is a private initiative serving as a discussion partner for representative segments of civil society, contributing to the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy.

As a recognition of innovation and excellence in 2030 Agenda implementation, in 2021, the Department was honored with the UN DESA award for Enhancing the effectiveness of public institutions to reach the SDGs.

According to the National Institute of Statistics, Romania has achieved 58.2% progress towards implementing the 2030 Agenda, but more effort is needed to ensure successful fulfillment.

Alongside all institutional efforts, sustainable development is about people and requires passion, determination, and hope. Romania is committed to maintaining its position as a regional hub of good practices, but especially as a devoted friend to those working towards the Future we want.

Rwanda

Vision 2050 aims at high quality of life for Rwandans and becoming a developed country by 2050 which reflects the ambitions of the SDGs, adding to domestication efforts made through the National Strategy for Transformation (2017 – 2024) and related sector strategies.

The preparation process brought together various stakeholders including: government, private sector, civil society and development partners. Discussions centred on progress, challenges, lessons learned and mechanisms for recovery from the Covid19 effects with focus on below SDGs. The process was enhanced by data from the 5th Population and Housing Census (2022).

1. **Clean Water and Sanitation (SDG 6):** Access to water from improved sources at national level is at 82%. Progress was made countrywide more especially in rural areas from 22.6% (2005) to 76.7% compared to urban areas from 55.4% to 95.7%. Access to sanitation is at 72.2% with rural access higher at 78.5% compared to urban at 56.4%. This reflects investments made in the sector over the last decade to improve on hygiene, health and nutrition.

2. **Affordable and Clean Energy (SDG 7):** The proportion of households with access to electricity increased from 21.5% in 2014 to 61% (47% on-grid and 14% off-grid). The gains in access to electricity are attributed to: off-grid subsidy to poor households, rapid

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4 Reference period for all data unless indicated otherwise are 2022
expansion of the grid and private sector engagement. The use of firewood for cooking remains high at 76% hampered by relatively high cost of cleaner alternatives.

3. **Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure (SDG 9):**

   Industrial development is promoted with a strong focus on ‘Made in Rwanda’ policy that has enabled strong participation of the private sector in unlocking new industries during the covid19 outbreak (e.g. hygiene products, health & pharmaceutical products, etc.), for example, a first ever vaccine manufacturing plant is being constructed in Rwanda.

   Innovation is facilitated by roll out of internet across the country with 62.86% of households using internet. A number of initiatives are being undertaken to enhance innovation start-ups including setting up of: innovation hubs across the country, innovation fund and Kigali Innovation City designed to create an ecosystem that supports a thriving tech and innovation industry.

   A network of trade infrastructure has been developed across the country including: scaling up of airline (RwandAir) capacity and destinations, setting up modern logistics platforms, cross border markets, one stop border points, development of regional, national and feeder roads, among others.

4. **Sustainable Cities and Communities (SDG 11):** The Population living in urban areas increased from 18.4% in 2016/17 to 27.90% and Rwanda is one of the most rapidly urbanizing countries in the world. This emphasizes the need to provide climate resilient urban services such as: transport and housing. The **National Land Use Master Plan** revised in 2020 provides a long term roadmap aligned to the Vision 2050 for the development of a hierarchy of sustainable cities, towns and urban areas.

5. **Partnerships to achieve the Goal (SDG 17).** Rwanda actively participates in South-South Cooperation through the **Rwanda Cooperation Initiative** an agency set up to coordinate the sharing of experiences between Rwanda and other countries. Other initiatives include Rwanda Green Fund, enhancing PPPs and domestic resource mobilization.

   **Leaving no one behind:** The constitution provides for the participation of all groups in the governance structures of the country. The social protection policy revised in 2020 emphasizes: social security, social assistance, livelihood and employment support aimed at protection, promotion, prevention and transformation of citizens. In this regard, government supported households affected by Covid19 and disasters.

   **Building Back Better:** Covid19 affected SDGs implementation by: reprioritization of resources, slowing implementation, increasing vulnerability and reducing mobilization of resources. To accelerate recovery, a **Recovery Plan** and **Economic Recovery Fund** were established. Vaccination of the population was also accelerated.

   **Key lessons learned:**

   1. Although the pandemic brought setbacks to SDG implementation, recovery is underway due to swift and concrete policy measures coupled with good leadership.

   2. The pandemic highlighted the need for a stronger and resilient local economy to minimize exposure to external shocks.

   3. More efforts are needed to mobilize resources to support the private sector and achieve the SDGs at national and global level.
Saint Kitts and Nevis

[Original: English]

A Sustainable Island State

Introduction

Saint Kitts and Nevis has made significant strides in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Our development initiatives over the past two decades targeted accelerating economic growth with a focus on employment, resulting in a fall in levels of poverty, improved social services, and expanded social protection for poor and vulnerable households. The pandemic caused massive disruption to people’s lives and affected the implementation of the SDGs in areas such as poverty reduction, good health care, quality education, decent work, and economic growth.

Saint Kitts and Nevis’ National Development Planning Framework (2023-2037), which guides the country’s long-term development planning, is well-aligned with the SDGs and serves as the key mechanism for implementing the government’s vision for the country to become the first Sustainable Island State (SIS).

People and Prosperity

Saint Kitts and Nevis’ economy bounced back positively from the pandemic. Tourism and its ancillary sectors have rebounded sharply, contributing to real GDP growth of 9% in 2022, after contracting 14.5% in 2020 and 0.9% in 2021. The government is resolute in economic diversification targeting sustainable agriculture and food security through the establishment of environmentally friendly green villages; regenerative tourism focused on building resilience and the sustainable consumption of environmental resources; and developing the green, blue and orange economies. We have intensified our transition to renewable energy through solar power and geothermal energy production estimated by 2025.

Lessons learned during the pandemic highlighted the importance of social protection in post-pandemic recovery, including strengthening household resilience and skills relevant to the emergent labour market. The government’s top priorities are improving health and well-being, building social cohesion, and protecting the most vulnerable; mainstreaming gender, youth, and persons with disabilities across all policies and initiatives; and improving the access to and affordability of education.

Delivery of quality and accessible health care is focused on national health insurance, climate-smart infrastructure, prevention and control of NCDs, mental health and nutrition. The establishment of the Ministry of Youth Empowerment, Ageing and Disabilities will ensure special attention is paid to some of our most vulnerable residents. To enhance human capital, the government introduced free tuition to all students at the community college in addition to reducing the cost of university education via favourable student loan terms at the Development Bank. The government also focused on the integration of technology in education including addressing the digital divide through reintroduction of the One-to-One Laptop Programme.
Planet

Saint Kitts and Nevis is extremely vulnerable to climate phenomena. Several cyclones and hurricanes have affected the country since 1950. With about 15.2% of the population living in low-lying coastal zones, the threat of storm surge and sea-level rise is real. Drought has been identified as a critical hazard making water scarcity a significant challenge. Given the centrality of groundwater sources to the water supply, protecting these resources is crucial. To increase and diversify water production capacity, resources will be required to construct desalination plants in the short term.

Saint Kitts and Nevis remains committed to environmental sustainability and resilience. As a signatory to several climate change-related international agreements, we have integrated climate change mitigation and adaptation into our development planning by formulating the updated Nationally Determined Contributions which pledges an ambitious 61% reduction in CO₂ emissions by 2030 and emphasizes the urgency of climate adaptation initiatives and accessing climate financing for resilience building.

Peace and Partnership

Violent crimes have declined significantly through a comprehensive crime management strategy including the improvement of social intervention and rehabilitation programs for deeper impact along with the modernisation of security infrastructure, and reform of the judicial system. Similar initiatives are ongoing to accelerate the government’s good governance agenda, with a focus on anti-corruption, integrity in public life, and freedom of information.

Both domestic and external partnerships have played a catalytic role for Saint Kitts and Nevis to successfully advance on the SDGs. However, accelerating SDG implementation in line with the SIS agenda will require even more strategic and impactful partnerships. The National Sustainable Development Coordinating Committee, incorporating private sector and CSO representatives, will continue to fully integrate the SDGs through medium-term planning, including key principles such as gender mainstreaming and Leave No One Behind.

Saudi Arabia

[Original: English]

- Saudi Arabia has placed sustainable development at the forefront of national priorities by fully integrating it into the Vision 2030, the country’s transformational long-term plan. The Vision seeks to transform Saudi Arabia into a thriving and dynamic nation, while at the same time balancing economic growth with social and environmental sustainability. The integration of Vision 2030 and the SDGs represents a concerted effort to promote sustainable and inclusive development with quality of life at the core.

- The Kingdom views sustainability as a driving force for growth and advancement, and strives to integrate economic, social, and environmental considerations into development initiatives. This commitment is reflected in the extensive institutional and policy framework that underpins the SDGs, culminating with the establishment of Sustainable Development Steering Committee in September 2021. Sustainability has become central to policy development, with key measures taken by the Government to foster policy coherence for
sustainable development. To this end, the Government has adopted a whole-of-society and a whole-of-government approach to policymaking.

- The Kingdom has launched numerous initiatives in support of sustainable development. The Saudi Green Initiative positions Saudi Arabia as a global leader in climate action and environmental protection. The Middle East Green Initiative, a regional effort to address climate change, and the Circular Carbon Economy approach, targeting net-zero emissions, have also been launched. The Saudi Public Investment Fund, one of the world's largest sovereign funds, finances projects promoting economic growth and sustainable development. The Quality of Life Program enhances citizens' well-being, while institutions like the King Abdulaziz City for Science and Technology, the Saudi Data & AI Authority and multiple incubators and accelerators foster technological development and innovation.

- Saudi Arabia’s commitment to sustainable development is long-standing and present in all social, environmental, and economic dimensions. In the social sphere, Saudi Arabia has established an extensive social protection system, which incorporates social insurance programs, social safety nets, and labor market support programs, providing citizens with wide-ranging support in areas such as health, retirement, unemployment insurance, subsidies, housing, education, and employment. The Kingdom has tackled childhood malnutrition, enhanced its healthcare system, maintained high vaccination rates, and achieved near gender parity in education. Human rights are fortified through multiple programs and the Human Rights Commission. Women's empowerment has progressed through increased workforce participation and leadership representation. Women's rights have been prioritized, adopting laws promoting equal pay, travel freedom, and violence protection.

- Saudi Arabia places great importance on the protection of environment and the preservation of natural resources. The Kingdom has set out to increase renewables to 50% of its power generation by 2030. The Kingdom is scaling up renewable projects, electric vehicle adoption, hydrogen production, energy efficiency, and carbon capture, utilization, and storage. Improvements in clean water and sanitation have been achieved. The Kingdom participates actively in climate negotiations, has ratified the Paris Agreement, and aims for net-zero emissions by 2060 through the circular carbon economy approach. The Government has also established ambitious afforestation efforts and protection of marine and land areas.

- In the area of economic development, Saudi Arabia has reduced oil dependency and is expanding sectors such as tourism, technology, and diversified energy. The Kingdom has made significant progress in creating jobs, with a particular focus on female labor force participation, which rose from 19.4% in 2015 to 36% in 2022. Multiple large-scale urban development programs are expanding green spaces, pedestrian walkways, and recreational areas.

- Globally, Saudi Arabia is emerging as an investment powerhouse and an economic hub connecting three continents. As a G20 member, Saudi Arabia has demonstrated strong commitment to sustainable development by leading towards "seizing the opportunities of the 21st century for all" during its presidency. Based on OECD data, Saudi Arabia is ranked as the top global donor for humanitarian and development assistance to low- and middle-income countries.

- Saudi Arabia’s achievements outlined in the VNR report are evidence of its unwavering commitment to sustainable development. They are the result of unprecedented reforms ushered in by Vision 2030 and the collaborative and inclusive approach involving all segments of the society. Guided by its traditions and vision, Saudi Arabia remains dedicated to a future where all people live in prosperity and security and contribute to a peaceful and prosperous planet.
Since Singapore’s first Voluntary National Review (VNR) in 2018, the world has become more volatile and uncertain. COVID-19 had a tremendous impact on all countries, geopolitical tensions have come into sharper relief, and the impact of climate change has exacerbated threats to global food, water, and energy security. Consequently, global progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has stagnated, and in some cases, regressed.

As a small, low-lying island state, climate change is an existential threat to Singapore. We expect significant increase in sea levels, temperatures, and extreme weather patterns by the end of this century. The unpredictability of external shocks compounds the challenges we face in achieving the 2030 Agenda, and could derail the progress we have made if we do not act decisively. Amidst this turbulence, Singapore remains steadfast in our commitment to sustainable development and we have taken concrete measures to pursue this, by balancing economic growth with environmental protection and social inclusion.

Our second VNR highlights the significant progress we have made while acknowledging our constraints and challenges. We raised our climate ambition to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, are making good progress with the Singapore Green Plan 2030, and are diversifying our sustainability agenda across multiple domains, ranging from urban greenery to economic transformation. Our sustainability plans will continue to evolve over the years, to address new challenges and ensure Singapore remains a green, liveable, and climate-resilient home.

There is opportunity in every crisis. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, we accelerated our digitalisation efforts to empower our citizens and bridge the digital divide. We continue to champion connectivity across various platforms – within our communities, between our natural and urban landscapes, and in the digital space. We believe in education as a social leveller and are committed to providing quality and accessible education for everyone. In doing so, we aim to build an inclusive society with equal opportunities for all – a fundamental principle of Singapore’s governance.

Singapore’s Whole-of-Nation approach underpins our efforts to achieve sustainable development in an inclusive manner. We engage our people, community, and the private sector extensively through consultations and dialogues, and seek to facilitate partnerships across sectors to co-deliver on our SDGs.

Our sustainability efforts stretch far beyond our shores. There is much that countries can share and learn from one another in our common pursuit of sustainable development. This spirit of international cooperation is reflected in our practices, from convening and hosting sustainability-focused events such as the biennial Singapore International Water Week (SIWW), to sharing our experiences with fellow developing countries through the Singapore Cooperation Programme (SCP) – our flagship capacity-building platform. Singapore firmly supports a strong multilateral system which enables the international community to work together to deliver effective solutions.

Singapore’s VNR at the 2023 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development captures our progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda since 2018, and charts our sustainability blueprint for the future. It serves as a useful checkpoint to
remind us that sustainable development is a continuous journey, that requires the commitment and partnership of all stakeholders across different sectors and countries. Singapore continues to adopt a forward-looking approach to meet the needs of the present without compromising our future generations, as we progress towards the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda and beyond.

The Slovak Republic

[Original: English]

The 2030 Agenda is the backbone of long-term development planning in Slovakia.

Five years after its first voluntary national review (VNR), Slovakia has made progress in integrating the 2030 Agenda into its national development framework, notably by adopting a Vision and Development Strategy until 2030. At the same time, implementation needs to be accelerated to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) until 2030. To turn this ambition into a reality, Slovakia has identified two key enablers, which are in line with the principles of policy coherence for sustainable development (PCSD):5

Integration

To better respond to circumstances at the national level, Slovakia integrated the 17 SDGs into six national priorities for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (1. Education; 2. Knowledge-based and green economy; 3. Poverty reduction and social inclusion; 4. Sustainable settlements and countryside; 5. Rule of law, democracy and security; 6. Health). These were then associated with national priorities of regional development, paving the way for the development of Slovakia’s integrated Vision and Development Strategy until 2030, adopted by Government in 2021. However, integration needs to go further than the strategic level and become a cornerstone at the programme and project levels as well.

Engagement

Horizontal and vertical coordination across government, as well as whole-of-society participation, have been built into the implementation framework of the 2030 Agenda in Slovakia. Apart from ensuring a coordinated approach, broad stakeholder participation, including civil society organisations, is an important safeguard of leaving no one behind.

Progress on individual SDGs can only be achieved by recognising their interlinkages.

In its VNR, Slovakia pays significant attention to interlinkages between SDGs, as well as to the impact of recent and ongoing crises – such as the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change and the war in Ukraine – on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The detailed analysis of interactions between the various SDG targets clearly

5 As elaborated by the OECD, PCSD principles include: (1) Political Commitment and Leadership; (2) Strategic Long-term Vision; (3) Policy Integration; (4) Whole-of-Government Coordination; (5) Subnational Engagement; (6) Stakeholder Engagement; (7) Policy and Financing Impacts; (8) Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation.
demonstrates that the 2030 Agenda can only be achieved in an integrated manner and by acknowledging potential trade-offs, synergies and transboundary impacts.

Progress on SDGs is evaluated by using the United Nations indicator framework. For the purposes of this VNR, Slovakia has decided to focus on the five SDGs under in-depth review at the 2023 High-level Political Forum: SDGs 6, 7, 9, 11 and 17.

Slovakia demonstrates good performance on SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) and considers water to be a strategic resource. The country’s performance on SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) is also positive although the currently ongoing energy crisis may put progress in peril. Progress towards SDG 9 (Industry, innovation and infrastructure), SDG 11 (Sustainable cities and communities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) is more uneven and requires increased attention as well as investment. The official development cooperation of the Slovak Republic is strongly underpinned by the SDGs in bilateral and multilateral relations alike.

The below table provides a snapshot of the 17 SDGs in Slovakia:


To achieve the SDGs, systemic change is inevitable.

Apart from evaluating progress, the VNR also pinpoints persisting challenges and highlights the need to speed up 2030 Agenda implementation at the national level. Recognizing the importance of civil society organizations in Slovakia, cooperation with all relevant stakeholders needs to be an integral part of implementation efforts.

At the international level, successive global reports on the status of sustainable development have raised the alarm on severe implementation gaps across the world, which have been further exacerbated by environmental, health and security crises. The eight years that have passed since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda have seen uneven progress across the goals, across territories, and across various social and population groups. Today it is evident that in addition to setting ambitious global goals and establishing worldwide monitoring mechanisms, a more intensive coordination of implementation at the international level is also inevitable for achieving the SDGs.
Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]

تقتضي صياغة تقرير الاستعراض الطوعي الثاني إجراء مراجعة لما تم اتخاذه فيما يخص رسائل تقرير الاستعراض الطوعي الأول الذي تم تقديمه خلال المنتدى السياسي رفيع المستوى للأمم المتحدة عام 2020.

فعل المستوى الدولي:

- تواصل بعض الدول الأعضاء في الأمم المتحدة عرقلة جمهورية الدولة السورية الراشمة لاستعادة الأمن والاقتصاد، وبضمانات الدولة على كامل أراضيها، ومحاولة الإرهاق، لا بل تمنع في توزع واستنفاذ الموارد والثروات الوطنية التي تمت الدعوة الأساسية لتحقيق التنمية المستدامة.
- ما تزال التدابير القسرية أحادية الجانب واللاشرعية المفروضة على سوريا عمل كحم لجعل العملية التنميةية.
- وعاقباً أما العمل الإرهاق والتنافس المنافذ وإعادة الهجرات، علماً على ما تمثله من نقاب جماعي للشعب السوري.
- عجز منظومة الأمن المتحدة عن تنفيذ قراراتها المتعلقة بإنهاء الاحتلال الإسرائيلي للضفة والاراحة من الأراضي العربية المحتلة، وعن إلغاء ووقف الاعتداءات الإسرائيلية المزدوجة على سيادة سوريا والتي طالت البنية التحتية والمناطق المدنية بما فيها المرافق التعليمية والثقافية والمدراس والموانئ البحرية ومنازل المدنيين، متبثبة بإزلاق أرواح المدنيين وخصوصاً مادياً حسب الأمر.
- تسبب تعلق عضوية سورية في بعض المنظمات الدولية - لأسباب سياسية أو جراء عرقلة التدابير القسرية لتستدعي مشاركتنا في المجال، بما أن استعادة سوريا من مزايا عضويتها في تلك المنظمات، بما فيها تلك الاستفادة من أي دعم مالي وفي فيرا ومساندها وخططها التنمية الوطنية.
- لم تقم لسورية أي مساعدة إستراتيجية لدعم تنفيذ الخطط الوطنية الراشمة لتحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة، وتم اتخاذ وتعزيز الاعتماد على أسس مستدامة، وحل ما تم تقديمه هو المساعدات الإغاثة الإطارية التي وعلي الرغم من أهميتها تقتضي لطابع الاستدامة. وتحول التدابير القسرية الراهنة إلى استفادة سورية من أمورها المجردة في الخارج، تم تسليط تدخلات تحقيق أهداف التنمية المستدامة.

على المستوى الوطني: