

STATEMENT

By H.E. Ms. Lachezara Stoeva,

Permanent Representative of the Republic of Bulgaria to the UN in New York

High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

General Debate, 17-20 July 2023

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In 2015 we all took a collective commitment to make the world a better place by implementing the Agenda 2030 and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals. At the midpoint to 2030, we are halfway there and yet nowhere near the achievement of the SDGs. Already astray by 2020, the achievement of the SDGs is now further delayed, stalled, or even reversed in some areas due to various challenges and crises. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed our weaknesses and vulnerabilities and opened the door for a multi-dimensional crisis. The already dire situation was further aggravated by the unprovoked and unjustified Russian military aggression against Ukraine. It not only puts global peace and security in jeopardy, but also imperils the very fulfilment of the SDGs in all their dimensions. The political and economic disruptions brought about by the war in Ukraine threaten also global recovery. More than ever we need to focus on conflict prevention, on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus and on inclusive approaches to resilience.

And yet, according to science it is still possible to go back on track; to build back better, greener and fairer; to build a world that is healthy, just, peaceful and sustainable and where no one is left behind. It has never been more important to stay together, to do more and to do it better and faster. Leveraging scientific knowledge, strengthening governance for the SDGs and unleashing their full potential by using the power of their interlinkages and spillover effects will bring peace and prosperity for the people and the planet. This is not going to be the last time we face challenges, but we will be able to overcome them only if

we are together. We need partnerships, we need whole-of- government and whole-of-society approach to reverse the negative trends and give ourselves and the future generations a chance to live in a better world.

Let me turn to my own country's efforts to give its people the future they deserve, as well as to stay a good and reliable partner on the international arena. In preparing the National Development Programme BULGARIA 2030 and its priority areas special attention has been paid to the UN 2030 Agenda and to the SDGs. The SDGs are regarded as a framework for the national development policies, while the Programme itself – as the Government's response for their implementation. We realize that the road to the implementation of the SDGs is long and challenging, but we also know that this is our only way to overcome the effects of the multifaceted crisis the world is facing today.

In the years to come until 2030 Bulgaria will maximize its efforts for the fulfillment of the SDGs including, to the extent possible, for increasing the financial resources allocated to Development Cooperation (International Cooperation for Development) and Humanitarian Aid. To that end initiatives, which already started after 2015, to increase awareness among citizens, businesses, media, government institutions at all decision-making levels in support of SDG's will continue.

In conclusion, let me reiterate Bulgaria's commitment to the implementation of Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals as our common roadmap to peace, stability, and prosperity for the current and future generations.

I thank you!