

High-Level Political Forum

General debate: “Building momentum towards the SDG Summit: Transformation for accelerating implementation of the SDGs”

Monday, 17 July 2023

10:45 AM-1:00 PM

General Assembly Hall

Statement by Portugal

The 2030 Agenda remains our best roadmap to a peaceful, healthy and secure life for current and future generations.

Notwithstanding we realize that, halfway point to 2030, we are off track to meet most of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The UN Secretary General’s Report on Progress towards the SDGs is clear: hunger is on the rise; the pace of poverty reduction is too slow; gender inequalities are exacerbated; and our action to tackle the climate crisis is clearly insufficient.

If these factors were not enough, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and conflicts worldwide, particularly Russia's aggression against Ukraine, are further hindering the fulfillment of the SDGs.

Fortunately, there are also signs of hope.

This is the place to come together.

And now is time to come through by doing more and faster.

And for that, stronger political commitment, more global solidarity and financing are imperative.

Tomorrow, Portugal will present its second Voluntary National Review (VNR).

It represents the conclusion of a strenuous, yet very rewarding challenge.

The self-reflection it implied, halfway through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, presented us with a unique opportunity to go beyond the actions to accelerate SDG implementation.

It encouraged a systemic transformation of our national ownership of the SDGs, leading us to focus on our core vision for sustainable development, which extends way beyond 2030.

Throughout this process, the Portuguese Government has adopted a new inter-institutional mechanism. The coordination of the 2030 Agenda at national level now sits at the heart of the Government's activity, the Presidency of the Council of Ministers, in close articulation with Foreign Affairs.

At the national and regional levels, public policies are gradually incorporating the Agenda.

In this endeavor, Portugal is establishing a 2030 National Roadmap for Sustainable Development. This Roadmap will focus on four areas: i) consistency and alignment between public policies, ii) engagement and participation of stakeholders; iii) a single communication strategy on SDGs encompassing all relevant stakeholders; and iv) awareness and capacity building of the relevant stakeholders.

On the external dimension, the 2030 Portuguese Cooperation Strategy is fully aligned with the 2030 Agenda, prioritizing least developed countries, Small Island Developing States, fragile countries and graduating countries.

Our active engagement within the UN Climate Change Conferences, our role as “Champions” of the Global Compact for Migration, and our cohosting with Kenya of the 2nd UN Ocean Conference, in 2022, are examples of our unwavering commitment to supporting the 2030 Agenda.

But so is our work with partner countries in key areas such climate, agriculture, governance, health, education, and social protection, essential to human development, and aligned with the UN Global Accelerator priorities and the Social Summit in 2025.

We continue to increase our ODA - 17.5% since 2021. The impact on our strategic partnerships, as well as on our humanitarian support to Ukraine, is very clear.

Portugal is committed to making the SDG Summit a genuine and meaningful turning point. It should strengthen political commitment, galvanize leadership, and restore trust, to put us on course to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

We hope that, come September, our leaders can adopt an ambitious and forward-looking Political Declaration: concise, operational and focused on providing high-level guidance on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Let's turn the SDG Summit into a moment of trust and action for the SDGs.

Thank you.