

*High-Level Political Forum 2023*

*Statement at the General debate: “Building momentum towards the SDG Summit”*

*17<sup>th</sup> of July*

*Delivered by H.E Mr. Mircea FECHET*

*Minister of Environment, Waters and Forests, Romania*

*Excellencies,*

*Distinguished delegates,*

It is my great pleasure to be part of these crucial discussions on ***Building momentum towards the SDG Summit***, addressing the urgent need for actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

I am convinced that at the SDG Summit in September this year, many countries will reconfirm their strong commitment towards on time implementation. Also, concrete discussions on areas where progress has been made, as well as the areas where we still have important work to do, will be conducted in a very constructive approach for all of us. Furthermore, it is crucial to identify the trends and the potential for progress by 2030.

Romania has taken concrete steps to implement the SDGs and mainstream the 2030 Agenda in its national context.

**We will present our second Voluntary National Review later on today**, that details Romania’s progress towards the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda achievement, as a new stage in the implementation of the SDGs, which takes into account the national, regional and global challenges and realities.

Aside from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate and conflict crises caused further disturbances. In this regard, Romania condemns in the strongest terms Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustified war of aggression against Ukraine, which defies the UN Charter, the international law, endangers the environment, and aggravates the global food and energy crises.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We must work towards promoting digitalization, multilateral cooperation, and stakeholder partnerships.

As part of our efforts to recovery after the pandemic, Romania's Government currently implements The National Recovery and Resilience Plan targeting investments and reforms in various sectors of the environment regarding the extension of the national forest fund, biodiversity protection, water resources management, selective collection of waste, as well as circular economy.

Romania implements an integrated wood tracking information system that improves the supply chain transparency and discourages illegal logging.

We adopted *Romania's strategy for the transition to a circular economy 2020-2030*, that can contribute to the growth of our economy while preserving natural resources.

Moreover, at national level, we attach great importance to climate change, in line with the EU's targets in this regard.

Currently, we are working on updating The National Energy and Climate Plan, together with the development of "Romania's long-term strategy for reducing greenhouse gas emissions".

Also, our National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy is in the final stage of adoption.

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

We have seven years left until the global stocktake on achieving the SDGs.

It is imperative that we utilize our leadership to deliver and fulfil the vision and commitment of the 2030 Agenda, ensuring that no one is left behind.

As decision-makers, our role during this time is of utmost importance!

*Thank You!*