



General Statement

On behalf of the European Union and its Member States

On the occasion of the

2022 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

organised under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)

(5-15 July 2022)

We are meeting halfway through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and global efforts so far have proved insufficient. Our trajectories were already incompatible with the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and they have been further hindered by the pandemic, conflicts, growing inequalities and unabated environmental degradation. The clock is ticking and we urgently need to get on track.

The EU and its Member States unreservedly condemn Russia's unprovoked and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine, which blatantly violates international law as well as the principles of the UN Charter and reiterate their solidarity with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. Russia's decision to bring war back to Europe puts global peace, stability and security in jeopardy, affects people in all parts of the world and imperils the very fulfilment of the SDGs in all their dimensions. We support the United Nations Secretary General's call on Russia to stop the war. We are ready to take responsibility to ensure a decent livelihood for all refugees.

Peace and security are a prerequisite for sustainable development, in line with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda. There can be no sustainable development without peace and no peace without sustainable development. The political and economic disruptions brought about by the war in Ukraine threaten global recovery. Soaring food and energy prices, alongside other multiple impacts of the Russian aggression on Ukraine put SDG implementation at global level at risk, particularly SDGs 1, 2, 7, 10 and 16, exacerbating existing challenges, in particular food and nutrition insecurity, driven by the effects of climate change, and potentially creating new clusters of instability. More than ever, conflict prevention, the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and inclusive approaches to resilience are necessary. The forced displacement of Ukrainian people has direct and concerning consequences on SDG 3, 4, 5 and 10. In the light of the growing humanitarian and refugee crisis in Ukraine, the full enforcement of all international humanitarian law commitments is our first concern. Moreover, Russian shelling of industrial infrastructure is causing air, soil, and water pollution, with serious consequences on SDG6, as well as SDG14 and SDG15.

The EU and its Member States are committed to the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda and recall that it constitutes a coherent and mutually reinforcing framework with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement.

The 2030 Agenda remains our universal, indivisible and integrated roadmap, and it should be implemented as a whole and not selectively. As recalled in the European Consensus on Development,

the EU and its Member States pay particular attention to addressing key crosscutting issues, in particular the promotion of gender equality and a human rights-based approach to progress towards sustainable development in an integrated and balanced manner.

The EU and its Member States very much welcome the theme for this year's High Level Political Forum (HLPF) of "Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". We promote the continued strengthening of the HLPF as the central coordination body for the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The EU and its Member States value the participation of civil society and other stakeholders in all aspects of the HLPF and encourage all parts of society to actively engage. Voluntary national reviews (VNRs) are a cornerstone of this process, and as such, their peer-learning character, inclusiveness and accountability needs to be enhanced. The EU intends to prepare its first Voluntary Review ahead of the 2023 HLPF, setting out how our internal and external actions contribute to implementing the SDGs.

The COVID-19 pandemic has wiped out years of global progress in development, exacerbating existing levels of inequality both within and between countries. It has set back the realization of the 2030 Agenda and aggravated financing difficulties. This impact has been disproportionately felt by countries and populations especially women and young people and those in most vulnerable situations, such as migrants, people with disabilities and older people, millions of whom have been pushed into extreme poverty. Our top priority is to put an end to the pandemic and build back better to ensure a sustainable recovery aligned with the SDGs, to ensure that our response is greener, resilient, just and inclusive. We need to turn this crisis into an opportunity to build momentum for the implementation of the SDGs, to leave no one behind and to build resilience to future crises.

The international community needs to be better prepared to prevent and effectively tackle future pandemics. In this context we express our support to the Intergovernmental Negotiating Body (INB) to draft and negotiate a convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemics prevention, preparedness and response taking a "One Health" approach under the constitution of the WHO and reiterate the need to combat serious cross-border threats to health. Achieving SDG 15 and addressing biodiversity loss is a key tool to reduce the risk of future zoonotic pandemics. It is therefore essential that we agree an ambitious post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework at the upcoming CoP 15.

Equitable access to quality, safe and affordable vaccines is an essential condition for recovery and the achievement of SDG3. No one is safe until everyone is safe. We call for strengthened multilateral coordination on vaccination, under WHO guidance, and put special emphasis on the vaccine pillar of ACT-A, COVAX, to support COVID-19 vaccination in developing countries, local and regional vaccine production capacity as well as the capacity of local health systems to deliver on vaccination. The EU and its Member States, acting in a Team Europe approach, have taken their full part in the global solidarity effort by financing COVAX up to €4.5 billion and with a pledge to donate 700 million vaccines of which 472 have been shared to date, the majority of which through COVAX. During the EU-AU summit, Team Europe has pledged to mobilize €425 million to support COVID-19 immunization in Africa. In addition, Team Europe is supporting the development of local production through projects in several African countries, and is in ongoing dialogue on possible actions in other countries. The EU and its Member States will continue to support a robust post-pandemic recovery through investment into health systems and their long-term resilience.

The EU and its Member States welcome the UNSG's report "Our Common Agenda" as a concrete roadmap towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda. Revitalized global action and political commitment are needed to ensure an effective and timely delivery of the SDGs; it requires effective multilateralism, with a reformed UN at its core, and increased support for the rules-based international order.

The EU and its Member States are committed to enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development across all internal and external policies, with particular attention for the interlinkages between the different SDGs as well as the impacts of their domestic actions in partner countries.

The EU and its Member States rely on renewed instruments and initiatives to ensure the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda, domestically and abroad, such as the New Neighbourhood Development and International Cooperation Instrument "NDICI-Global Europe" (including the European Fund for Sustainable Development Plus +), flagship projects such as the Team Europe Initiatives, as well as the Global Gateway strategy, designed to support the SDGs through promoting investment in sustainable connectivity.