

## **2023 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development**

Thank you, Madam Chair.

Distinguished delegates and participants, as many have pointed out, we meet at the halfway point toward our cherished 2030 Agenda. For the last 8 year, the world has experienced devastating impacts of the pandemic, armed conflicts, and environmental degradation, including climate change that we had not foreseen when setting 17 Sustainable Development Goals. It is hard to deny that our progress to achieve 2030 Agenda has been derailed to a large extent.

However, the fact that we are here to revitalize our commitments to SDGs truly matters. As the Secretary-General Guterres articulated in Our Common Agenda, we strongly believe that multilateralism makes us stronger and more resilient. This July HLPF is even more critical than ever, not only as a review process on crucial and impactful issues of water, energy, infrastructure, urbanization and partnership, but also as a preparatory meeting ahead of SDG Summit in September. In this connection, I would like to share the key elements in furthering our united efforts for getting back on track.

First, putting the SDGs at the center. While dealing with unprecedented challenges – such as COVID-19 pandemic – we often lost sight of our long-term goal. Now it is high time to have a common understanding of where we are headed as well as what the challenges we face. The 2030 Agenda must remain at the center when we are to pursue recovery from multi-layered crises at all levels. All member states are asked to put SDGs at the core of their institutions and frameworks.

With this in mind, the Republic of Korea is committed to expanding its development cooperation efforts and contributing to addressing global challenges as it aspires to be a “global pivotal state.” Korea announced its firm resolve to increase its ODA volume to reach the world’s top ten levels and to provide tailored support to its development partners in its first ever Indo-Pacific Strategy. The SDGs are enshrined in the main objectives and vision of ROK’s ODA-related laws and institutions, to keep our policies aligned with the values of the SDGs. For the purpose of better organizing the implementation of the SDGs for future generations, “the Framework Act on Sustainable Development,” enacted last year, stipulates the establishment of the National Commission on Sustainable Development and relevant local committees. According to the Act, all ministries should closely work together to effectively pursue SDGs domestically and abroad, focusing on enhancing policy coherence for sustainable development,

Second, transforming to accelerate the SDGs. To address the inequalities and disparities that hinder progress, we need to take bold measures to break out of inertia and transform our systems. For governments, this boldness and transformation lead them to partnership with diverse non-governmental actors in an inclusive manner.

The Korean government has been engaging in dialogue and cooperation with donor countries and partner countries, civil society, and international organizations through the implementation of the Busan Partnership Agreement adopted at the High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in 2011. Transformation is needed not only with regard to whom you work with, but also how you work. By inaugurating the Global Partnership for Effective Development Co-operation (GPEDC) and hosting the Busan Forum every two years, the Korean government has emphasized the importance of development effectiveness as a transformative

principle to make best use of the limited resources. This coming December, the 7<sup>th</sup> Busan Forum will be held in Seoul and I am quite confident this event will provide venue for ensuring our firm commitment to working hand-in-hand with all stakeholders to achieve our shared goals.

Third, narrowing the digital divide and leaving no one behind. The digital divide has been one of the major factors in worsening the gap within and between countries and generations to exacerbate inequality. The trend has been strengthened in so-called “untact” economy brought by the pandemic. We cannot emphasize enough the significance of empowering people with digital technology in development cooperation. As suggested in the UN Secretary-General’s roadmap for Digital Cooperation, we need to step up our effort to achieve universal connectivity by 2030 – to ensure digital inclusion for all, including the most vulnerable. The Republic of Korea will join this roadmap. President Yoon has clearly shown his willingness to bridge the digital divide at his speech at the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly. Korea – as one of the front-runners in digital innovation – will continue to offer broader assistance, in the areas of digital education, technology transfer, investment for innovation, alongside with the UN.

We have been plagued with unprecedented poly-crises. However, I am confident that we will recover with our joint efforts and resilience. Korea will continue to stand with the international community for the full realization of the 2030 Agenda.

I thank you.