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Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development

Compilation of main messages for the 2021 voluntary national reviews

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat transmits herewith the main messages of voluntary national reviews presented by 43 States members of the high-level political forum on sustainable development at its 2021 meeting, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions [67/290](#), [70/1](#) and [70/299](#).***

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Afghanistan

[Original: English]

Realizing self-reliance by accelerating implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals

Afghanistan has the privilege to present its second voluntary national review report on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals this year. Since the adoption of the Goals, the Government has committed itself to the attainment of this global development agenda. To demonstrate political will and promote national ownership, Afghanistan integrated the Goals into its national development framework, created an institutional mechanism to enable an environment for policy and technical innovation and successfully developed national Goals through robust consultations with all stakeholders.

Alongside government efforts to achieve the targeted economic, social and environmental goals, Afghanistan faced significant existing and emerging challenges, which affected the country's development efforts, including overall achievement of the Goals. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences, a decrease in economic growth, the prolongation of the peace process and the associated increase in civilian and military casualties, the negative impact of the withdrawal of the international coalition forces and the Government's increased security burden and the impact of climate change have all had a direct impact on Afghanistan's socioeconomic and environmental progress, including achievement of the Goals.

Considering the situation, the Government launched the second Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework in July 2020 to continue the agenda of eradicating poverty, developing the country into a self-reliant and productive economy connected with the region and the world and investing in strong institutions while continuing our endeavours to address the risks imposed by COVID-19. Our development focus for the next five years will be on peacebuilding, State-building and market-building.

At the core of our vision lies the principle of State response to citizens' demands, especially those of women and the most vulnerable, in a direct, accountable and transparent manner. The Government has taken concrete steps since its most recent voluntary national review, in 2017. The steps include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Nationalizing the Goals, including 16 Goals, 110 targets and 177 indicators;

(b) To further improve the political and technical enabling environment, establishing a new institutional set-up under the chairmanship of the Chief Executive, with four thematic committees established to provide a sustained high-level platform to engage various stakeholders, including the Government, the private sector, civil society organizations, academia and development partners;

(c) Aligning the national Goals with the Peace and Development Framework, including the second version thereof;

(d) Aligning the Afghanistan national Goals with 10 national priority programmes;

(e) Prioritizing the Afghanistan national Goals using multi-criteria analysis methodology, which scored all targets of the Goals on the basis of a weighted linear

average of the level of urgency, the systemic impact and policy gap analysis indicators;

(f) Completion of data gap analysis of the Afghanistan national Goals;

(g) Developing the computable general equilibrium model for the Goals. The Goals Dashboard, monitoring and evaluation framework, financing strategy and costing are in process.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a substantial negative impact on Afghanistan's accelerated efforts to achieve planned economic, social and environmental targets and, overall, the Goals. The Government quickly recognized the seriousness of the pandemic, mapped its trajectory into five phases – acknowledgment, diffusion, adversity, relief and recovery – and organized a whole-of-State response, delegating unprecedented authority to the Ministry of Public Health and the provincial governors.

The Government, considering fiscal realities, undertook a restructuring of its existing programmes, closed non-performing projects and aligned all resources to help to meet the immediate needs of citizens, relief, response, recovery and resilience objectives related to COVID-19. Given the vast impact of the pandemic, in the short to medium term, Afghanistan will be unable to meet all financing needs from domestic revenue sources.

We commit, and meanwhile attach much importance, to meaningful international cooperation with regard to attaining the Goals. Global partnership is required in the form of finance, technology, and trade, particularly for countries in special situations, to accelerate the implementation of the Goals and the realization of their core philosophy of leaving no one behind.

Successful implementation of the Goals complements our endeavours to achieve our national aspiration to grant lasting peace, self-reliance and economic growth as we move into the second half of Afghanistan's decade of transformation, from 2021 to 2025.

Angola

[Original: English]

Angola presents its voluntary national review of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for the first time, committing itself to the voluntary and participatory review of its implementation and follow-up. Under the leadership of the Presidency of the Republic and the coordination of the Ministry of Economy and Planning, and in partnership with the United Nations system in Angola, the platform for the Sustainable Development Goals was set up in June 2020 with the participation of several relevant sectors.

Highlights

Since 2014, the economy of Angola has been facing a recession caused by falling oil prices and declining production, which was recently exacerbated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. In order to deal with this crisis with greater resilience and lessen its dependence on oil, Angola is focused on carrying out a series of important reforms in the economic domain, articulated in the National Development Plan 2018–2022 and aimed especially at macroeconomic stabilization, privatization and diversification. On the one hand, these crises further exposed the vulnerability of the economy of Angola and its limited structural transformation, with high dependence on oil, as well as high unemployment rates, especially among youth (54.4 per cent in 2019). On the other hand, Angola rapidly adopted a response plan to

COVID-19 (the National Development Plan is aimed at vaccinating around 17 million people), together with a package of measures to alleviate the economic impact on businesses, families and the informal economy.

The Government's past efforts to improve social and economic conditions have also started to yield some results. Angola has turned into a country with a medium human development index. Among others, the mortality rate of children under 5 years of age fell, from nearly 300 per 100,000 live births at the beginning of the century to around 68 in 2015. The net attendance rate for secondary education is situated at 39.9 per cent (2019) and, between 1990 and 2019, the average life expectancy increased by 15.8 years, to 61.2 years. The country has also managed to make great strides in the eradication of hunger, reducing the prevalence of malnutrition from 52.2 per cent (2004–2006) to 19 per cent (2017–2019).

Challenges and opportunities

Angola is endowed with important human and natural resources that are essential for structural transformation and diversification and enhance inclusive and sustainable productivity and prosperity, underpinned by solid institutions.

One of the main challenges is to ensure that the reforms translate into an increase in high-quality, decent employment and a reduction in multidimensional poverty, which remains high, with more than half of Angolans living in this condition, especially in rural areas. To this end, it is necessary to improve inclusive access to a series of services, including high-quality education, technical and professional training, drinking water, electricity, the Internet and credit, in general reducing the main inequalities between urban and rural areas, and the economic ones – about 23 per cent of the population lives on less than half the average income – and between men and women. The gender inequality index in 2019 was 0.536, and women and girls generally have less access to education, are more affected by HIV/AIDS, suffer more from gender violence, are less represented in decision-making bodies and have lower access to employment.

The country also reaffirms the importance of sustainability in this process. Angola ratified the Paris Agreement and boasts a rich biodiversity and abundant natural resources to manage. However, the impacts of climate change are visible, especially in the south and the coastal areas, with the 2012–2016 and 2019–2021 droughts causing serious damage and threatening progress towards eradicating hunger.

Way forward

In February 2021, the General Assembly approved resolution [75/259](#), on the extension of the preparatory period preceding the graduation of Angola from the least developed country category, to 2024, owing to its high socioeconomic vulnerability. This extension is an opportunity to review and strengthen relevant international support measures of the government programme and to enhance partnerships with the United Nations system and development partners through a smooth national transition strategy.

The preparation of the voluntary national review also provides an opportunity to develop systems for producing, collecting, compiling and analysing the statistical data necessary to continue to monitor and evaluate progress towards the Goals in the next reviews until 2030.

The National Development Plan 2018–2022 is aimed at accelerating progress towards achieving the Goals through enhanced monitoring of their implementation, integrated in the annual plans and in the national budget, and through the greater

engagement of the private sector in increasing investments in productive value chains, aimed at substantial employment and targeting youth and women in particular.

Antigua and Barbuda

[Original: English]

Introduction

The twin-island State of Antigua and Barbuda resides in the northern Caribbean and includes the uninhabited Redonda, a nature reserve. The date of 1 November 2021 will mark 40 years of our political independence. We are pleased to present our first voluntary national review, highlighting the commitment of the Government and the people to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2016, a ban on single-use plastic bags was instituted, a bold action by a small nation focused on improving the lives of its people and the environment in pursuit of sustainable national development. Despite this commendable feat, the pursuit of the Goals continues to be daunting owing to vulnerabilities, including high indebtedness; susceptibility to exogenous shocks, including natural disasters, extraterritorial laws and health crises; an unstable global economy; and a hostile multilateral trading system.

Nevertheless, the Government remains resolute in its nation-building objectives, putting people at the centre of development, with the voluntary national review reflecting our unwavering commitment to advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and leaving no one behind. The review was informed by participatory stakeholder engagement with the public and private sectors, civil society, academia, the media and our youth.

Development thrust within the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Antigua and Barbuda

Our people enjoy relatively high incomes, allowing them to live better, longer and healthier lives. Classified as a high-income country by the United Nations, Antigua and Barbuda has a human development index value of 0.778, one of the highest in our region, placing it seventy-eighth out of 189 countries. The value is a testament to the deliberate efforts of advancing the economic and social transformation of our country towards putting people first. However, this accomplishment has inhibited our access to concessionary financing, constraining our ability to have a country with no poverty.

Regardless, we continue to place a strategic focus on reducing poverty and income inequality while investing in education and training. That focus accompanies our efforts to support the private sector through loans and technical assistance, ensuring its international competitiveness and innovation. However, that level of global competitiveness and innovation continues to be stymied by unilateral economic blacklisting, threats to corresponding banking relationships and a hostile multilateral trading architecture.

A nation surrounded by water presents untapped potential for development that needs to be sustainably managed for current and future generations. In pursuit of a sustainable blue economy, Antigua and Barbuda is actively participating in the World Trade Organization fisheries subsidies negotiation, which is aimed at eliminating fisheries subsidies that contribute to illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, leading to overcapacity and overfishing.

Progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals within the context of the coronavirus disease pandemic and other exogenous shocks in Antigua and Barbuda

Our efforts, post-COVID-19, are to build forward stronger, as we have approached the recovery of Barbuda, which was devastated by Hurricane Irma in 2017. We are among the few countries in the world with a low rate of death and infection, a high rate of recovery and no known community spread of COVID-19. Notwithstanding our efforts, the virus has caused many disruptions to our economy and for our citizens. Our recovery will be dependent on equitable access to vaccines, global management of the virus and the support of our development partners.

We have accomplished much under the Goals related to people, in particular Goals 1, 2, 3 and 4, in addition to Goal 8, which is focused on prosperity, as well as thanks to our foresight to prioritize the blue economy embodied under Goal 14, although challenges remain. We continue to be severely affected by climate change the increasing incidence of non-communicable diseases and our inability to obtain access to concessionary financing, emphasizing the need for a recognized vulnerability index as a tool of measurement.

Our next steps to accelerate localization of the global agenda

This is an opportune time to advance the global agenda, given the enhanced development gains to be achieved by implementing the Goals, given that we are in the process of reviewing our National Development Plan.

A national committee on the Goals has been established, and efforts are continuing to seek assistance to develop a comprehensive communications and stakeholder engagement strategy and a mainstreaming, acceleration and policy support mission to aid in aligning the goals across policies and programmes and identifying accelerators to realize our development prospects.

We are motivated, determined and committed to achieving the Goals and to making our country a good place to live where everyone is included.

Azerbaijan

[Original: English]

Ownership of the Sustainable Development Goals

The establishment of a just, equitable and inclusive model of sustainable development for everyone is one of the key priorities of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This is the third voluntary national review presented by Azerbaijan since the adoption and integration of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development into its national policy and development strategies. The National Coordination Council on Sustainable Development and the Ministry of Economy lead the voluntary national review process with the support of the United Nations Development Programme country office through consultations with various stakeholders, including the parliament, line ministries, public institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academic institutions.

National development priorities of Azerbaijan, 2030

Azerbaijan is entering a strategic phase in this new post-pandemic and post-conflict era, which spans from 2021 to 2030. Acknowledging global trends and challenges, the Government of Azerbaijan sets the country's long-term development vector and pathways to socioeconomic and environmental development through five

corresponding national priorities, approved by Presidential decree, for the subsequent decade. These priorities, aligned with the commitments of Azerbaijan under the 2030 Agenda, are as follows:

- A steadily growing competitive economy
- A society based on dynamic, inclusive and social justice
- Competitive human capital and space for modern innovation
- A great return to the liberated territories
- A clean environment and a green growth country

The end of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan creates new economic opportunities not only for Azerbaijan but also for the region. In this regard, the rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration of the liberated and conflict-affected areas will be one of the main directions of the development priorities of Azerbaijan in coming years.

Building back better from the coronavirus disease pandemic

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic caused massive disruption to people's lives around the world and seriously affected the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Azerbaijan in several areas – economic growth, employment, health care, education and tourism. Since the first quarter of 2020, the spread of COVID-19 in Azerbaijan and the subsequent obligatory lockdowns naturally had a negative impact on economic activity and led to a 4.3 per cent decrease in gross domestic product in 2020. To mitigate the impact of COVID-19, the Government of Azerbaijan approved support programmes to provide direct financial assistance (overall, \$1.5 billion in 2020) through wage subsidies to entrepreneurs, tax concessions, customs and insurance payments and benefits to the unemployed and to public workers, covering education and health expenses. As a result of effective support, it is assumed that 2021–2022 will be a recovery period for Azerbaijan. Parallel to internal measures taken, the Government actively participates in fighting COVID-19 globally through bilateral and multilateral programmes and has supported 33 countries with humanitarian aid and financial assistance.

Green growth

The Government of Azerbaijan admits that global climate change should be based on the introduction of clean technologies, encouraging the use of clean energy sources, recycling and the remediation of contaminated areas. In this regard, selected priorities include a high-quality ecological environment and spaces for green energy, as well as building smart cities and smart villages based on national development priorities and Goal 11.

Next steps regarding challenges

- Driven by COVID-19 challenges, strengthening the health-care system and enlarging coverage of the vaccination process while helping economic activity to recover through the gradual elimination of mandatory lockdowns
- Accelerating economic diversification and ensuring the dynamic development of the non-oil sector, which contributes to implementation of the Goals. This will be carried out through clustering, the formation of a favourable business environment, the development of a national innovation system and the formation of a favourable institutional framework

- Developing competitive human capital through expansion of the scope of active labour market programmes, increasing investment in education and ensuring full access to the compulsory health insurance system
- Strengthening the use of alternative energy sources and protecting biodiversity, as well as ensuring that government agencies take measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in order to fulfil the obligations arising from the Paris Agreement on climate change
- Ensuring sustainable development through the rehabilitation, reconstruction and reintegration of the liberated territories in consideration of the Goals and other international challenges, resources and perspectives
- Improving data collection and analysis with regard to sustainable development, including by strengthening capacity for analysis and generating detailed disaggregated data on gender, ethnicity, age groups, habitats and regions and/or administrative districts
- Establishing a Sustainable Development Goals financing mechanism with the engagement of the private sector and government institutions to achieve selected targets of the Goals

Bahamas

[Original: English]

In September 2019, just one year after the Bahamas presented its first voluntary national review to the United Nations, Hurricane Dorian made landfall on the islands of Abaco and Grand Bahama, where entire towns were destroyed by category 5 winds and storm surges of over 20 feet. As a small island developing State, we are affected the most by the effects of the impact of climate change, even though we contribute to it the least. Hurricane Dorian was a devastating example of just how strong these effects have become.

In September 2019, government authorities responded quickly by creating the Ministry of Disaster Preparedness, Management and Reconstruction, thus taking a significant step towards strengthening national disaster preparedness and response capabilities. The new ministry comprises the National Emergency Management Agency and the Disaster Reconstruction Authority, which work together to facilitate mitigation planning, community preparedness, public information-sharing and recovery coordination.

Many organizations and countries lent a hand to assist in building the Bahamas back better. The National Emergency Management Agency coordinated emergency response with support from the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency and various countries and agencies, including those in the United Nations system, particularly humanitarian agencies. During his visit to the Bahamas, the Secretary-General commended the Government's response to the disaster and pledged the full support of the United Nations. These partnerships were instrumental in the recovery efforts of the Bahamas.

In March 2020, the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas announced the first confirmed case of coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Immediately, the country began to prepare for the varying effects of the pandemic. This came in the form of emergency orders from the Prime Minister that instituted, inter alia, a lockdown schedule for the country. Mask-wearing and increased sanitation protocols were made mandatory, along with nightly curfews and the shutdown of all non-essential businesses and organizations, commercial sailing, public transportation and gatherings. The COVID-19 protocols were accompanied by the creation of a

COVID-19 enforcement unit, which is located within the Royal Bahamas Police Force. The purpose of the unit is to curb breaches of quarantine protocols and patrol public spaces to ensure that health guidelines are being adhered to.

Like many other countries, the Bahamas was shaken in unprecedented ways by the global COVID-19 pandemic, which has occurred while the country is still rebuilding and recovering from the most catastrophic hurricane experienced in the country to date. Both historic events have affected progress towards the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. While there have been some setbacks, the Bahamas remains resilient and has responded quickly and strategically to the nation's ongoing efforts to achieve Vision 2030, the National Development Plan.

The economy of the Bahamas is heavily dependent on tourism and financial services. COVID-19 brought the tourism industry to a halt, creating a domino effect with regard to hotel and tourism-dependent jobs. To mitigate the stress caused by the lack of employment, the Government of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas launched the National Food Distribution Taskforce, which delivered emergency food assistance. To date, it is one of the largest public-private social care initiatives in the Bahamas. To facilitate the packaging and distribution of food items, the Government partnered with faith-based organizations and non-governmental organizations. The Ministry of Social Services and Urban Development also provided emergency food assistance and made special provisions for tourism workers. The National Insurance Board paid out over \$45 million in unemployment benefits to assist those in need.

The Small Business Development Centre was launched and has invested over \$2 million in over 550 small businesses through its grant programmes, which remained accessible throughout the pandemic. The Centre serves to provide existing and budding entrepreneurs with the resources and funds needed to open and maintain a successful business. Through its Access Accelerator programme and other initiatives, the Centre ultimately works to improve the economy.

Notwithstanding the varying challenges of the past two years, the Bahamas reaffirms its commitment and the high priority attached to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in national programmes and policies. The country is making strides across all sectors to ensure that we create the sustainable future that we wish to see and that we remain committed to leaving no one behind.

The Bahamas delegation looks forward to participating in the high-level political forum of the Economic and Social Council of July 2021 and values the opportunities that will be garnered from productive exchanges with other delegations and stakeholders.

Bhutan

[Original: English]

While Bhutan's progress towards implementing the Sustainable Development Goals has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, it has handled the situation well, given strong preventative and inclusive response measures in place since early 2020. A total of 1,111 positive cases were recorded as at 2 May 2021, of which 117 were active, and there was only one related death. More than 93 per cent of the eligible population has been vaccinated, and efforts to ensure the administration of the second dose are under way.

An economic contingency plan of 4.492 billion ngultrum provides priority support to the tourism and construction sectors, to agriculture and livestock production and towards stocking essential food and non-food items. The Druk

Gyalpo's Relief Kidu – an important social protection prerogative of His Majesty the King – has helped to sustain the livelihoods of about 52,644 individuals besides supporting the interest payments of more than 139,096 loan account holders. Several monetary and fiscal measures are also in place.

Meanwhile, with Bhutan's gross national happiness philosophy resonating strongly with the Goals and forming the basis of its five-year plans, priority concerns identified in its first voluntary national review report continue to be addressed through the twelfth five-year plan (November 2018 to October 2023). The Dewa Platform, an integrated dashboard to monitor gross national happiness, the Goals and five-year plan progress, has also been developed.

To ensure the quality and inclusiveness of key social outcomes, a flagship health programme is under implementation. National policies on gender equality, disabilities and maternal and child health have been endorsed. Flagship programmes on sustainable tourism, organic agriculture, cottage and small industries and digital transformation are being implemented to enhance the productive capacity of the economy.

Bhutan's smooth transition strategy for graduation from the least developed country category by 2023 has been prepared, and a twenty-first century economic road map is currently under formulation. Meanwhile, emphasis on improved efficiency and the sustainable use of natural resources will be reinforced by the recently developed sustainable consumption and production strategy.

A national climate change policy, a strategy for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries (REDD-plus), and an updated environment strategy, among others, have been adopted as part of efforts to manage climate change impacts. Bhutan has submitted its third national communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and is developing its second nationally determined contribution along with sectoral low-emission strategies. Gender and climate analyses have been initiated, and a road map for disaster risk management is in place.

However, the impacts of the pandemic have been deep and far-reaching. While gross domestic product had grown, from 3 per cent in 2018 to 5.46 per cent in 2019, and was projected at 6.9 per cent in 2020, growth projection decelerated to -6.1 per cent by year end, given containment measures. A large number of people dependent on tourism and allied sectors were displaced, and many Bhutanese working overseas returned home. Overall unemployment reached 5 per cent in 2020, compared with 2.7 per cent in 2019, and youth unemployment, a long-standing concern, reached an all-time high of 22.6 per cent, compared with 11.9 per cent in 2019.

Domestic violence and protection issues emerged as a shadow pandemic, exposing an area that has yet to have effective systems and essential services fully in place. Issues of online safety, cybersecurity and the digital divide were highlighted as education and public services went online. Concerns over food and nutrition security were amplified as weaknesses in value chain management and distribution became apparent. The health system's capacity to deal with a prolonged pandemic is an additional concern, with epidemiological changes already putting pressure on the sustainability of free health-care services.

Meanwhile, Bhutan remains highly vulnerable to climate change impacts and natural disasters, which pose serious threats to its nature-dependent livelihood and hydropower- and agriculture-based economy. As it maintains its carbon-neutral status in the face of mounting pressure to accelerate economic growth, the additional burden of adaptation and mitigation entails huge costs.

Going forward, Bhutan is drawing important lessons from the pandemic, including the need and possibility for long-term, transformative and green solutions for its food system, local economy, public services delivery, approaches to learning, data ecosystem and preparedness for disasters and future pandemics. Therefore, while working to build back better, Bhutan remains committed to accelerating the Goals so that progress towards an inclusive, low-carbon and resilient development pathway – as envisioned in its gross national happiness approach – is sustained.

Cabo Verde

[Original: English]

1. Facing coronavirus disease

In the past five years, Cabo Verde has faced three terrible years of drought but still recovered its economic growth. However, in 2020, like other small island developing States, the country faced a harsh recession of 14.8 per cent owing to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The year 2021 should be the year of consolidation of the first cycle of sustainable development, but instead it will be the year of sustainable recovery. The existing social vulnerabilities are amplified, and therefore health and the economic and social emergency are the budget priorities, with the support of the international community, especially with regard to the implementation of the national plan for response, recovery and the promotion of the economy. In addition, with the support of the international community, Cabo Verde aims to vaccinate a minimum of 70 per cent of adults in 2021 with full coverage by 2023.

2. Gender parity

Cabo Verde has made remarkable progress in the area of gender equality that will be shared with the international community, with an emphasis on a significant and sustainable reduction of gender-based violence crimes and full achievement of gender parity in political decision-making bodies with the implementation of the parity law. Cabo Verde aspires to be a country without gender discrimination by promoting economic opportunities for women and girls, stimulating diversified educational and professional paths, deepening the equal participation of women and men in spaces and positions of power and decision-making and developing policies and measures to eliminate all forms of gender-based violence.

3. Human capital

Cabo Verde elected the development of human capital as the main accelerator of sustainable development, and young people are the most important segment, with an increasing population of older persons. The country made remarkable progress in the past four years on education, becoming one of the few countries with free primary and secondary education. Reforms to promote technical and professional education from the ninth grade onward will contribute to the massification of the professional qualification of young people. With these reforms, coupled with those under way in higher education, and with investment in health for all, the aim is to develop human capital, accelerate economic growth and reduce inequality and poverty. We urge the international community to support the country's efforts within the framework of the strategic plan for human capital development.

4. Diversifying the economy

The COVID-19 pandemic reinforces the imperative of diversifying the economy as an essential measure of resilience to external shocks. Cabo Verde Ambition 2030 set the commitment to diversification of the economy by integrating the country into

new global value chains. The country's authorities prioritize the acceleration of energy transition, the development of sustainable tourism, the digital economy, industry, culture and the creative industries, the transition to the blue economy, an international health platform and the transformation of agriculture. The national authorities invite the international community to invest in Cabo Verde, especially through public-private partnerships.

5. Small island developing States: the financing of sustainable development

The losses suffered by the economies of small island developing States, as well as the slow recovery, jeopardize the continuity of the national effort towards financing development under the Addis Ababa Action Plan. The need for better consideration of the multidimensional vulnerability index as a specific criterion for these States, which are subject to disasters and more vulnerable to climate change, with regard to obtaining access to official development assistance and concessional financing has deepened, as has the need for creation of a small island developing State compact as the mechanism par excellence for financing sustainable recovery. The national authorities propose to promote, with other small island developing States and with the support of the United Nations and other development partners, the creation of an international commitment to post-COVID-19 economic recovery and sustainable development financing in small island developing States.

6. Debt forgiveness

From the COVID-19 pandemic and Cabo Verde Ambition 2030, structural changes and priorities have emerged regarding the fight against impoverishment, the promotion of health security and, especially, the diversification of the economy. The expansion of public investment is therefore unavoidable in the context of overindebtedness aggravated by the pandemic in middle-income countries. It is therefore vital to forgive, even partially, foreign debt not only so that investments with a transformative impact are not postponed but also to avoid the blockage, if not the collapse, of the State, regression and the destruction of the dreams of all Cabo Verdeans.

Chad

[Original: French]

Having presented its first voluntary national review of the Sustainable Development Goals at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019, Chad is now submitting another review in 2021.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development provides an opportunity for Chad to develop public policies for sustainable and inclusive development.

By engaging in the second voluntary national review, the high-level authorities of the country have demonstrated their commitment to achieving, alongside all stakeholders, the 16 Sustainable Development Goals, contextualized so as to ensure respect for the principle of leaving no one behind, in order to build a just world and lasting peace.

The assessment of progress towards the achievement of the Goals has shown that results remain mixed, as Chad is facing multiple challenges despite the efforts it has deployed in the economic, social and security fields.

Moreover, the economic crisis linked to the drop in the price of crude oil, political instability and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had a

negative impact on the economy as a whole and on the Government's efforts, exposing a large portion of the population to poverty and vulnerability.

The 2021 voluntary national review was prepared through a participatory approach involving all stakeholders participating in efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It is based on the joint monitoring report concerning the African and global sustainable development agendas prepared by Chad in 2020.

The 2021 review provides an opportunity to reflect further on sustainable development challenges, analyse progress and, above all, identify opportunities and actions to accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in Chad.

Despite the effects of the decline in State resources and the fight against violent extremism on the economic environment, Chad has made progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The poverty rate fell from 46.7 per cent in 2011 to 42.3 per cent in 2019, the rate of access to safe drinking water rose from 56.1 per cent in 2014 to 61.8 per cent in 2019, the proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel rose from 24.3 per cent in 2015 to 34.5 per cent in 2019, the school retention rate for girls improved, and the adult literacy rate rose from 28.8 per cent in 2011 to 41.5 per cent in 2019.

However, a limited number of people (8.4 per cent of the population) have access to electricity, and only 1.6 per cent of the population is covered by the social protection floor. Furthermore, the economic situation is still weak; there were recessions in 2016 and 2017 as a result of falls in the price of crude oil, and another in 2020 as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the implementation of its "Vision 2030, the Chad we want", which is divided into three national development plans, Chad intends to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals fully and indivisibly, in order to reduce significantly the levels of poverty and inequality and promote the empowerment of women and girls.

The action plan linked to the national statistics development strategy (2018–2021) should make it possible to strengthen the operational capacities of the departments responsible for planning and statistics, in order to improve the frequency of data collection and dissemination.

The inclusive approach involving all stakeholders, technical and financial partners and, in particular, the parliament and the supreme audit institution in the Sustainable Development Goals review process is an achievement that should be capitalized on, as is the joint monitoring of the Agenda 2063 and the 2030 Agenda initiated by Chad in 2020.

The sharing of experiences and the prioritization of virtual exchanges between countries and multilateral institutions during the preparation of voluntary national reviews in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic proved to be effective.

Despite the progress that has been made in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the following challenges remain: (a) the regular production of quality statistical data; (b) the better integration of the 2030 Agenda into development policies and strategies; (c) the mobilization of financial resources; (d) the systematic evaluation of projects and programmes; and (e) better capacity-building for stakeholders.

China

[Original: English]

Over the past five years, under the strong leadership of President Xi Jinping, China has put people's well-being front and centre, followed a new vision of

innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development and taken comprehensive measures to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development according to its national implementation plan, which was among the first of its kind in the world, and through an interministerial coordination mechanism made up of 45 ministries and agencies, integrating its implementation efforts into the country's thirteenth Five-Year Plan and other medium- to long-term development strategies. China has also actively participated in international development cooperation to promote global implementation endeavours. All of these efforts have yielded remarkable results.

China has eradicated extreme poverty and ensured food security. At the end of 2020, China won its fight against poverty as scheduled, ending poverty for the 98.99 million rural residents living below the current poverty line and meeting the targets of Sustainable Development Goal 1, 10 years ahead of schedule. Building on these achievements, China is prioritizing the development of agriculture and rural areas and implementing its rural revitalization strategy in a comprehensive manner. In 2020, China reaped a bumper harvest in grain production for the seventeenth year in a row. The “rice bowl” of the Chinese people is held tightly in the hands of the Chinese themselves.

China has actively taken climate action and contributed to global green development. Following the philosophy that clear water and lush mountains are invaluable assets, China has accelerated the transition towards green development. The country has won the three critical battles to keep its skies blue, its water clear and its soil pollution-free and made remarkable headway in the holistic protection and treatment of its mountains, rivers, forests, farmland, lakes, grassland and deserts. China has firmly implemented the Paris Agreement and actively participated in global climate governance. Carbon intensity in China has fallen cumulatively by 18.8 per cent. Clean energy now accounts for 23.4 per cent of China's energy mix. China leads the world in installed capacity and output of photovoltaic and wind power generation. The country has scaled up its nationally determined contributions, and it aims to have its carbon dioxide emissions peak before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060, injecting strong impetus into global climate actions and green and low-carbon development worldwide.

China has met the challenge of the pandemic with success and improved public health governance. Putting people and their lives above everything else, China has made major strategic achievements in fighting coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and protected people's rights to life and health. China has increased investment in public health infrastructure and woven the world's largest social safety net, with basic medical insurance covering more than 1.3 billion people. With upgraded public health services, the Chinese people's sense of fulfilment, happiness and security has increased steadily.

China has registered steady economic growth and enhanced development resilience. China's gross domestic product has increased from less than 70 trillion yuan to over 100 trillion yuan. Steady progress has been made in infrastructure connectivity and sustainable transportation. Pandemic control goes hand in hand with economic and social development. A new development paradigm is being formed, with domestic circulation as the mainstay and domestic and international circulation reinforcing each other. In 2020, China's gross domestic product grew by 2.3 per cent, making the country the only major world economy to grow.

China has shouldered its responsibilities as a major country and advanced international development cooperation. China champions mankind's common values of peace, development, fairness, justice, democracy and freedom and strives to build a community on the basis of a shared future for mankind. It has stepped up

efforts to promote synergy between the Belt and Road Initiative and the 2030 Agenda, promoted the green Belt and Road Initiative, deepened South-South cooperation and helped other developing countries to implement the 2030 Agenda to the best of its ability. China has provided assistance to more than 160 countries and international organizations in combating COVID-19 and donated and exported pandemic response supplies to over 200 countries and regions. The country has joined the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility, has provided or is providing vaccine assistance to more than 80 developing countries that are most in need and has exported vaccines to more than 40 countries, making its due contribution to the global fight against the pandemic.

China's remarkable achievements in implementing the 2030 Agenda are attributable to the strong leadership of the Communist Party of that country, to the advantages of socialism with Chinese characteristics, to China's comprehensive drive to deepen reforms and expand opening up and to the joint efforts of the people of all ethnic groups in the country.

Likewise, the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda calls for strong political leadership, effective institutional guarantees, scientific and technological innovation, extensive social mobilization and pragmatic global partnerships. The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a severe blow to the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda. China stands ready to work with other countries to consolidate political will, put development first, strengthen means of implementation, take joint actions and address the special difficulties of developing countries to leave no one and no country behind.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]

Sustainable Development Goals in Colombia: accelerating implementation for sustainable recovery

In 2016, Colombia presented its first voluntary national report, in order to reaffirm its commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and show the international community the institutional governance associated with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the country. In its second report, in 2018, it presented the progress made towards the achievement of the Goals through the development of the public policy framework entitled "Strategy for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Colombia". Four areas of action are set out in National Council on Economic and Social Policy document No. 3918 (CONPES 3918), which is the country's road map for the period up to 2030: monitoring and reporting; availability of information; a territorial strategy; and a strategy for the participation and financing of non-governmental actors.

In this third voluntary national report, Colombia seeks to reaffirm its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals as a national policy and also to present an overview of its progress at the current juncture, where the calls under the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals are converging with the conviction that recovery from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic must be inclusive, resilient and sustainable.

Overall progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, in terms of achievement of the targets set by the national Government, stood at 72.1 per cent as at December 2020. This progress is the result of a national effort

to improve the living conditions of the entire population of Colombia, and of the commitment to achieve the goal of leaving no one behind.

The 2030 Agenda is a reference framework for using development plans as instruments for classifying public investment, at both the national and territorial levels. In the National Development Plan for the period 2018–2022, more than 98 per cent of indicators are associated with one or more Sustainable Development Goal targets. Progress with regard to the territorialization of the Goals as a strategy for bringing together different actors to implement a sustainable development model in Colombia is presented through descriptive analysis and an assessment of the similarities between the Goals and the territorial development plans for the period 2020–2023, carried out using textual analysis and data mining techniques. This represents a significant step towards closing social and economic gaps in Colombia, in particular since inequality in the country must be analysed not only at the level of individuals, but also between territories.

Advances made with regard to the availability of timely information include progress in the area of statistics. Within the framework of the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals and national government bodies, indicator production plans have been made and an innovative monitoring strategy known as the “Barometer” has been developed. In 2020, eight new global indicators were produced, which will complement the national Sustainable Development Goals monitoring system.

The commencement of the decade of action has provided an opportunity to strengthen the participation of non-governmental actors in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal targets in order to realize the multi-stakeholder approach of the 2030 Agenda, accelerate the implementation of the Goals and bring about a resilient and sustainable recovery. Following the pilot presented in the 2018 voluntary national report, the country put in place robust methodology to measure the contribution of the private sector to the achievement of the Goals. Implementing partners have used the SDG Corporate Tracker platform to have more than 311 companies provide information reports for 2018 and 2019.

Progress has also been made with regard to the structure and road map that will allow the multi-stakeholder platform to function as a space for dialogue and participation, the primary objective being the alignment of efforts to promote sustainable development. Colombia is also committed to developing a strategy that will make it possible to bring together various sources of financing. The above-mentioned advances represent the joint effort of public, private and civil society actors to bring about economic recovery while ensuring environmental sustainability and closing gaps, so that no one is left behind.

Lastly, this review sets out the progress made in the implementation of policies to continue the country’s trajectory towards a sustainable and lasting development model that integrates the social, economic and environmental dimensions, while avoiding adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]

In Cuba, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a State commitment and a national priority. The National Group for the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda is the institutional mechanism for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals in the country. The establishment of partnerships is a key element of the Cuban strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The new Constitution also includes elements that provide legal support for its implementation.

The National Economic and Social Development Plan for the period up to 2030 is aligned with the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The country is working to launch its Goals portal and is implementing a national communications campaign entitled “Cuba, con paso 2030”, which is helping to promote the 2030 Agenda and the National Plan.

Public policies prioritize delivering and maintaining important social achievements, in accordance with the principle of leaving no one behind, through universal free access to important social services such as health care, which is integrated into the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries; education, which has contributed to the development of highly qualified human capital that aligns science, technology and innovation results with sustainable development; and culture and sport as legitimate rights of individuals.

There is strong institutional capacity to provide a social protection network that takes into consideration gender equity, the security and peace of mind of citizens and respect for rights, with an emphasis on support for vulnerable individuals and groups.

The response to the pandemic is agile, effective and universal, and the social protection system has contributed to providing social guarantees for all. The country has five coronavirus disease (COVID-19) candidate vaccines, all of which are at the clinical trial stage, and plans to vaccinate the entire population in 2021.

The country is strengthening the environmental aspect of sustainable development. The State’s plan to combat climate change (Tarea Vida) includes actions to protect the environment through the promotion of sustainable consumption and production practices, the sustainable management of natural resources and the adoption of mitigation and adaptation measures to ensure the physical security and food security of society, including in the most vulnerable communities.

Disaster risk reduction is a priority for the Government, as the fact that the country is an island and its geographical location mean that it is very vulnerable to climate phenomena.

Cuba shares its experiences and good practices through South-South and triangular cooperation, so that other countries can benefit. Cuba is committed to renewed and strengthened multilateralism, to cooperation in solidarity and to the search for concerted and innovative solutions. It is a leader in South-South and triangular cooperation, cooperating with 170 countries. The brigades of the Henry Reeve medical contingent, which specialize in dealing with disaster situations and serious pandemics, play a prominent role.

Cuba faces significant challenges in its commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The main obstacle in Cuba is the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States, the cumulative damage of which amounts to \$147.8533 billion dollars at current prices.

Cuba has recognized that it faces challenges with regard to the diversification and expansion of its external and internal sources of financing for development, the need to address deformations in its production structure, the technology gap, its high dependency on imports, national food production and the transformation of the energy mix to include more sources of renewable energy.

The country is not giving up on the Sustainable Development Goals, however difficult the conditions. Cuba is implementing a socioeconomic strategy to boost the economy and move towards recovery, and is working to achieve the Goals and implement its National Plan 2030, on the basis of the complementarity of all economic actors. Cuba is committed to building a sovereign, independent, socialist, democratic, prosperous and sustainable society and reaffirms its commitment to sustainable development and its willingness to strengthen effective partnerships that contribute to its achievement.

Cyprus

[Original: English]

Introduction

Cyprus's second voluntary national review provides an overview of the progress towards, and the remaining challenges to, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The challenges have been aggravated by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which halted socioeconomic and environmental progress.

Governance and stakeholder engagement

Building on a lesson learned through the 2017 voluntary national review, an intergovernmental commission has been established for the implementation of the Goals, under the coordination of the Ministry of Finance, while the responsibility for the target of each Goal remains with the competent ministry. Under the adopted integrated policy framework, stakeholders from civil society, active citizenship, volunteer groups and non-governmental organizations play a pivotal role in the implementation of the Goals.

Response to coronavirus disease

The COVID-19 reality brought unprecedented challenges and changes to everyday life. The top priority of the Government of Cyprus was the protection and health of its citizens, as well as support related to social and economic fallout from the pandemic. Prompt public health interventions, including non-pharmaceutical measures and active contact tracing, with extensive and targeted testing, proved to be a valuable combination of strategies to effectively control the COVID-19 outbreak. Furthermore, to mitigate the negative impact of the pandemic on the economy, the Government adopted a support package for employees, the self-employed, vulnerable groups and businesses, which in 2020 amounted to 2.6 billion euros, or 12.5 per cent of gross domestic product. Cyprus's pioneering mobilization of its volunteer network, under the coordination of the Office of the Commissioner for Volunteerism and non-governmental organizations, received European Union-wide recognition for its prompt and effective support of vulnerable groups following prescribed security protocols.

Progress overview

In the period that elapsed since its first voluntary national review, in 2017, and given five years of continuous high economic growth, Cyprus has shown progress in

most Goal indicators, even though it continues to rank low among the European Union countries. Cyprus performs well with regard to reducing poverty, securing good health and attaining high tertiary education levels, but falls behind in high-quality education. It is ahead of many European Union countries in terms of the gender pay gap and has shown some improvement with regard to the number of women in leadership positions. On the other hand, Cyprus experiences the highest influx of migrants in the European Union, with the number of asylum applications rising to 8,746 in 2019, compared with the European Union average of 1,411 applications. Regarding the environment, Cyprus's performance is below the European Union average for most Goals. Severe challenges exist with respect to sustainable agriculture, clean water and sanitation. Cyprus continues to lag behind with respect to affordable and clean energy, responsible consumption and production and climate action. However, the data show continuous improvement with regard to most environmental goals, reflecting the fruition of targeted government policies and initiatives.

Building forward better

Cyprus is in the process of preparing a long-term strategy in order to adopt a robust new growth model to strengthen the economy's resilience and the country's potential for economically, socially and environmentally sustainable long-term growth and welfare. This objective will be achieved through an appropriate country-specific mix of investments and reforms included in the national recovery and resilience plan, with an overall budget exceeding 1.0 billion euros of investment for the period 2021–2026. The plan takes into account the need to mitigate the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and to strengthen the foundations of the economy.

At the governance level, with regard to the Goals, Cyprus is implementing a project in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research that is aimed at a whole-of-government approach to implementing a sustainable development agenda and at a stronger partnership with all stakeholders. Next steps include, among others, the following:

- A broader awareness of the Goals within Cypriot society, with the involvement and commitment of all stakeholders, including the creation of the following online platform: www.initiative2030.gov.cy
- The training of government employees to contribute to the implementation of the national strategy for the Goals
- A pioneering educational programme for children, with activities related to each of the 17 Goals

Cyprus's coordinated efforts to implement projects, initiatives and actions reflect its commitment to achieving the vision of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The national recovery and resilience plan is a key tool for Cyprus's effective green and digital transition while leaving no one behind.

Czechia

[Original: English]

Introduction

The transformation from authoritarianism to democracy that Czechia has undergone over the past 30 years has in many ways been led by the principles of sustainable development and strengthened by membership in the European Union. This successful transformation is evident in the benchmarks in which Czechia ranks

near the forefront (eighth in the Sustainable Development Goals Index, tenth in the Sustainable Development Goals Index for Europe and seventeenth in the Transitions Performance Index). Nevertheless, success must be measured comprehensively. As such, we consider the voluntary national review to be an opportunity for a thorough and objective evaluation that will help us to find ways out of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Tangible steps towards improving the well-being of Czech citizens and sustainability for the next generation are indeed our key priorities.

Progress and challenges since 2017

Czechia is well aware of the prominence of climate change and meets the European Union's climate commitments. Over the past 20 years, Czechia has significantly reduced its greenhouse gas emissions, but the downward trend is currently stagnating because of the emission-intensive energy sector and energy-intensive industry. The country's greenhouse gas emission intensity per capita remains one of the highest in the European Union, given that Czechia is an open economy with a strong industrial base. Decarbonization poses a major challenge not only at the environmental level but also at the economic and social levels. Therefore, the just transition of coal regions is in preparation, and a phasing out of coal is expected by 2038 at the latest.

The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have reminded us of the fragility of our achievements. Income inequality and the at-risk-of-poverty rate are low as a result of an effective social protection system and increases to the minimum wage in recent years. Czechia was severely affected by the pandemic, but the health-care system withstood the pressure. Nevertheless, the pandemic has deepened long-term shortcomings with regard to the availability and financing of social services. Vulnerable groups have lost their primary earners, especially single parents, who must remain at home to look after their children, despite the fact that Czechia's unemployment rate remained at record low levels during the pandemic.

The social system now stands as the greatest challenge, which consists of maintaining the successes achieved thus far while dealing with increasing pressure. Leaving no one behind will now be more relevant than ever, especially with regard to gender equality. Women still earn on average 20 per cent less than men and, owing to a combination of this and other disadvantages, are generally more vulnerable.

Currently, the national recovery plan (approximately 7 billion euros) is being prepared. It is focused on several transformative areas, including decarbonization, circularity, digitalization, climate change adaptation and the resilience of the health-care system. Coping with the lockdown also continues inclusive education reform.

Although Czechia is a small country, it does not neglect its global responsibility. The Goals have been fully incorporated into its development cooperation strategy and activities. Czechia has not yet fulfilled its commitment to providing 0.33 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance notwithstanding its slight gradual increase in real terms until 2019. In line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and global financing for development policies, Czechia has also made progress towards mobilizing private finances and promoting innovation.

Implementation tools

The country's long-term vision is embodied within the Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030, which is aimed at coordinating public administration and deploys a lens of policy coherence for sustainable development. Since 2019, a network of focal points has been in place to ensure fulfilment of the Goals at each ministry. Czechia strives to mainstream a sustainable development perspective in day-to-day policymaking processes. Regulatory impact assessment in particular has the

potential to be the most appropriate tool for this purpose if it is amended to include a sustainability perspective.

Progress is monitored through three sets of approximately 500 indicators: the 2030 Agenda global indicators, the national indicator set linked to the Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030 and national well-being indicators. Nevertheless, the well-being perspective has to be further elaborated to be incorporated into policymaking processes.

In 2020, Czechia conducted its first overview of State budget expenditures with regard to the Goals (Sustainable Development Goal tagging). The 75 per cent government expenditures are in compliance with the priorities of the Goals. However, budgeting based directly on the Goals requires major adjustments to the structure of the budget and the process of its preparation.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]

On 25 September 2015, the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, committing to building a new world by eradicating inequality and poverty at the global level, as well as ensuring human dignity and its potential and healthy lives for not only this generation but also for posterity.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea expressed its full support for the 2030 Agenda, recognizing that the 17 Sustainable Development Goals outlined therein conform to its national development strategy for building a powerful socialist country centred on the popular masses.

For the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea set up the National Task Force for Sustainable Development, which included representatives from relevant line ministries and agencies, and appointed the Vice-Premier and Chairman of the State Planning Commission as the Chair and the Deputy Director-General of the Central Bureau of Statistics as the Vice-Chair. The Technical Committee under the National Task Force was formed, composed of Central Bureau of Statistics statisticians.

The National Task Force is responsible for nationalizing the global sustainable development strategies, targets and indicators to establish country-specific 2030 sustainable development strategies in conformity with the national development goals and coordinating activities for the implementation of sustainable development strategies at all levels, while the Technical Committee compiles and evaluates data by indicators through the national statistics system and surveys and reports them to the National Task Force.

The Goals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea include 17 Goals, 95 targets and 132 indicators. It is underlined in the national Goals to consolidate the foundations of the self-supporting economy by placing an emphasis on line f, prioritizing science and education and providing people with a more affluent and cultured life by giving priority to energy, agriculture, water, sanitation and hygiene and the environment, as well as by fully enforcing social welfare policies.

The Goals of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the successor of the national Millennium Development Goals, have been set on the basis of indicators of off-tracked Millennium Development Goals, as well as the successes and lessons learned during the implementation of the national development strategy and sectoral plans. Those targets and indicators will be further updated in conformity with the

country's context on the basis of the results of necessary national surveys, the evaluation of international practices and the five-year (2021–2025) plan.

The voluntary national review, the first national report of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to be presented at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2021, describes successes and lessons learned, challenges and the way forward for the implementation of each Goal.

Continued sanctions and blockades on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, severe natural disasters that hit the country each year and the protracted global health crisis since 2020 are the main obstacles to the Government's efforts to achieve sustainable development in the country and improve the people's livelihoods, causing a tendency to be off-track in several indicators of the national Goals.

The voluntary national review process offered the Government a valuable opportunity to readjust and decide on future directions and plans for Goal implementation, mainly as follows:

First, the national Goals should be achieved by optimizing the use of its own resources, technology and internal force under the ideals of "The People are God", self-reliance and single-minded unity while intensifying the emergency anti-epidemic campaign to cope with the protracted worldwide health crisis for the safety of the country and the people. Bringing the advantages of people-centred socialism into full play, the Government will make every possible effort to achieve the Goals through the rational use of national resources and a nationwide campaign.

Second, the capacity to collect and analyse statistical data should be improved, and the national system of unified statistics should be strengthened. The role of national statistics will be ensured in such a way as to establish a monitoring and evaluation system for tracking progress towards Goal implementation, regularly review the attainment of each indicator and decide on the right directions for achieving the goals. International standard indicators and methodologies will be widely adopted.

Third, it is essential to raise awareness of the Goals and promote partnership with other countries and international organizations. The review of progress towards the Goals will be disseminated to the ministries, agencies, people's government at all levels, research institutes and civil society to inform them of the current status, challenges and ways forward and to readjust in a timely fashion and reinforce relevant plans. In addition, the bilateral and multilateral cooperation will be enhanced to achieve the national Goals.

The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with its own resources, technologies and the concerted efforts of the masses of people, will overcome all challenges and difficulties and further strengthen collaboration with the international community in the course of implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Denmark

[Original: English]

Voluntary national review 2021: progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, 2017–2021

In 2021, Denmark presents its second voluntary national review. Globally, Denmark is at the forefront of sustainable development, according to the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and has successfully implemented numerous Sustainable Development Goals, but there are still important challenges to face. Further action is needed.

The voluntary national review is coordinated by the Ministry of Finance and prepared through the combined work of all ministries and stakeholders in Danish society. A significant improvement of the second review relates to the inclusion of two independent assessments of the progress made towards each Goal by government officials as well as civil society actors. The review also includes uncensored chapters written by actors in the parliament, civil society, the private sector, organizations, academic institutions, municipalities and regions. Another new element of the review is a peer review process with Norway.

The review also builds on newly established institutional mechanisms and research. In 2018, Statistics Denmark launched a unique statistical database that allows for the monitoring of the development of the Goals. This work provides a necessary tool for follow-up to the assessments.

According to the assessment of the Government, Denmark is in a strong position in relation to many Goals, especially in terms of health and well-being, education, sustainable energy, peace, justice and strong institutions. Denmark's key challenges relate to responsible consumption and production as well as climate action, and further attention is needed to improve life in the ocean and on land. As a nation with an ambitious green agenda, Denmark feels significantly responsible in contributing to the green transition as well as in assuming global responsibility and collaborating on long-term sustainable solutions with other countries.

Recovery from coronavirus disease

The foundation of the country's recovery and resilience plan is to utilize the need to stimulate the economy to support and front-load investments in the green transition.

While the funds will help to stimulate the economy and support jobs and companies in the short run, they will also contribute to speeding up the green transition in the medium to long run. This effort is crucial to meet Denmark's ambitious climate target of lowering greenhouse gas emissions in the country by 70 per cent in 2030.

Leaving no one behind

The Goals are not fulfilled until they are fulfilled for everyone. While the country's welfare state constitutes a good starting point for equal opportunities, some vulnerable groups are still subject to discrimination and are less able, or even unable, to participate in society.

While the agenda is receiving increasing attention, more remains to be done. The Government is working actively with the agenda, in which initiatives include, but are not limited to, improvement of labour market conditions for vulnerable groups, due diligence and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex rights. Denmark is committed to not only including but also empowering. An example of this approach is the "Children First" initiative, through which better conditions for equal opportunities in childhood are sought to be ensured.

Engagement and commitment

The voluntary national review is based on the two fundamental principles of transparency and involvement, which is reflected in the scope of stakeholder engagement. The voluntary national review demonstrates how civil society, the private sector, organizations, academic institutions, municipalities and regions continue to integrate the Goals into their core strategies.

The Goals are increasingly anchored among actors in society, of whom the Government has received knowledge, inspirational material and valuable recommendations for the preparation of the new national action plan and the voluntary national review, as well as specific input on policy initiatives. Several meetings, hearings and conferences have provided platforms for necessary mutual exchange and increased awareness.

The next step is further action

Denmark is currently working on new policy initiatives in a new national action plan, which will be launched in the coming months. The progress report for 2022 will review the progress towards each national Goal following the action plan. Both large and small steps have been taken, and they will be followed by additional ones in the coming years, through which the Government continues to integrate sustainability into political initiatives, and stakeholders in society continue to contribute at all levels. A significant example thereof is the decision to conduct a screening process for all legislative proposals with respect to their impact in terms of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Dominican Republic

[Original: Spanish]

Key messages of the 2021 voluntary national report

The incidence of poverty declined in the first four years of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, but this trend was reversed (with an increase of 2.1 per cent) by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The low levels of productivity and income from agricultural activity constitute a major challenge in terms of food security and improving the living conditions of the rural population.

The main health coverage indicators show little progress (57 hospitals were examined simultaneously), and there are still challenges with regard to quality of service.

Access to vaccines and the strengthening of health services is vital in order to reduce the risk of prolonging and deepening the crisis.

The country has experienced strong economic growth in recent decades, but the pandemic brought it to an abrupt halt in 2020. The country's gross domestic product (GDP) fell 6.7 per cent. Tourism was the most affected sector, as a result of a 62.7 per cent reduction in foreign visitors and a 47.5 per cent reduction in the added value of hotels, bars and restaurants. Returning to growth will involve addressing multiple challenges, including reviewing the development model for the sector, improving working conditions, promoting productive development, reducing inequality, increasing resilience to climate change and enhancing the capacity to respond to natural phenomena.

The unemployment rate has fallen, but there is still room to improve the situation through the creation of more and better jobs. More than half of the employed population works in the informal sector. There are still wide gaps in access to the labour market between women and men, different age groups and residents of different regions.

Income concentration, as measured by the Gini coefficient, has decreased. However, the country loses more than a fifth of its human development index score when it is adjusted for inequality.

Structural development gaps between the different territories within the country remain and are being addressed. The country plans to implement medium-term policies with a territorial focus.

A road map for sustainable production and consumption has been drawn up, but there are challenges in terms of coordination and national appropriation. The actors involved are behind in the effective integration of the road map.

The country is very vulnerable to climate phenomena. In the past five years, approximately 11 per cent of the population has been affected by hurricanes, storms and heavy rainfall. The negative impact of the country's carbon dioxide emissions and material footprint on its human development index score is estimated to be approximately 4 per cent.

Public security and access to justice present challenges. The homicide rate shows a downward trend (higher among men and young people). There is no evidence of progress towards the eradication of abuse and trafficking in persons, the victims of which are mostly women. Barriers to access to justice persist, although the independence of the judiciary has improved significantly.

According to figures from 2019, institution-related indicators show deterioration, primarily with regard to trust in political parties and the perception of corruption. The fight against corruption and impunity has been ramped up.

In order to address the significant structural and emerging challenges, the Dominican Republic is strengthening the institutions of the State. It is also working to improve the fiscal situation substantially through a tax regime that guarantees higher revenues, in an equitable manner, and quality in public spending.

The increase in public debt, which has been accelerated by the impact of COVID-19, has led to the allocation of a high proportion of the budget to interest payments, amounting to 17.4 per cent of central government spending over the past five years.

The generation of foreign exchange is mainly dependent on the tourism sector, remittances and free trade zones. These had been growing at a good pace, but this was brought to a halt by the pandemic. Both remittances and exports from free trade zone are now back to pre-pandemic levels. Exports, on the other hand, have shown little dynamism. Current public policies are expected to result in improvements in this area.

Strengthening international cooperation and solidarity is key to addressing challenges and overcoming problems such as those outlined above, especially now, in the face of the urgent need to mitigate the impact of the pandemic. Multilateral bodies have an essential role to play in ensuring the reprofiling of consolidated public debt.

The level of alignment of the Sustainable Development Goals with national planning is high (88 per cent). Efforts are being made to fully integrate them through medium-term planning, although progress needs to be made in closing the gaps between what is planned and what is executed.

Egypt

[Original: English]

- Egypt is among 10 countries worldwide that is submitting its third voluntary national review this year. The first review was submitted in 2016, following the launch of the national sustainable development strategy, "Egypt Vision 2030", and the second review, submitted in 2018, marked the successful implementation of the economic stabilization and reform programme. The third

review will share with the international community Egypt's strides towards laying the foundation for a more resilient economy and a community capable of weathering adverse unexpected shocks, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

- Before the outbreak of COVID-19, Egypt was on an upbeat trajectory to achieve its development targets. Unfortunately, the outbreak of the pandemic, and its socioeconomic impacts, took the whole world by storm, leading to an unprecedented global recession. Despite the adverse shock to the economy of Egypt, the successful implementation of the economic stabilization and reform programme, which enhanced the resilience of the economy, diluted the effects of the pandemic, leaving the economy among the very few, and the only country in the Middle East and North Africa Region, to register positive growth.
- The Government of Egypt is convinced that, despite the woes of the pandemic, it can be rendered as a catalyst for expediting the implementation of reforms. Consequently, the Government launched the second phase of the economic reform programme in 2021, aimed at streamlining the structure of the country's economy and increasing its competitiveness by targeting sectoral bottlenecks.
- The Government of Egypt and all stakeholders worked together to deal with the challenges identified in the country's second voluntary national review. In terms of financing for development, 2020 marked the issuing of the first green bond in Egypt and the Middle East and North Africa Region. The issuing, which was extremely successful, not only adds to the diversification of the finance tools at the disposal of the Government of Egypt but also promotes the agenda of greening public projects. In addition, The Government, in collaboration with the League of Arab States and the United Nations, will launch the first comprehensive national report on financing for development this year to provide an objective taxonomy of such financing in Egypt. As for the issue of population growth, the Government has embarked on a national project for family development on which ministries, civil society organizations and international organizations collaborate not only to curb population growth but, equally important, to improve the characteristics of human capital. The Government has also made significant efforts towards improving the stance of governance in Egypt, which was identified as another major challenge. In this regard, the Government adopted the second version of its national anti-corruption strategy, aimed at promoting transparency and integrity in government units and enhancing prompt justice. In addition, to enhance public financial management, the electronic government payment system and the electronic government procurement and contracting system were launched. The systems help to simplify and enhance the transparency of contracting procedures and the revenue collection system, as well as to ameliorate the competition base.
- To accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and to reinforce the concept of leaving no one behind, Egypt successfully cut poverty, which had been rising for almost 20 years, with the help of better targeted social protection programmes. In the same vein, and in its quest to prioritize the localization of sustainable development, the Government, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund, produced localization reports for all Egyptian governorates that depict the current values and targets of Goal indicators in the governorates in order to target local developmental gaps. Another important pioneering initiative was the construction of the first governorate-based competitiveness index, in collaboration with civil society in Egypt and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia. A culmination of these efforts was the Government's launch of "Decent Life", an initiative to improve the lives of millions of poor people in rural areas across

Egypt by providing high-quality government services to dwellers in the 1,500 poorest villages in its first phase.

- Egypt remains committed to an inclusive and participatory approach. Identification of the issues and the content of the third voluntary national review has involved a series of consultations with government entities, the private sector and civil society representatives, as well as development partners.

Germany

[Original: English]

In September 2019, at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, Heads of State and Government stated that the Goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development could not be reached if the trend in their implementation remained unchanged. It is imperative that we finally achieve effective progress on sustainability, including climate protection over the decade of action.

On the basis of the decisions of the European Union and of the recent ruling of the German Federal Constitutional Court, Germany aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 65 per cent by 2030, compared with 1990 levels. The German Federal Government will set yearly reduction targets in order to reach greenhouse gas emission neutrality by 2045. This needs to be accompanied by an increased effort in climate and sustainability diplomacy, based on a whole-of-government approach.

The pandemic caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and its worldwide effects have sharply increased the urgency of social and ecological transformation. It has been and remains strategically important to establish the path to a socially and environmentally more sustainable, and thus more future-proof society, to pursue a better and green recovery worldwide, in Europe and in Germany. The 2030 Agenda and its Goals, as well as the Paris Agreement should serve as the guiding framework at the national, European and global levels, to redirect policies and programmes in response to the pandemic to “recover better”, guided by the principle of “leave no one behind”.

Progress in the following six transition areas is key to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in, with and by Germany:

- Human well-being and capabilities, social justice (Goals 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10)
- Climate action and energy transition (Goals 7, 13)
- Circular economy (Goals 8, 9, 12)
- Sustainable building and transport (Goals 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13)
- Sustainable agricultural and food systems (Goals 2, 3, 8, 12, 13)
- A pollutant-free environment (Goals 6, 8, 9, 14, 15)

In its new sustainability strategy adopted in March 2021, coordinated by the Federal Chancellery, the German Government has identified transformative policies and measures for the six areas, which are designed to achieve measurable progress. The policies and measures are undertaken at three levels, focusing on their implementation and effect in Germany, on their international impact and on supporting partner countries.

Global responsibility is one of the principles of Germany’s Sustainable Development Strategy and part of a comprehensive vision for a sustainable future in Germany. Thus, the German Federal Government aligns its international activities with the principle of sustainability. As part of the European Union and together with

our European partners, Germany makes important contributions to coping with global challenges in the long term.

The German Federal Government will continue its efforts in Germany and in its international engagement with partner countries. This commitment is reflected in our position as the second largest donor of official development assistance.

Sustainable development serves as a guiding principle for German foreign and development policy. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Germany has played a pivotal role in its implementation and the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals world-wide.

Peace and security, human rights and sustainable development are all interdependent. Our policy is to strengthen and promote a rules-based international order and multilateral cooperation. The German Federal Government promotes these principles, inter alia, through the work of the Alliance for Multilateralism, initiated together with France and other partners.

The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda is only possible if the effort is based on broad support from society as a whole. The Federal Government has included civil society, business and science in the process of the development of the German sustainability strategy as well as in the dialogue process accompanying the preparation of its voluntary national report. The transition to a sustainable Germany can only succeed if understood as a joint endeavour – that is, as a road that the federal, regional and local authorities and the various groups within society will travel together.

Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]

Guatemala is pleased to be among the countries presenting their third voluntary national reports in 2021. In its report, Guatemala highlights the actions it has taken as part of the process of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. It is important to note that Guatemala was one of the countries that pioneered the incorporation of the Sustainable Development Goals into national planning instruments, using the methodology of critical nodes and links to define 10 national development priorities and 16 strategic development targets through which it is now implementing efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level.

To that end, Guatemala has put in place an implementation strategy comprising eight major components. Significant progress has been made with regard to those components, primarily in the areas of planning and financing. The General Government Policy for the period 2020–2024 is aligned with the national development priorities and has, therefore, become the main reference for yearly and multi-year planning. Planning and budgeting have thus been linked, in order to achieve better results.

Progress has also been made with regard to the sustainable development targets under six of the priorities defined by Guatemala. The most progress has been made in relation to access to health services, followed by employment and investment; institution-building, security and justice; and poverty reduction and social protection.

With regard to the priority of institution-building, the State of Guatemala has modernized its system for ensuring transparency in the use of public resources, through the design and implementation of platforms that make it possible to monitor public activities. These include the portal established under the Access to Public Information Act, the National Public Investment System, among others.

Since the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires the participation of all stakeholders, the report covers the contributions of the public sector, the private sector, international cooperation agencies and civil society organizations, among others. Those entities have, in accordance with their mandates and their natures, carried out actions that not only contribute directly to the implementation of the country's sustainable development targets but have also mitigated the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Given that one of the main recommendations concerning the preparation of voluntary national reports is that they be elaborated in a highly participatory manner, Guatemala is pleased to include the points of view of certain sectors of the population regarding the progress made by the country towards the achievement of the sustainable development targets presented in the report. Girls, boys and adolescents took part in that process, sharing their opinions and main demands through a series of virtual workshops.

As concerns monitoring and evaluation, progress has been made with regard to indicators and in the implementation of a computer platform that makes it possible to visualize the indicators linked to each sustainable development target. Different stakeholders can use this platform to help them prioritize plans, programmes and projects that will contribute to the achievement of the country's targets.

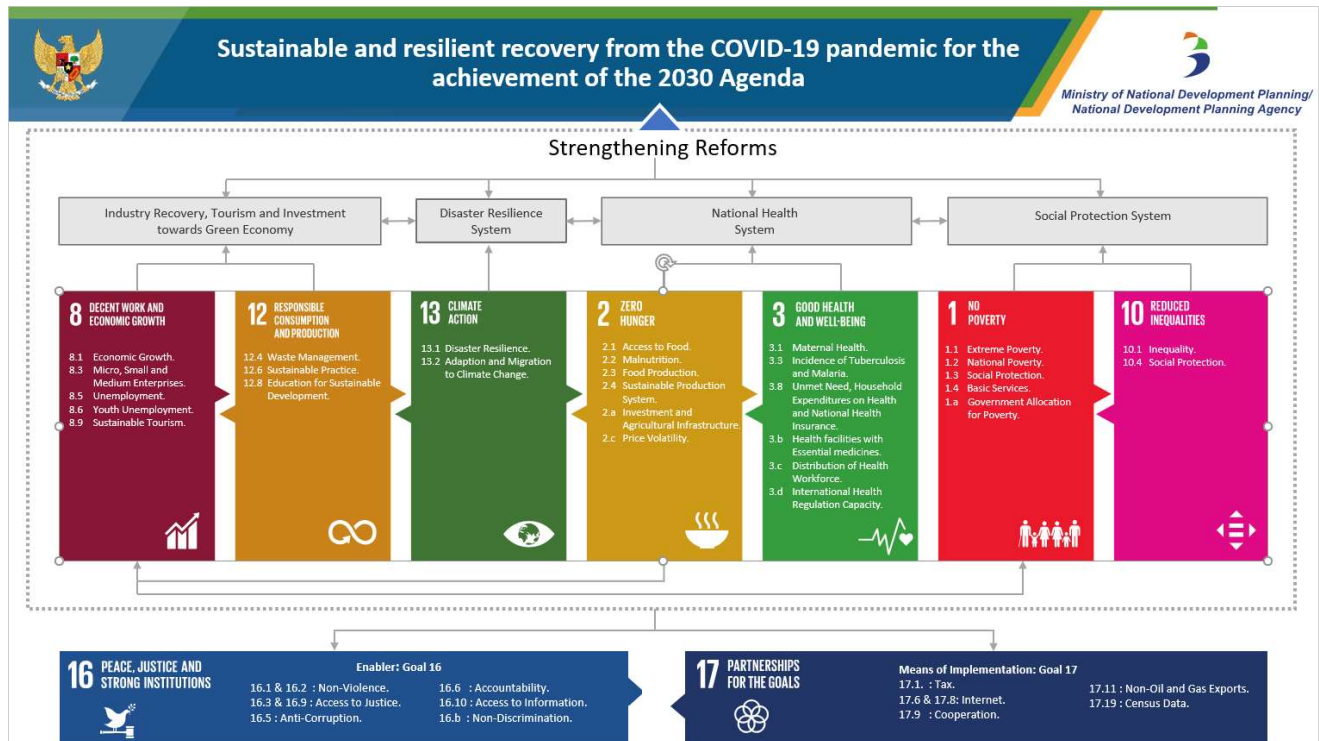
Lastly, the main challenges that the country must address in the coming years, from the perspectives of different development actors, are presented.

We are aware that we have made progress, that positive actions must be sustained and that a path to resilience, in the context of COVID-19, must be laid.

It is important to remember, as we proceed through the decade of action, that there is no way back. We must reduce the equity gap, strengthen our statistical system and build a country where no one is left behind and where the entire Guatemalan population can be guaranteed their rights and a dignified life.

Indonesia

[Original: English]



The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic poses challenges to progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, but underlines the need for greater international cooperation.

To ensure sustainable and resilient recovery, Indonesia has embarked on systemic reforms in the following key areas: the social protection system, the national health system, the disaster resilience system and industry recovery, tourism and investment in a green economy.

Notwithstanding social distancing and health protocols, Indonesia has developed its voluntary national review through an inclusive approach, including online consultations. Going forward, we highlight achievement of the Goals and efforts to recover from the pandemic.

Notable achievement of the Goals, effects of the pandemic and recovery efforts include the following:

Social protection

- The national poverty rate fell, from 11.13 per cent (2015) to 9.22 per cent (2019), but increased to 10.19 per cent (2020) owing to the pandemic. It affected most notably women, people in rural areas and the elderly. The child poverty rate increased, from 11.76 per cent (2019) to 12.23 per cent (2020)
- From 2015 to 2019, the Gini ratio fell, from 0.402 to 0.380, but increased to 0.385 (2020) owing to the pandemic. Indonesia strengthened social spending, from 12.3 per cent in 2019 to 12.7 per cent in 2020, the highest figure ever recorded

National health

- The pandemic has had an impact on the following key health indicators:
- More than 1.6 million Indonesians have been infected with COVID-19 since March 2020, putting pressure on the health system and affecting the treatment of communicable and non-communicable diseases
- The tuberculosis incidence rate fell, from 312 (2019) to 182 (2020) per 100,000 population, attributable to the disruption of diagnosis and treatment during the pandemic
- The prevalence of undernourishment fell, from 10.73 per cent (2015) to 7.63 per cent (2019), but increased to 8.45 per cent (2020)
- The prevalence of stunting in children under 5 years of age declined, from 37.2 per cent to 27.67 per cent (2019), and the prevalence of wasting fell, from 12.1 per cent (2013) to 7.44 per cent (2019)
- The Food Insecurity Experience Scale fell, from 8.66 per cent (2015) to 5.12 per cent (2020)
- The national health insurance system covered 222.5 million people, or 82.51 per cent (2020), but unmet need for health services rose, from 4.66 per cent (2015) to 5.44 per cent (2020)

Disaster resilience

- Indonesia is focused on achieving lower greenhouse gas emissions and disaster risk reduction to enhance disaster resilience
- The greenhouse gas emissions level in 2019 was 1,866,500 Gg carbon dioxide equivalent. Potential greenhouse gas emissions were reduced by 23.46 per cent (2019), and greenhouse gas emission intensity was reduced by 20.77 per cent (2019) from the baseline
- The total government budget (2018–2020) for low-carbon development activities is 54.57 trillion rupiahs (approximately \$3.8 billion)
- With regard to disaster management in 2020: there were 409 deaths and disappearances, and 6,451,439 people were affected and evacuated owing to disasters

Industry, tourism and investment recovery towards a green economy

- The pandemic has affected economic indicators: income per capita fell, from \$4,174.9 (2019) to \$3,911.7 (2020); economic growth contracted, from 5.02 per cent (2019) to -2.07 per cent (2020); the informal sector economy grew to 60.47 per cent (2020); the unemployment rate increased, from 5.23 per cent (2019) to 7.07 per cent (2020); youth not in employment, education or training rose, from 21.21 per cent (2019) to 23.85 per cent (2020), while disabled youth not in employment rose, from 52.32 per cent (2019) to 53.37 per cent (2020); and arrivals of foreign tourists declined, from 16.1 million (2019) to 4.1 million (2020)
- The reduction in and handling of waste amounted to 14.58 per cent and 67.40 per cent, respectively, and 68.35 per cent of 132.7 million tons of hazardous waste was treated (2019). Approximately 100 companies released sustainability reports in 2020, compared with 54 in 2016

Means of implementation

- With regard to an enabling environment: increased public awareness of corruption; an increased number of informative State institutions and an improved freedom of the press index; expanded legal aid budgets; and an increase in legal identity, for example, 77.2 per cent of children under 5 years of age and 58.03 per cent of children under 1 year of age have obtained legal identity (2020)
- The number of Internet users reached 73.7 per cent (2019), with challenges remaining with regard to the digital divide and literacy
- The Internet-based 2020 population census was successfully implemented, with no major impediments to cooperation among stakeholders

Way forward

Indonesia will undertake and strengthen policy reform on the following:

- Improving the social protection system by improving the mechanism and widening the coverage of social security and assistance
- Improving the health system, focusing on disease control, health security, promotive and preventive actions and supply-side readiness
- Developing a holistic and integrated approach to the food system to overcome malnutrition
- Promoting an inclusive economy through sustainable investment, innovative financing, sustainable tourism, support for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises and digital technology
- Implementing sustainable production and consumption patterns through a circular economy by developing green industries and integrated waste and hazardous waste management, including of medical waste
- Strengthening disaster resilience through early warning systems, preparedness, capacity-building and low-carbon and climate-resilient development

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]

Today, the Republic of Iraq, with its rich culture and long history, embraces an ambitious development reality that strives for high-quality and sustainable human development for its citizens. It is a path enshrined in the country's 2005 Constitution and long-term national development visions. It is based on strong national partnerships and a commitment to implementing, monitoring and tracking the Sustainable Development Goals and reporting on progress made on indicators. It is supported by a firm political will, integrated planning and supportive legal frameworks.

The "Safe Society" approach has been adopted as part of a strong national coordination and monitoring framework that has translated the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals into medium-term national development plans, strategies and policies covering the three dimensions of sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental.

Perhaps the most difficult aspect of implementing this process is balancing reality against aspirations and responding to the competing demands and priorities of millions of citizens. This experience has helped us to compare our situation at home

against what is happening abroad, as well as to review our plans and re-evaluate our approach in Iraq. Our vision is not only about healing wounds, but also about quality of life, social cohesion, human and social capital, and how to preserve our heritage for future generations.

The main challenge is to keep our vision connected to reality by assessing progress, diagnosing obstacles and creating indicators of success and sustainability. Our voluntary national review reports trace the journey we have taken in reviewing progress. They highlight achievements, challenges, lessons learned, and next steps that will determine the future path of federal and local Government efforts.

We must acknowledge that we do not control all the levers of development. Sustainable development does not hang on Government efforts alone. It must be complemented by the activities of civil society and the private sector.



National messages

Young people are the engine of change and a tool for development

- The youth movement is a declaration of change towards a new social contract between the State and society.
- Our youth are the ultimate demographic gift that will pave the way for change, reconstruction and inclusion.
- Active citizenship embraces diversity, promotes participation and preserves rights and privacy.

Create constructive competition at the local level (government and community)

- Inspiring a spirit of development both nationally and locally promotes constructive competition.
- Decentralization promotes equality and justice.
- Integrated planning and policy coherence promote participation and sustainable local development (spatial development).

Leave no one behind (solidarity among development partners in the face of the COVID-19 crisis)

- Containing the compound health/economic crisis and mitigating its repercussions and effects on vulnerable groups is the responsibility of the State.
- Solidarity among development partners will increase protection and community security in crisis conditions.
- The development roles and functions of civil society and the private sector are success stories of social cohesion.

External messages

Determination to stay on track and maintain the momentum of the spirit of development

- Respond to challenges posed by global and local realities;
- Meet crises proactively by focusing on maintaining the tracks toward the Sustainable Development Goals;
- Continue to enhance risk and crisis prevention and resilience.

International partnerships are the hallmark of solidarity in times of crisis

- We believe in global partnerships to promote human security.
- International partnerships are an opportunity to build knowledge and exchange experiences.
- Partnerships are a cornerstone of ensuring equal opportunities among States through support for international solidarity and mitigation of the suffering of the less developed and neediest countries.

Mere analysis and comprehension of multiple threats and complex opportunities through monitoring and evaluation processes will not lead to development that is truly cognizant of looming risks and growing threats. True awareness requires decision-making to be based on integrating an understanding and awareness of risks with cognitive horizons and practical measures to address risks; making the most of opportunities offered by development plans, policies and programmes; and stressing flexibility of measures to ensure their sustainability. That requires the following:

- Acknowledging the interdependence of complex global threats such as terrorism, organized crime, pandemics, economic instability, cybercrime, natural dangers, climate change and complex risks and opportunities that run the gamut from local to global;
- Deterring risk, investing in opportunities and mitigating their associated complex implications through a well-considered comprehension of the need to bolster sustainability by realizing flexible structural development that protects against new risks while minimizing existing ones.

Japan

[Original: English]

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic occurred immediately after the international community had reaffirmed its commitment to accelerating its efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on the basis of the related decade of action. The pandemic has since been threatening the lives, livelihoods and dignity of

people around the world, especially those in vulnerable situations. It has also greatly affected efforts to achieve the Goals. It is indeed causing a human security crisis. Under these circumstances, the Goals will be an important road map for social transformation that looks ahead to a new era and anticipates the future. Therefore, in the voluntary national review of 2021, we have looked back at how Japan has been working to promote the Goals and check progress towards achieving them in order to overcome and “build back better” from the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, it is critical for all stakeholders to work together to promote their efforts. In the 2021 voluntary national review, through a review of Japan’s domestic institutions to promote the Goals, it was confirmed that, through such frameworks as the “Japan Sustainable Development Goals Award” organized by the Sustainable Development Goals Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister, which recognizes leading companies and organizations working on the Goals, collaboration among various stakeholders has been broadened, leading to increased awareness throughout Japan and progress on the Goals.

In particular, with regard to local governments, those that proposed outstanding initiatives to achieve the Goals have been selected as “Sustainable Development Goal future cities” since 2018, and leading model cases have been disseminated throughout the country. In addition, other initiatives, such as the Public-Private Partnership Platform for Local Sustainable Development Goals and the Local Sustainable Development Goal Finance have created momentum to promote the Goals and encouraged every citizen to treat the Goals as their own concern. As a result, a movement to promote the resolution of regional issues, such as declining birth rates, aging communities and declining populations, through the principles of the Goals has been gaining momentum throughout the country. In 2017, when Japan submitted its previous voluntary national review, the percentage of local governments working on the Goals was only 1 per cent, but by 2020, it had risen to 39.7 per cent, and the Government of Japan is working on increasing it to 60 per cent by the end of the 2024 financial year. In this connection, in the review, we have included several positive examples of local governments that have taken the lead to promote the Goals as model cities in Japan, including four cities that have conducted their own voluntary local reviews.

In its SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles, the Government of Japan identified eight priority issues that Japan should focus on in particular. The review describes major efforts that have been made under each priority issue in terms of both domestic implementation and international cooperation, as well as the progress that has been made on the 17 Goals through such efforts, taking into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals requires the efforts of a wide range of stakeholders, the review was prepared not only through discussions within the Government, but also through discussions at the Sustainable Development Goals Promotion Round Table, which consists of representatives from various fields, discussions with civil society representatives and young people, who will lead society in the future, and through public comments in order to incorporate the opinions of a wide range of people. In addition, in order to evaluate our progress, we have included evaluations from the private sector members of the Round Table, considering that it would be desirable to include evaluations of progress from perspectives other than that of the Government.

The drafting process of the review provided us with an opportunity to review the institutions for promoting the Sustainable Development Goals and major initiatives, and to consider how Japan should promote the Goals in the future.

Therefore, based on the opinions of experts and citizens, the review concludes with a description of how Japan will promote initiatives to achieve the Goals henceforth.

Japan will continue to work with the international community, on the basis of the principle of human security, to address global health, including the achievement of universal health coverage, and realize a society where the Sustainable Development Goals have been achieved and “no one is left behind”.

Lao People’s Democratic Republic

[Original: English]

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic is at an important stage of its national development planning process. 2020 marked the conclusion of the implementation of the eighth National Socioeconomic Development Plan (2016–2020) and the development of the ninth Plan (2021–2025), which will guide the country’s development for the next five years. This development has been dominated by the challenges associated with the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) response and recovery, sustainability and climate change, quality and inclusive growth, human capital, infrastructure development and graduation from the category of least developed countries, which the Lao People’s Democratic Republic hopes to achieve.

The conclusion of eighth Plan and the development of the ninth Plan come at a time when the country is in the process of preparing the second voluntary national review of the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, when possible, progress on Goal implementation in the Lao People’s Democratic Republic since the first review, in 2018, will contain key elements related to COVID-19 in addition to the various other challenges that the country has encountered over the past two years.

The National Steering Committee for Sustainable Development Goals implementation was set up in 2017, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister, and comprises members from all the concerned ministries and agencies concerned. The National Sustainable Development Goals Secretariat and focal points in the line ministries were appointed to lead and take ownership of each Goal to ensure smooth coordination and collaboration. Since the first review, in 2018, some key milestones have been reached in relation to the Goals, as outlined below.

The Sustainable Development Goal road map including the Sustainable Development Goal advocacy and communication was finalized and approved by the National Steering Committee in 2019. It includes institutional strengthening and partnerships, awareness-raising strategies, multi-stakeholder consultations, mechanisms to create horizontal and vertical policy coherence, and budgeting and plans for monitoring, reporting and accountability.

In 2019, 238 Sustainable Development Goal indicators, that is, around 60 per cent of the indicators, were integrated into the eighth National Socioeconomic Development Plan (2016–2020), and the remaining indicators will continue to be integrated into the forthcoming development cycles.

The 2021 review was developed on the basis of the principle of leaving no one behind, and its drafting process also built on key recommendations from the first review and the conclusion of the eighth Plan. The National Sustainable Development Goals Secretariat conducted a series of consultations with different stakeholders. Public officials from all 18 provinces were also involved, with a view to increasing their understanding of the Goals and to implementing relevant strategies in each province.

Securing data on localized Sustainable Development Goals in advance of the review was challenging as a result of COVID-19-related disruptions. While the

second review provides a snapshot of progress towards all Goals, the detailed discussion bears on nine Goals in particular, which are also in line with the theme of the high-level political forum on sustainable development to be held in 2021.

From graduation from the category of least developed countries to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is a platform for the future. The country is on track to graduate from the category of least developed countries by having reached the threshold for graduation in the two consecutive triennial reviews of 2018 and 2021. This means that the country is eligible for recommendation for graduation in 2024. However, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic and the already existing challenges, a longer preparatory period of transition has been granted.

In addition, progress towards various Sustainable Development Goals has been greatly affected. Therefore, some COVID-19 recovery measures will be introduced in the course of the Goals implementation in line with the ninth National Socioeconomic Development Plan, including with regard to efforts to improve financing, macroeconomic management, business environment and investment, human capital development, job creation, macrofiscal stability and economic diversification to achieve more resilient, green, inclusive and sustainable growth.

Lessons learned and way forward

- First, the Government's strong commitment to the 2030 Agenda lies within the greater involvement of line ministries and provincial authorities, leading to their strong sense of ownership of Sustainable Development Goal localization and implementation.
- Second, administrative data systems related to many goals still need to be harmonized, streamlined and strengthened while enhancing institutional and statistical capacity-building. Importantly, high quality and disaggregated data are essential to ensuring equitable progress against the Sustainable Development Goals and related targets.
- Third, collaboration and coordination across line ministries, between central and local levels and across different stakeholders will be built on a multi-stakeholder engagement approach.
- Fourth, the Government will continue to work with all partners and identify the practical development financing strategy needed for implementing the 2030 Agenda.
- Last but not least, public awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals is important to ensure greater support and partnerships, which are essential for the Goal realization.

Madagascar

[Original: French]

Since 2015, when Madagascar made a commitment to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the country has put in place two institutional frameworks to follow up on that commitment: the Steering and Monitoring Committee and the Technical Committee. As part of the process of preparing its second report, a national consultation was held with the participation of focal points from ministries, civil society organizations, the private sector, associations and technical and financial partners, to ensure that no one is left behind.

In Madagascar, efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals have coincided with the updating of development policies and strategies. Accordingly, the

National Development Plan (2015–2019) has been aligned with the Goals, and the Goals have been incorporated into the 13 commitments of the general State policy, which form the basis for the Madagascar Emergence Plan (2019–2023). An exercise was conducted to determine the national Sustainable Development Goals priorities, through which 64 targets and 85 indicators were established.

Despite climate-related hazards (cyclones and drought) and the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, progress has been made towards implementing the 2030 Agenda:

- With regard to the environment, Madagascar is intensifying its efforts to preserve its biodiversity. The surface area of reforested lands increased from 4,739 hectares in 2016 to 45,003 in 2020. The surface area of protected lands containing biodiversity conservation sites reached 7,099,000 hectares in 2020, compared with 7,000,828 hectares in 2016 (Sustainable Development Goal 15). However, the rate of deforestation remains high, exposing the country to vulnerabilities linked to climate change.
- Economic growth was on an upward trajectory before the health crisis, reaching a rate of 4.4 per cent in 2019. The unemployment rate for 2020 is estimated at 1.9 per cent of the active population. The informal sector continues to be the main source of employment, and the rate of multidimensional poverty is 70.3 per cent, with poverty intensity estimated at 54.9 per cent (Goal 1).¹
- At the social level, commitments to ensure universal access to health services have been translated into action through the development of an investment framework for reproductive, maternal, neonatal, child and adolescent health and the enactment of the Reproductive Health and Family Planning Act. With regard to efforts to combat gender-based violence, Act No. 2019-008 of 13 December 2019 was enacted to strengthen the legal framework for the prevention, prosecution and suppression of such violence and for care, reparation and protection for victims.

Madagascar has a multisectoral emergency plan in place to combat COVID-19 and mitigate its socioeconomic effects. The plan provides for the allocation of resources for cash transfers, safety nets and actions to help vulnerable people. However, the pandemic has undermined efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. On the economic front, the gross domestic product decreased by 4.2 per cent in 2020 (Goal 8). Health-related risks (Goal 3) are very real. There has been a decline in visits to health-care facilities, resulting in decreased rates of vaccination, births attended by health personnel and access to sexual and reproductive health information and services (Goal 5). With regard to education, the decision to close schools temporarily is having a negative impact on the rate of access to and the quality of education.

Several challenges remain:

- Strengthening coordination, monitoring and evaluation in respect of the Sustainable Development Goals.
- Mobilizing resources through the implementation of a Sustainable Development Goals financing strategy.
- Recovering economic growth after the COVID-19 pandemic.

¹ The weighted proportion of deprivations based on the different indicators of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (deprivations related to access to health care, access to education and standard of living).

- Combating food insecurity, in particular famine, in the south of the country.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to have devastating effects in Madagascar, as in other countries around the world, jeopardizing recent social and economic progress and making additional financing, including external financing, necessary for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, Madagascar is seeking to move forward, and the 13 commitments made by the State in the context of the Madagascar Emergence Plan concern not only solutions for emerging from the health crisis but also structural reforms that will make it possible to achieve sustainable development and reduce poverty.

Malaysia

[Original: English]

Introduction

Sustainable and inclusive development has always been a key principle in the nation's development planning. Efforts to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into national development planning were undertaken by bringing the five-year national development plans in line with the Goals, the development of Goal-related data and the establishment of a multi-stakeholder institutional framework. Malaysia's voluntary national review of 2021 is the second report submitted as part of the review of the 2030 Agenda. The stakeholder engagement for the 2021 commenced with a formal online inception workshop attended by more than 300 participants. The findings and data collected for the forthcoming twelfth Malaysia Plan and the Sustainable Development Goal Indicators Malaysia 2019 report are also used in the 2021 review. Following improvement in data collection, the review will provide more comprehensive evidence-based data as compared with the first review, in 2017.

National key achievements and progress

Malaysia has successfully transformed its economy, raised living standards and moved from a low-income to an upper-middle-income economy within a generation. The gross national income per capita increased about 29-fold, from \$347 in 1970 to \$10,118 in 2020. Significant achievements have been made, inter alia, in eradicating poverty and narrowing inequalities, as well as in providing people with a better quality of life. The incidence of absolute poverty dropped from 7.6 per cent in 2016 to 5.6 per cent in 2019. Hardcore poverty has almost been eradicated, though pockets among specific groups and multidimensional deprivations remain. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) crisis resulted in some vulnerable households within the bottom 40 per cent income group falling into a higher incidence of poverty and widened inequalities. In response, the Government has implemented a series of special economic recovery packages to boost growth and protect the vulnerable. Malaysia has also enhanced its food production, with the self-sufficiency levels of 10 major agrifood commodities continuing to improve. However, the nutritional aspect of food security has become more pertinent as Malaysia faces a double burden of malnutrition, involving particularly vulnerable groups and current unexpected emergencies.

Malaysia has been successful in providing quality, accessible and affordable health care, on par with those in more developed countries, based on the principle of universal health coverage. The country's health security preparedness was demonstrated by its successful management of the COVID-19 outbreak. However, health burdens are rising as a result of an aging population, demands for better health care, and the increase in non-communicable diseases, which are currently responsible for more than 70 per cent of deaths. Initiatives to enhance the health-care delivery

system to promote a better and healthier lifestyle through a multisectoral nutrition framework are currently being implemented.

Malaysia is also making progress towards sustainability and managing climate change by adopting a resource-efficient and climate-resilient development model. The sustainable consumption and production approach was undertaken by creating a green market, managing waste holistically and increasing the share of renewables in the energy mix. While various efforts are being made to better coordinate the sustainable consumption and production and combat climate change at the policy level, technical and financial support is still required at the implementation level.

Malaysia continues to practice a unity-in-diversity approach, while emphasizing governance, social cohesion and partnership. It is committed to South-South cooperation through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme, supporting 144 developing countries through technical and capacity-building initiatives. In addition, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the Sustainable Development Goals was established to enhance the Goal localization. Voluntary local reviews have also been initiated to ensure that local authorities' programmes and initiatives are in line with the Goals.

Way forward

Moving towards 2030, the national development priorities will continue to be aligned with and to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals. The National Sustainable Development Goal Road Map phase 2 (2021–2025) will be formulated to advance the 2030 Agenda by identifying priority areas, key enablers and critical “accelerator points” for Goals for which progress is lagging, ensuring policy coherence across all levels of government and recommending strategies and plan of actions. Localizing Goal-related initiatives will also be further strengthened. The twelfth Malaysia Plan will ensure that the people benefit from socioeconomic development, achieve inclusivity and social cohesion and improve general well-being. Malaysia will advance green growth towards becoming a low-carbon nation, ultimately attaining carbon neutrality. The effective execution of the twelfth Malaysia Plan will contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

Marshall Islands

[Original: English]

Our commitment to sustainable development

We have a clear vision for the Republic of the Marshall Islands: “in our hands is our future”. This vision guides our efforts as a resilient, productive and self-supportive nation. Embracing the inherent challenges faced as a small island developing State, including geographic isolation, rising sea levels and the impacts of climate change, and diseconomies of scale, we remain resolute to transform our development pathway in a manner that maintains and enhances a united and inclusive Marshallese identity.

Achieving this will require building our resilience to the damaging effects of climate change and global pandemics, such as the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and addressing our social and well-being concerns. Moreover, we need to continue to develop an economy that delivers effective public services and productive opportunities for all Marshallese children, women and men, living in urban areas and the outer islands.

Our National Strategic Plan provides a road map for our approach to sustainable development and inclusive growth. The Plan is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for

Sustainable Development and the SAMOA Pathway, with relevant aspects of global initiatives already integrated into relevant national strategies and policies. The Plan prioritizes five strategic areas, namely, social services and cultural identity, economic development, infrastructure, environmental awareness and climate change, and good governance.

Negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic

The Republic of the Marshall Islands has successfully ensured the safety of its people from the COVID-19 pandemic. We have received budget support and supplies from our development partners and have provided support to our people and local businesses to ensure that the economic and social fabric of the Marshall Islands remains resilient. Despite this, the pandemic has had a negative impact on our economy and progress against specific development priorities.

Voluntary national review issues of focus

Reporting carried out under the voluntary national review allows stakeholders in the Republic of the Marshall Islands to reflect on progress made against the strategic areas and respective commitments in the National Strategic Plan. The process also underscores the value of partnerships with local stakeholders and development partners and highlights the need for collective responsibility to achieve the desired results.

The voluntary national review of the Republic of the Marshall Islands will outline achievements in tackling issues of strategic importance contained in the National Strategic Plan and related Sustainable Development Goal implementation. It will also highlight challenges and opportunities for accelerated implementation. Issues of strategic importance include:

- **Good health and well-being.** While the country’s broad human development indicators, such as infant and child mortality rates and educational attainment, have steadily progressed since independence, overall progress in building human capital can still be improved. Our strategy embraces the value of *Kumiti Ejmour*, that is, “health is a shared responsibility”.
- **Reduced inequalities.** Inequalities between rural and urban areas continue to exist. The economies of the outer atoll communities have not fundamentally changed over the past century, with reliance on copra and handicraft production and limited commercial fishing and farming activities for their livelihoods. An inclusive “Vision 2018 One Nation Concept” is aimed at integrating the unique development needs of each atoll.
- **Decent work and economic growth.** Urban economies in Majuro and Kwajalein rely heavily on government bureaucracy and the Kwajalein missile base for employment and income. These economies are dominated by wholesale and retail trade, construction, banking and insurance. The productive economy has evidenced great potential in harnessing the “blue economy”, as already evidenced in commercial fisheries as well as tourism, trade and investment.
- **Climate change.** Sea level rise combined with more frequent and severe periodic wave surges are creating tipping points for tolerability of habitation. Accelerated and targeted adaptation measures for the well-being and livelihoods of atoll communities are being pursued, with additional and accessible resources needed to support further climate-proofing and resilience-building efforts. At the same time, the Republic of the Marshall Islands calls for decisive global action, especially from the larger emitters, to reduce greenhouse gases.

Conclusion

The Republic of the Marshall Islands is committed to implementing its National Strategic Plan, which integrates the Sustainable Development Goals and the SAMOA Pathway commitments, as relevant. We acknowledge that reaching the targets in the National Strategic Plan and the 2030 Agenda remains a challenge, noting the capacity and resource constraints that we face. It requires the collective efforts of all stakeholders, including for transboundary issues, such as marine resource management and climate change, which depend on global leadership and action. Notwithstanding, we strive to achieve our national development priorities for the benefit of all Marshallese people.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]

In its third voluntary national report, Mexico builds on the recommendations related to previous reports and emphasizes that all sectors of Mexican society are committed to making progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Mexico. For that reason, the report was, for the first time, drafted in dialogue with a committee comprising representatives of civil society, the private sector, academia, the federal and state-level executive and legislative branches, bilateral cooperation agencies and agencies of the United Nations system, who carried out their own consultations and independent studies to feed into the report.

The federal administration, which began its term in December 2018, maintained the National Council for the 2030 Agenda, as well as its committees and its technical secretariat. Since the commencement of its term, it has mainstreamed the sustainable development perspective in its government plan, sectoral programmes, budgeting process and flagship projects; promoted the independent monitoring of indicators; launched innovative initiatives, such as a sovereign bond linked to the Sustainable Development Goals; and developed tools to promote progress with regard to the 2030 Agenda, with support from bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

All 32 states and various municipalities have established bodies for the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda and promoted voluntary subnational reviews and tools for progress, with support from national associations and bilateral and multilateral cooperation. Their achievements are as varied as the country itself, and many of them need support to strengthen their capacities. Through their associations, they are seeking to increase their representation in the national 2030 Agenda coordination bodies. Some also consider that the national systems for democratic planning and fiscal coordination need to be reviewed in order to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The legislative branch established a special commission within the Senate and a working group in the Chamber of Deputies, with the support of all of their political leaders, to monitor the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. These entities promote legislation, budgets, agendas, training and diagnostic exercises with a sustainable development perspective, unprecedented tools such as the legislative strategy for the 2030 Agenda, and collaboration with the state congresses to promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level.

In the private sector, individual companies and trade organizations have taken up the 2030 Agenda through actions related to production processes, the measurement of achievements, legislative analysis and coordination strategies, such as the establishment of 19 multi-stakeholder working groups to address strategic issues

related to the Sustainable Development Goals. Various business groups consider it necessary to strengthen advocacy in order to motivate more companies to participate in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; proactively include micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises; improve the monitoring of progress; and increase public awareness.

With regard to the academic sector, the Mexican national network of the Sustainable Development Solutions Network has been established, with support from bilateral cooperation. The Mexican network currently comprises 73 affiliated institutions covering more than 70 per cent of the country's territory. It promotes training and the analysis and monitoring of policies that affect the 2030 Agenda. Various members of the network consider it necessary to improve coordination between the different levels of government; promote sustainable legislation; and attract funding for research, development and innovation and strengthen knowledge and action related to sustainable development within academic institutions, through the establishment of more multi-stakeholder partnerships.

Various individuals and organizations from civil society consider that the strategy for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is generally adequate but that its multidimensional perspective should be strengthened and its performance improved in the areas of gender, the environment, business and human rights, citizen participation and financing, in particular at the state and municipality levels. Such efforts should be aimed at bringing about a paradigm shift for development so that all communities play a leading role, which would strengthen local and national governance.

It is not yet clear what the long-term effects of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic will be, but it has already affected the prospects for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Agenda should therefore be adapted to the new national and global contexts. This should involve the sharing of responsibility between all sectors of society, a focus on sustainable recovery in which rights are a priority and a thoughtful approach that takes into consideration the structural conditions that affect the available options and the reach of specific actions.

Namibia

[Original: English]

Summary of key messages

In line with its commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Namibia volunteered to undertake a second national review of the Goals in 2021. The focus will be on three Goal dimensions, namely, economic, social and environmental, which are comprehensively integrated into the fifth National Development Plan pillars: economic progression, social transformation, environmental sustainability and good governance.

Economic progression

In 2020, Namibia recorded its deepest economic contraction, of 8.0 per cent, on account of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which appears to have exacerbated the already slow economic growth due to, among other factors, the persistent drought. However, it is expected to gradually rebound to above 3 per cent in the medium term, owing to the recuperation of the external demand and commodity prices in the mining sector. The unemployment rate remained high, at 33.4 per cent, in 2018, in particular among young people, (46.1 per cent). Namibia's target is to reduce unemployment rate to 24.2 per cent by 2022.

In its Global Competitiveness Report 2019, the World Economic Forum ranks Namibia among the African countries with a good road infrastructure, scoring 5.3 out of 7. Namibia developed a logistics master plan in 2015, aimed at making it an international logistics hub by developing its potential, such as its geographic location, to provide a safe, efficient and effective transport infrastructure and services for social and economic development.

Social transformation

In the spirit of leaving no one behind, Namibia adopted a social protection policy in 2021, and progress has also been made in addressing risks and vulnerabilities that people face throughout their lives, through social assistance programmes targeting the poor and vulnerable, as the non-contributory grant spending increased from 5.1 billion rands in the 2018/19 fiscal year to 6.2 billion rands in the 2020/21 fiscal year. The coverage rates of the main social grants for the same period have increased, with the old age grant coverage increasing from 95 to 98 per cent, the disability grant coverage increasing from 71 to 74 per cent and the child grant increasing from 60 to 66 per cent.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the country implemented three new non-contributory programmes in the areas of housing/basic services, economic stimulus and relief package, and special allowance/grant targeting the poor and vulnerable population, as well as workers and dependants. The Government spent 560 million rands on the emergency income grant, which benefited 769,000 Namibians above the age of 16 years, which in relative terms represents one of the highest coverage rates in the world. Equally, the economic stimulus and relief package benefited 230 employers and 21,359 employees through wage subsidies, while employee salary protection programmes cost a total of 8.1 billion rands.

Environmental sustainability

With regard to wildlife, Namibia has made considerable efforts in its fight against poaching by strengthening institutional coordination to combat wildlife crimes, resulting in the reduction of about 70 per cent of poached elephants and rhinoceroses, falling from 97 and 49 in 2015 to 31 and 11 in 2020, respectively.

In terms of climate change, Namibia's resource mobilization towards climate change mitigation and adaptation measures have improved drastically since 2015. To date, Namibia has mobilized about \$90 million.

Good governance

Namibia lauds itself on the global gender gap index ranking, being number 6 of 156 countries. Further strides were made towards women representation, which are attributed to the "zebra-style" equal representation in Parliament adopted by the ruling party, with women representing 48 per cent of the members of the Namibian bicameral Parliament since the 2019 elections. Namibia ranks number one in Africa in the World Press Freedom index, owing to public access to information and protection of fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements.

Lessons learned

Integration of the Sustainable Development Goals into national development frameworks and alignment with the Goals. Namibia mainstreamed and integrated the implementation of the Goals into its fifth National Development Plan to ensure their successful implementation.

Partnership. Extensive consultations with all stakeholders and citizens, including parliamentarians, in setting policies and priorities are key to integrating at the domestic level, creating ownership and ensuring the continuity of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Affirmation of commitment

Among other efforts, Namibia launched the Development Finance Assessment Report in 2021, as part of the holistic approach on the financing frameworks in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Vision 2030 and the national development plans.

Nicaragua

[Original: Spanish]

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, there are four crises in the world economy whose negative impact is worsening in developing countries:

(a) The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is affecting economic growth. The gross domestic product (GDP) per capita in Latin America and the Caribbean in 2020 is estimated to be similar to that of 2010.

(b) Inequality is a barrier to development. According to the Oxford Famine Relief Organization (OXFAM), the wealthiest 1 per cent of the population has more than twice as much wealth as 6.9 billion people.

(c) Global thresholds are close to reaching the point of no return. Therefore, the goal for limiting the average global temperature increase to 1.5°C cannot be pushed back.

(d) There is a double asymmetry in environmental issues. The costs of mitigation and adaptation should not be borne equally by all. Nicaragua is responsible for only 0.02 per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions but is highly susceptible to the effects of climate change.

The slow pace of efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals is linked to financial shortfalls, making it urgent that, within the framework of the global partnership, we all deliver on our commitments, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and without illegal unilateral coercive measures, which do nothing to contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Our annual shortfall in the amount needed to address the environmental crisis is \$2 billion.

Nicaragua had been experiencing vigorous growth (5.3 per cent gross domestic product (GDP) growth on average per year from 2011 to 2017) and declining rates of overall poverty (from 48.3 per cent in 2005 to 24.9 in 2016) and extreme poverty (from 17.2 per cent to 6.9 per cent). However, the failed coup in 2018, Hurricanes Eta and Iota in 2020 and the pandemic have resulted in projected losses of \$29.5438 billion between 2018 and 2023 (2.3 times the nominal GDP for 2021). However, thanks to the strength of the economy and the will of the people, our economy was among those in the region that contracted least in 2020 (2 per cent).

Therefore, in accordance with our Christianity- and solidarity-based model, we will continue to restore rights and meet needs, leaving no one behind, through:

(a) Free public education for more than 1.7 million students and free school lunches for 1.2 million children and young people, the delivery of 5,760,560 solidarity school packages, the construction of 35,393 schools and other social programmes;

(b) Free public health care and the construction of the largest hospital network in Central America, comprising 70 hospitals, 1,259 medical positions, 192 health centres and a molecular biology laboratory, which is the second most advanced such facility in the region, according to the World Health Organization;

(c) Greater gender equity. According to the Global Gender Gap Report of the World Economic Forum, Nicaragua was the fifth most gender-equal country (and the top country in Latin America) in 2020, up from ninetieth position in 2007;

(d) Increased rates of access to drinking water in urban areas (from 65.0 per cent in 2007 to 91.5 per cent in 2020), connectivity to sewage systems (from 33.0 per cent to 54.0 per cent) and access to water in rural areas (from 41.77 per cent to 54.9 per cent);

(e) An increase in the rate of access to electricity, from 54 per cent in 2006 to 98.5 per cent in 2020, and the transformation the energy mix so that 75.94 per cent is generated from renewable sources (compared with 26.15 per cent in 2007);

(f) An increase in the amount of paved road, which grew from 2,044 km in 2006 to 4,538 km in 2020. According to the World Economic Forum, Nicaragua is among the five countries with the best roads in Latin America;

(g) National production, which has increased by 76 per cent, to ensure national food security and food sovereignty;

(h) Safety. We continue to be the safest country in Central America.

We maintain our unwavering commitment to protect our natural heritage, which belongs to us all and includes:

(a) 7 per cent of the world's biodiversity;

(b) 4.7 million hectares of forest, covering 35 per cent of the national territory, which has the capacity to store 869 million tons of carbon dioxide, and of which 50 per cent is self-managed by indigenous, Afrodescendent and rural communities;

(c) Protected areas comprising 30 per cent of the national territory;

(d) 47,000 km² of seas and marine resources;

(e) Four biosphere reserves, three of which are recognized by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization;

(f) The first geopark in Central America.

We therefore reaffirm our commitment to continuing to implement the national policy on climate change mitigation and adaptation, with social and environmental justice; the national response system; nationally determined contributions; low-carbon investments for the green transition; and nature-based solutions, in order to enhance human development at the national, regional and global levels.

Niger

[Original: French]

The voluntary national report for 2021 was developed through broad consultations, despite the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, and covers Sustainable Development Goals 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 12, 13, 16 and 17.

The process was participatory and inclusive, in accordance with the principle of leaving no one behind. The Niger made significant progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals between 2015 and 2020.

Goal 16: The high quality of political and socioeconomic governance has contributed to progress with regard to the indicators; the gross domestic product (GDP) has increased by 16 per cent over the past 10 years.

Goal 8: With regard to the economy, the Niger has shown resilience in the face of various security shocks, the drop in price of its main mineral ore export (uranium), floods, border closures, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. The average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate for the period 2016–2019 was 5.9 per cent. The growth rate for 2020 was initially projected to be 6.9 per cent but, as a result of the effects of the pandemic, was actually 1.2 per cent. The Niger is apparently one of five African countries that have shown resilience with regard to the economic impact of the COVID-19 crisis.² The improvement in living standards indicators is the result inclusive economic growth that benefits the poor.

Goal 1: The poverty rate has been falling by one percentage point per year, with a more significant drop in rural areas, in line with the target outcomes of country's 3N Initiative. However, the number of poor people increased by 438,000 during the period. A longitudinal telephone survey on the impact of COVID-19 conducted in 2020 by the National Institute of Statistics revealed that the pandemic has not had much impact on household access to basic necessities, and 80 per cent of rural and urban households were obtaining supplies regularly from the market.

Goals 2 and 3: The nutrition of the population improved between 2015 and 2020, as indicated by the 2.3 per cent decrease in global acute malnutrition and the nearly 2 per cent decrease in severe acute malnutrition. The health of the population has also improved, with life expectancy increasing by a year between 2016 and 2019. A longitudinal telephone survey on the impact of COVID-19 conducted by the National Institute of Statistics revealed that most individuals (97.4 per cent) who needed health care for a different illness were able to obtain such care. The main barrier to access to health services when needed is lack of resources.

Goal 10: Inequality is lower than in some countries, including Benin (which had a Gini coefficient of 0.478 in 2015), Togo (0.43 in 2015) and Côte d'Ivoire (0.42 in 2015), although the Gini coefficient of the Niger increased slightly, by 0.05, to 0.35 in 2019.

Goal 13: With regard to climate change, the Niger has developed strategic frameworks to deal with shocks and other climate hazards. Nevertheless, the number of people affected by flooding increased from 142,715 in 2018 to 639,870, and the number of deaths increased from 40 to 65 over the same period.

Goal 17: As a result of structural reforms, the mobilization of tax revenue has gained new momentum, with an improvement of 2 per cent per year. The absolute value of foreign direct investment increased by more than 250 per cent between 2016 and 2020. Public debt remains sustainable, and the risk of debt distress is now considered moderate, following the implementation of a prudent debt policy.

The decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals, from 2020 to 2030, is aimed at promoting good political and economic governance and redesigning the education system to turn demographic assets into economic dividends. In addition, the Government will continue to translate the Strategy for Sustainable Development and Inclusive Growth Niger 2035 into inclusive development plans focused on, among other things, developing human capital, in particular through schooling for girls and training for women.

² According to the International Monetary Fund.

Norway

[Original: English]

Voluntary national review process

Norway's second voluntary national review describes the country's continuous efforts towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and provides an overview of progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals from 2016 to 2021.

The Ministry of Local Government and Modernization, in collaboration with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, are responsible for the preparation of the voluntary national review. The Office of the Prime Minister, all ministries and several government agencies contribute to the review.

The main focus of the voluntary national review is the local and regional commitments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. To gain insights into the work towards sustainability in Norwegian municipalities and regions, a partnership agreement with the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities was established.

Three key actors from the civil society are involved to coordinate feedback from a vast group of stakeholders. The Norwegian Forum for Development and Environment coordinates feedback on Norway's progress on all 17 Sustainable Development Goals from their network of 50 organizations working in development, the environment, peace and human rights. UN Global Compact Norway and SDG Norway contribute with views and recommendations on the government implementation of the Goals from the business and industry sector, and the education and academic sector.

The Governments of Indonesia and Denmark cooperated with Norway in the preparation of the voluntary national review by reviewing the draft report and sharing their recommendations.

Policy and enabling environment

In January 2020, the Ministry of Local Government and Modernization was appointed coordinating body for the national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. This has increased cross-sectoral cooperation and promoted a more holistic approach to sustainable development. The Government will submit Norway's first national action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to Parliament in 2021. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs coordinates Norway's global efforts on the implementation of the Goals.

Progress on Sustainable Development Goals

According to the Sustainable Development Goals Index, Norway's performance for Goals 1 (no poverty), 3 (good health and well-being), 5 (gender equality), 7 (affordable and clean energy), 10 (reduced inequalities) and 17 (partnerships for the Goals) in particular is high. On the Goals Index, Norway currently ranks as number six. The key challenges for achieving the Goals in Norway are related to unsustainable consumption patterns, climate gas emissions and the state of biodiversity. Gender-based violence and labour market disparities remain and show that persisting or rising inequalities between groups of society must be addressed.

Leaving no one behind

The Norwegian welfare society is key to ensuring that no one is left behind, by securing opportunities for income, providing education and health services for everyone. A strong focus on equality and non-discrimination is also key to ensuring that no one is left behind. Norway is at the forefront of developing legislation to ensure non-discrimination online. The leaving no one behind principle is also mainstreamed throughout Norwegian foreign and development policy.

Sustainable Development Goals in Norwegian municipalities and regions

The Sustainable Development Goals are relevant to all aspects of local government activities. Since 2016, implementation has gained momentum in municipalities and in regional authorities. Their experience indicate that political commitment is vital for providing direction and speed and that knowledge-sharing and collaboration across different levels of government foster success.

Context of COVID-19

Measures against the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic have led to severe social and economic setbacks that cannot be ignored. Structural issues that were present in Norway before the pandemic have become more prominent. At the same time, the pandemic has also accelerated ongoing processes, such as the digitalization of society.

Governance for sustainable development

Human rights and gender equality are an integral part of Norwegian foreign and development policy. Norway seeks to increase awareness of discriminatory practices, reduce inequalities and promote inclusion on a global scale. Norway provides financial and political support to a pluralistic civil society, which contributes significantly to the objective of leaving no one behind.

The 2030 Agenda, including the Sustainable Development Goals, is the framework for the Norwegian foreign and development policy. The Prime Minister of Norway is the Co-Chair, together with the President of Ghana, of the Sustainable Development Goals Advocacy Group. Norwegian development policy will contribute to getting the world back on track in achieving the Goals, in a greener, fairer and more resilient manner. The Government's long-term commitment to allocating 1 per cent of gross national income to development will continue.

Paraguay

[Original: Spanish]

Journeying together towards a more inclusive, participatory and resilient Paraguay

The presentation of this second voluntary national report represents a milestone for Paraguay. Our slogan is "Paraguay of the people", and we understand that taking the path towards a more inclusive, participatory and resilient Paraguay requires uniting the efforts of all. We therefore took an innovative approach to the national review and the production of the report by addressing challenges in a participatory and inclusive manner, putting people at the centre of our efforts. The report is based on the outcome of dialogues and collaboration that took place over the course of a number of months. It is hoped that those various spaces will be consolidated and strengthened over time.

The global health crisis caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic brought the country's structural problems to light. The rapid responses that

were needed required political commitment at the highest level. Consequently, in 2020 Paraguay embarked on an institution-building process to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It restructured and established a hierarchy within the Sustainable Development Goals Commission of Paraguay, which now includes representatives from the three branches of government. The Commission's vision has changed to focus on ensuring that the budget is results-based and aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals, and on the launch of the *Congresopy2030* platform to promote the alignment of legislative processes with the Goals.

These actions and initiatives, as well as recently implemented public policies, have emerged through participatory processes, led by different sectors, and have had a significant impact on citizens. In accordance with the principle of leaving no one behind, we have built up a particular economic, social and environmental resilience that will enable us to advance and account for progress on our national development priorities.

We have been addressing the challenges and inequalities affecting the population, especially the most vulnerable. In this regard, we have come to understand that we will not be able to increase the visibility of those who are furthest behind or implement policies that are able to meet their needs without disaggregated data to enable us to have a complete picture of their situations. Therefore, in late 2020, a law establishing a National Institute of Statistics was adopted. This milestone brings us closer to the implementation of evidence-based policies.

On the basis of the global consensus that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, the National Institute of Statistics has led a participatory process to develop a multidimensional poverty index, in order to give more prominence to a segment of the population that, until now, has not been included in public policies. In addition, the Government has begun to adopt more comprehensive protection policies that seek to improve quality of life for all people, with a focus on rights, throughout their lives. This has led to the launch of the “¡Vamos!” social protection system.

The participatory and multisectoral implementation of the Paraguayan Education Transformation Strategy 2030 has begun a process that seeks to address the challenges involved in providing quality, inclusive and equitable education through the development skills and competencies that meet the current workforce demand, while meeting the needs of children and adolescents with disabilities, with an emphasis on challenges with regard to increasing access to the Internet, innovation and technology. Paraguay is thus redoubling its efforts to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 4. It is conscious of the fact that education is the foundation of sustainable development, and that sustainable development will not be achieved without investment in the country's most valuable resource: its human capital.

The past three years have seen multisectoral collaborative actions that have led to innovative solutions to national development challenges, with a participatory vision. These include PROEZA, a project that focuses simultaneously on aspects of poverty, reforestation, energy and climate change; *Wendá*, a platform for citizens' initiatives; *e-Heka SIIS*, a social data visualization platform; *ASU+B*, a Sustainable Development Goals mentoring programme; and the Sustainable Development Goals Multi-stakeholder Dialogue Spaces, among many others. These multisectoral governance initiatives are themselves the result of alliances that show that together we can address the challenges of the 2030 Agenda and build the Paraguay we want. International cooperation has been an important vehicle for accelerating these processes in Paraguay.

Qatar

[Original: Arabic]

The State of Qatar has developed an effective social protection system for all Qataris that takes into account their civil rights, values their active participation in the development of society, and ensures sufficient income to maintain their dignity and health. The State has been able to establish a solid system of social protection with the active participation of civil society organizations and the private sector. It also provides health and education services to all. That has earned Qatar high rankings in global and regional human development indices.

Food security is a priority issue in the national sustainable development policies of Qatar. The State is working to achieve 70 per cent food self-sufficiency by 2023 and 100 per cent food security by 2030.

Qatar has scored outstanding achievements in physical and psychological preventive care in various areas, including early detection of disease, promotion of healthy behaviours among the public and greater transparency in the rights and responsibilities of patients. The basic health service availability index has reached full primary-care coverage (100 per cent) for the entire population.

Employment policies, development of labour market legislation, encouragement of entrepreneurship and job creation, increasing women's participation in the labour force, effective measures to protect the rights of infrastructure workers and the promotion of workers' occupational health and safety are all decisive factors in the push towards the goal of full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men in Qatar by 2030.

Qatar National Vision 2030 aims to achieve sustainable economic development from the standpoint of equality and social justice as embodied in the Constitution. Taken as a whole, our national strategic development strategies, programmes and projects aim to improve the well-being of Qatari society regardless of age, gender, race, religion or economic status.

Many economic activities have been affected by measures to contain the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the most affected are labour-intensive small and medium-sized enterprises. To alleviate the employment crisis, the Government established a national safeguards programme as part of an economic policy package to counter the repercussions of COVID-19 and help to defray employee salaries. More than 4,000 companies employing about 320,000 employees benefited.

Qatar has worked to diversify its production base by developing economic infrastructure, encouraging investment, establishing industrial and service zones, supporting and developing small and medium-sized enterprises to expand their contribution to diversifying the production base, and promoting a culture that makes rational and responsible consumption an integral part of the life of society with a view to establishing balanced patterns of consumption.

Qatar strongly favours environment-friendly solutions such as diversifying energy sources, investing in solar energy, moving towards the electric public transport system, switching over to green buildings and expanding projects such as the Million Trees campaign. In that connection, Qatar is committed to hosting the first carbon-free World Cup in 2022.

Qatar has earned high rankings in a number of areas. It has low murder and violence rates, a low incidence of crime in society, stable political conditions, a society free of the adverse effects of terrorism, and an absence of threats or conflicts, whether domestic or foreign. For the third year in a row (2017, 2019 and 2020), Qatar

has also maintained its position on the list of safest, most secure and most crime-free countries globally and in the Arab world. It has occupied first place in the Arab world from 2015 to 2020.

The World Cup to be held in Qatar in 2020 is a major international partnership and a major driver for achieving the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. It will leave a significant national legacy in its wake, providing Qatar and the people of the region with opportunities to spread a sustainable welcome message to millions of people around the world, build bridges of love and peace, promote tolerance, respect and understanding between civilizations, and showcase our national identity.

In March 2020, Qatar set forth a national action plan to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic, aimed at preparing for, monitoring, responding to and recovering from the pandemic. It reaffirmed the importance of compliance with United Nations guidelines and international cooperation to address the COVID-19 pandemic through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) initiative. Qatar has developed a national electronic platform to make available information about the pandemic, which has helped it to mount an effective response.

Qatar has used research, development and innovation both in the service of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and also to increase productivity through its 2018–2022 national development strategy in accordance with Qatar National Vision 2030. All this has been a major long-term driver for economic growth, prosperity and partnership, and has contributed to the realization of many goals and objectives in the areas of education, health, food security, the environment, investment in human capital and capacity-building.

San Marino

[Original: English]

We live in a time of unprecedented challenges. The need for cooperation and solidarity between nations to address the difficulties affecting all of us is more tangible than ever before. Issues such as climate change, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and migration have made this even more evident. These are epoch-making challenges that know no frontiers, and no country can face them alone.

In recent years, some of the inhabitants of our planet have experienced an unprecedented period of peace, prosperity and technological progress, which has enabled significant groups of women and men to free themselves from the terrible evils that have plagued their lives for too many years, such as hunger, poverty and inequality. Nevertheless, we must leave no one behind.

Many people still suffer from discrimination on the basis of their identity, the most vulnerable and marginalized groups of our society are still affected by violence, and a large number of people still face enormous economic difficulties. These facts are a call to increase our individual and common efforts.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represents the hope of the entire family of nations living on this planet to find synergies and solutions to achieve a more prosperous future for all, especially for those whose expectations and needs have been neglected for far too long.

The 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda help us to imagine and reach a shared target of economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection.

The Republic of San Marino strongly believes in the principles enshrined in the 2030 Agenda and in the opportunity that we have to improve living conditions through it, at home and globally.

We are therefore pleased to present the first voluntary national review of the Republic of San Marino. This work represents a tool to help us to better understand our achievements and the goals that our country still wants and needs to achieve in the remaining years to 2030.

The report also testifies to the concrete commitment of the institutions and citizens of the Republic of San Marino to promoting multilateralism and protecting the principles that inspired the birth of the United Nations. We congratulate and thank the United Nations institutions for their tireless work in affirming, promoting and protecting these principles and for their continuous efforts to make such principles a daily reality for all people.

Lastly, with the report, the Republic of San Marino wishes to renew its commitment to a better, fairer and more sustainable world, not only for the benefit of its citizens today but also for future generations, in our country and everywhere else.

Sierra Leone

[Original: English]

Sierra Leone remains steadfast in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. It is presenting a third voluntary national review report, following its second review in 2019. The country continues to give great emphasis to its accelerator Goals: Goal 4 (education) and Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions). These two Goals were identified as the most crucial to the socioeconomic transformation of the State, based on the national development context.

Ensuring access to basic, inclusive and free good-quality education is a top priority of the Government's human capital development flagship programme, part of the country's Medium-term National Development Plan (2019–2023). Accordingly, the national budget allocation to the education sector has remained around 21 per cent since 2018, to ensure that all public school pupils have access to basic and senior school education, free access to textbooks for core subjects and school meals. With regard to school meals, the Government provided food for more than 300,000 pupils in 2020, in addition to the efforts of development partners in that regard. This initiative has benefited some 2.5 million pupils, saved parents an estimated \$500 per year per beneficiary pupil and is coupled with a free school bus service for all district headquarter towns. It has resulted in a significant increase in the gross enrolment ratio at the primary level, which exceeded 135 per cent in 2019 and 2020, compared with 109 per cent in 2018.

The country's efforts regarding Goal 16 (peace, justice and strong institutions) also remain laudable. At the international level, it continues to provide leadership to the Group of Seven Plus, which obtained United Nations observer status in December 2019 in order to leverage more support to take this group from fragility to sustainable development. Sierra Leone is also Co-Chair of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and State-building. In December 2020, the country exited the formal agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission as a country-specific configuration, a sign of remarkable progress towards resilience and sustainable development. At the national level, the Government has scaled up efforts to establish the planned commission on peace and national cohesion, with a bill enacted in Parliament to that effect. The justice sector has made rapid strides in promoting access to justice for the underprivileged. With the establishment of the Legal Aid Board in 2015, those

benefiting from free legal representation, advice and related services reached a total of 413,169 people in 2020 (including persons in pretrial detention and prisons), representing a 93 per cent increase since 2018. Its action covered the rights of children and women, land disputes and criminal cases, including domestic violence, rape and juvenile offences. Rural communities received special attention. To reinforce this, the number of magistrates and judges in the country has increased from 63 to 77 since 2019.

Prioritizing education (Goal 4) and justice (Goal 16) is central to pursuing other Goals, such as Goal 1 (no poverty), Goal 2 (zero hunger) and Goal 10 (reducing inequality), as well as Goal 3 (good health and well-being) and Goal 5 (gender equality). For instance, increasing access to justice as an entitlement and basic need is fundamental to stemming rural multidimensional poverty in the country, currently estimated at 86.3 per cent, and rural income poverty, estimated at 73.9 per cent, compared with 37.6 per cent and 34.8 per cent for urban areas, respectively. Reducing the school fee burden for poor households will increase their access to basic services, including health care and investment in small businesses consistent with Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth) and even Goal 12 (responsible consumption and production) and Goal 13 (climate action). In addition, we have continued to maintain gender parity in primary education and have achieved parity in junior secondary education.

With regard to localizing the Goals, the Government has revitalized district development coordination structures, alongside scaling up the “People’s Planning Process” model integrating chiefdom- and village-level planning into district and national planning processes.

Concerning partnerships and financing for development (Goal 17), a range of initiatives have been pursued, largely informed by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. Among them, we are currently implementing a project on strengthening domestic resource mobilization for Sustainable Development Goal financing, which is aimed at driving innovation in domestic revenue collection and management at the central and local levels and financial sector capitalization through the deployment of digitalization and financial literacy.

In terms of challenges, the Government has experienced dwindling domestic revenues, mostly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely constrained private sector operations. In that regard, debt relief and cancellation would be critical to maintaining Sustainable Development Goal financing, in addition to ongoing efforts to strengthen general public financial management.

Spain

[Original: Spanish]

Commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to post-pandemic rebuilding in alignment with its principles

Spain has reaffirmed its commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals through the adoption of its Sustainable Development Strategy 2030, a framework for action that will make it possible to accelerate the structural transformation that is needed to make the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development a reality, both within and beyond its borders. The Strategy represents a major political and social agreement to ensure that recovery from the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic involves a social and ecological transition that puts sustainability and people’s rights at the centre of action. This is putting into practice the commitment

made in the action plan for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which was presented by Spain in its first voluntary national review, in 2018.

Eight “country challenges” have been identified in the Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 as the main challenges to be addressed. This will be done through eight sustainable development accelerator policies, which will be developed using a multidimensional and multilevel perspective with a view to enabling them to have a sustained impact in the medium and long term. These policies have been designed to make it possible to address issues such as poverty and inequality through a comprehensive approach, with a particular focus on issues that affect women, children and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, among others; the lack of guaranteed social rights and the inability to exercise effectively such rights; and the need to put an end to employment insecurity through the creation of quality jobs. The Strategy represents a commitment to decisive action on environmental and climate issues, in accordance with international commitments such as the Paris Agreement, and to driving the transformation of the economic system, enhancing public services and strengthening rights, in order to ensure that no one is left behind. It also reaffirms the commitment of Spain to making globalization fairer, more democratic and more sustainable, through its commitment to strengthened multilateralism with the United Nations at the centre of efforts.

The Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 also reflects a commitment to sustainable development policy coherence as a guiding principle for all actions, and to the continuation of efforts to align budgets and regulations with the Sustainable Development Goals. It also ensures continuing accountability, through the submission of annual progress reports. Lastly, it promotes a greater contribution by non-public actors to the advancement of the 2030 Agenda.

Governance

The renewed commitment of Spain to placing sustainable development at the centre of government action is evidenced by the establishment of the Ministry of Social Rights and the 2030 Agenda, which has executive powers in relation to the development and coordination of actions to promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In addition, a comprehensive governance system has been developed that includes three complementary levels of coordination: the Executive Committee of the Government for the 2030 Agenda, to strengthen dialogue and interministerial coordination; the Sectoral Conference for the 2030 Agenda, which enables coordination with subnational levels of government, thereby promoting the localization of the Goals; and the Council for Sustainable Development, an advisory and collaborative body in which 60 representatives of the private sector, trade unions, academia and civil society organizations participate. This comprehensive governance system is complemented by the essential parliamentary work carried out through the Joint Commission for the Coordination and Monitoring of the Spanish Strategy for Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, thus ensuring a comprehensive approach to efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda.

Participatory elaboration of the Sustainable Development Strategy 2030

The Sustainable Development Strategy 2030 was developed through a process of broad participation and consultation involving the various bodies of the governance system, which enabled a solid consensus to be reached on the common road map for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In addition, six specific consultations were conducted to gather contributions from children and adolescents, young people, social movements, local entities, the private sector and cultural actors.

Sweden

[Original: English]

Sweden's voluntary national review in 2021 builds on progress made in its implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda since 2017.

Sweden is well ahead in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, but some challenges remain

Sweden is in a favourable position in its implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Peaceful and democratic conditions, ambitious national targets for a sustainable transition, openness to collaboration with others at home and abroad and a dynamic business climate have together created a strong foundation for sustainable development and welfare. Sweden ranks highly in many international comparisons of Sustainable Development Goal implementation. However, the consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic are hampering progress and exacerbating existing challenges. Economic and social inequalities in Sweden are increasing. Young people are exposed to more mental health challenges, violence and bullying. Sweden also has challenges relating to sustainable consumption and production and the transition to a circular economy.

Delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals and accelerated actions

The delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals and accelerated actions require:

- **Political commitment to policy coherence for sustainable development.** In December 2020, the Swedish Riksdag (parliament) approved a government bill with an overarching objective for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda: Sweden will implement the 2030 Agenda to achieve economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development through a coherent policy at the national and international levels. Implementation will be guided by the Agenda principle of "leave no one behind".
- **Delivering on leaving no one behind.** Sweden is committed to delivering on the principle of leaving no one behind. This is a commitment to realizing human rights and gender equality, addressing inequalities within and among countries, achieving universal social protection, strengthening empowerment and participation, and transitioning towards resource-efficient, resilient and climate-neutral economies. Moreover, Sweden views promoting multidimensional poverty reduction, social dialogue and decent work as critical, as well as improving data to monitor progress on compliance with this principle.
- **Taking the perspectives of children and young people into account.** The perspectives, engagement and innovation of young people are of great importance to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Issues of importance to Swedish young people include the environment and climate, gender equality and preventing oppression and discrimination.
- **A whole-of-society approach.** Multiple actors in Sweden are involved in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Government agencies and municipalities are working together to implement the 2030 Agenda. The research community is contributing cutting-edge research and innovation on sustainable development. Civil society is paving the way through its own efforts and by pushing decision makers to act. The business community is at the forefront of

integrating the 2030 Agenda into its business models and driving innovation. Trade unions are pushing for social dialogue and decent working conditions.

- **Going local.** Municipalities and regions play an important role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals are put into practice and innovations are developed and tested at the local level, which in turn contributes to implementation at the national and global levels. In conjunction with Sweden’s voluntary national review, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions has conducted a voluntary regional review. Helsingborg, Malmö, Stockholm and Uppsala have also carried out voluntary local reviews for the first time.
- **Going global.** Sweden will remain a strong voice for the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda and be a trusted partner worldwide. Sweden will work to build back better and greener in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mitigating and adapting to climate change, halting biodiversity loss and restoring ecosystems are necessary for achieving all the Sustainable Development Goals. Sweden has increased funding to tackle climate change and has stepped up its efforts to safeguard biodiversity and ecosystems. Sweden will continue to focus on global health, including the fair distribution of vaccines. Sweden will always stand up for democracy, the rule of law and equality, including gender equality.
- **Financing for development.** Sweden is one of the most generous aid contributors globally and the Government is committed to allocating 1 per cent of the country’s gross national income to official development assistance (ODA). However, ODA is not enough. New forms of partnership and innovative financing are needed, and domestic resource mobilization must be strengthened. Debt vulnerability in low-income countries needs to be addressed by engaging all official and private creditors. Financial flows need to shift by adopting green financial instruments and stopping investment in fossil fuels.

Thailand

[Original: English]

Thailand attaches great importance to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular within the context of the decade of action for the Sustainable Development Goals. Since its previous official submission, in 2017, Thailand has made significant strides towards all 17 Goals. However, as in other countries, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has had an adverse impact on our economy and society and hampered our efforts to achieve the Goals.

The achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially within the context of the decade of action and the pandemic, will not come without drastic transformative change and multi-stakeholder partnerships. The voluntary national review of 2021 highlights Thailand’s application of the “Sufficiency Economy Philosophy” as our homegrown approach that focuses on human empowerment, resilience and environmental conservation, along with the application of technology and local wisdom in addressing development challenges and promoting recovery efforts. The review underlines the importance of a whole-of-society approach and the interconnectedness of the Goals, showcasing key examples of the role of the private sector, civil society, academia, youth networks and ordinary citizens in advancing the Goals at the national level. The review itself has provided an opportunity for stakeholders to engage and discuss the implementation of the Goals.

The Sustainable Development Goal landscape in Thailand is well established. The Goals have been integrated into the 20-Year National Strategy, which is the country's main development framework. The National Committee for Sustainable Development, chaired by the Prime Minister, represents the central mechanism for advancing all 17 Goals. The Committee has designated government focal points for each of the 169 targets, while its four subcommittees provide the driving force for the implementation of the Goals, the application of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy to the Goals, monitoring and evaluation, and environmental assessments. Thailand's Sustainable Development Goal road map provides the blueprint for moving forward in six key areas, namely, policy integration and coherence, enabling mechanisms, partnerships, pilot projects, monitoring and evaluation, and awareness-raising.

Key highlights of the new voluntary national review cover all sectors. Thailand has achieved considerable success in eradicating extreme poverty as part of Goal 1, and is committed to developing a national multidimensional poverty index. Projects aimed at improving nutrition for schoolchildren and food security boost progress towards Goal 2. With regard to Goal 3, the country's universal health coverage and Village Health Volunteers have played an integral role in the effective management of the COVID-19 crisis. Concerning Goal 4, efforts have been expanded to provide financial support to poor students through the use of digital tools and the Education Equality Fund. Gender equality initiatives, including efforts to address domestic violence, are the cornerstone of Thailand's implementation of Goal 5.

The highlight in relation to Goal 6 is increased access to clean water sources and sanitation. The development of a smart grid is under way to increase energy efficiency, in accordance with Goal 7. Workforce capacities continue to be strengthened to meet the needs of the global economy as part of Goal 8. The promotion of a bio-circular-green economy model through the development of sustainable infrastructure will advance Goal 9. To support the achievement of Goal 10, the Government has applied the Thai People Map and Analytics Platform to help to identify vulnerable groups who require support, while projects such as *Baan Mankong* (i.e. "secure housing") support impoverished communities in obtaining secure and sustainable housing as part of Goal 11.

Regarding Goals 12, 13, 14, and 15, Thailand has taken action on climate change and sustainable consumption and production, strengthened efforts to protect marine and coastal ecosystems and increased stakeholder engagement on forest area management. Thailand's implementation of Goal 16 centres on promoting fair and equal access to justice for all and multi-stakeholder cooperation on human rights promotion, as well as anti-trafficking and anti-corruption efforts. Lastly, Thailand has forged effective partnerships with all sectors, in line with Goal 17, including civil society, private sector networks and academia. Beyond our borders, we have expanded our role as a development partner to exchange knowledge, experiences and best practices with neighbouring countries and countries in other regions.

Those are some examples of Thailand's implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. We aim to build on the momentum of the voluntary national review to ensure a whole-of-society approach as we move forward. With the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy as our pathway, Thailand is confident that balanced and sustainable development for all is within reach.

Tunisia

[Original: French]

In accordance with its commitments concerning the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Tunisia is presenting its second voluntary

national report, for 2021, and reaffirms its will and determination to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, in spite of the very difficult conditions resulting from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in Tunisia began with the adoption of the first post-revolution development plan (2016–2020). Eighty per cent of the targets of the Sustainable Development Goals were in alignment with this plan.

Tunisia, a young democracy born of open and inclusive dialogue, has made progress in the area of democracy. It held free and transparent presidential and legislative elections in late 2019.

Access to electricity and drinking water is almost universal throughout the country. School attendance is compulsory and free for children between the ages of 6 and 16, and the enrolment rate for six-year-olds reached 99.5 per cent for the year 2019/20.

The State guarantees access to health-care services for vulnerable groups. In 2020, 263,000 families benefited from the free medical care programme and 470,000 families received medical care at reduced cost.

Since the adoption of the Personal Status Code on 13 August 1956, the achievements of Tunisian women have been considered an irreversible societal achievement. A legal and institutional arsenal is in place to promote equality between women and men and eliminate all forms of violence against women. Tunisia ranks second in the world in terms of the percentage of women graduates of higher education science programmes.

A national technical committee has been established to ensure coordination, monitoring and evaluation in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is composed of government sectoral Sustainable Development Goals focal points, representatives of national organizations, local elected officials, parliamentarians, representatives of civil society and the private sector, and academics. It is supported by working groups on the Goals that have been established within each ministry. A Sustainable Development Goals portal was launched by the Ministry of Economy, Finance and Investment Support in 2021 and serves as a platform for discussion and exchange.

Tunisia has developed its Vision 2030, an associated development strategy and a five-year development plan for the period 2021–2025.

To ensure the participation and support of all stakeholders, regional commissions have been set up under the supervision of the regional councils of the governorates and sectoral commissions at the level of the ministries. These commissions were launched in early August 2020, according to the circular of the Head of Government.

Tunisia took action to mitigate the effects of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. It implemented a lockdown, which relieved the pressure on the health-care system. It also implemented a series of actions to ensure the continuity of basic public social services. A special fund (18-18 Fund) has been established to collect donations and strengthen the health sector.

In order to support vulnerable groups, the Government provided subsidies to 260,000 families in need, 370,000 low-income families, 140,000 individuals on low pensions and 301,000 individuals with variable employment income. A plan comprising 23 measures to support businesses in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, including the establishment of two investment funds of 500 million Tunisian dinars each, was also put in place.

The management of the second and third waves of the pandemic was not as effective, and the socioeconomic situation deteriorated. The vaccination campaign did not begin until early March 2021.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic has been severe. The Tunisian economy contracted by 8.8 per cent in 2020. This led directly to a decrease in tax revenues, an increase in the budget deficit and in public debt, a concerning level of unemployment, an increase in poverty and a decline in investment.

Tunisia still has a number of challenges to overcome, including poverty in its various forms, unemployment, in particular among young graduates, inequalities between men and women and regional disparities. Those challenges will be priorities in the country's five-year development plan.

Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]

In 2020, a new administration took over the leadership of Uruguay. Its goal is to carry out a series of transformations aimed at improving the living conditions of everyone in the country.

The strategic framework for achieving its objectives in the coming years is based on the following priorities: (a) moving towards an economy that is innovative, generates jobs and guarantees that development is sustainable; (b) transforming State institutions to make the State efficient, give it a presence throughout the territory and ensure that it is accountable to citizens; (c) developing public policies that ensure that everyone has access to quality education, social protection and health care; and (d) establishing a society that promotes the development and rights of people and leaves no one behind.

Underpinning the first strategic priority is a vision for economic growth that ensures sustainability, protects natural resources and biodiversity and is able to cope with and mitigate the effects of climate change.

Training citizens and fully developing their capacities is a priority. Unless this is done, it will be impossible to achieve individual development, let alone collective development.

This strategic priority also involves a commitment to develop partnerships between the public sector, the private sector, academic institutions, social organizations, communities and families as drivers of development.

It also brings together the efforts that the country has been making through regulatory innovations, the creation and/or strengthening of public institutions, the implementation of policies and programmes and actions by private actors and civil society to achieve some of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Goal 12 (responsible production and consumption), Goal 9 (resilient industry, innovation and infrastructure), Goal 8 (decent work and economic growth), Goals 6, 7, 13, 14 and 15, concerning environmental sustainability, Goal 17, regarding partnerships for development, and Goal 5, concerning gender equality.

The second strategic priority ("an efficient State that has a presence throughout the territory and is accountable to its citizens") reflects more directly two of the priorities of the 2030 Agenda: the centrality of people and peace (building peaceful societies).

Improving the capacities of the State to manage and maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of the resources of citizens will necessarily have an environmental and

economic impact, and will thus contribute to two other priorities of the 2030 Agenda: prosperity and the planet.

The third priority area concerns capacity development and the well-being of the population. It relates to the social policies and programmes around which the welfare system or regime is built. Particularly noteworthy are the reforms in the areas of education and social security. These achievements are aimed at overcoming several of the problems that make it difficult to make the most of the country's capacities and are intended to contribute to the sustainable development of society.

The reform of the education system will contribute to the achievement not only of Sustainable Development Goal 4 but also of the employment-related targets under Sustainable Development Goal 8. The actions that are being promoted to strengthen the social security system will contribute to various targets under Goals 1, 8 and 10.

The programmatic actions that will be implemented under the fourth priority area ("a society that promotes the capacities of people and leaves no one behind") are linked to two pillars or principles of the 2030 Agenda, namely, peace and partnerships for development, as some of the outcomes refer to the elimination of all expressions or manifestations of gender-based violence (towards women and girls). They will thus contribute to the country's progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 5, specifically the targets concerning gender equality and the empowerment of women in all spheres.

Zimbabwe

[Original: English]

Zimbabwe has made significant progress in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, underpinned by the following policy frameworks: the Zimbabwe Agenda for Sustainable Socioeconomic Transformation (2013–2018), the Transitional Stabilization Programme (2018–2020), the current National Development Strategy 1 (2021–2025) and the country's Vision 2030. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been mainstreamed throughout the Vision 2030 to facilitate joint implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Key messages emanating from Zimbabwe's 2021 voluntary national review are as follows:

1. Building on the Sustainable Development Goal implementation and coordination framework presented in the voluntary national review of 2017, the Government is further strengthening the institutional framework by establishing a dedicated secretariat to coordinate the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Goals. Further improvements in the institutional architecture include the alignment of the National Development Strategy 1 with the Goals, as well as coordination and information-sharing within the National Development Strategy 1 and Goal implementation clusters. The monitoring and evaluation of the National Development Strategy 1 will be carried out through an e-enabled whole-of-government performance management system;

2. The Government recognizes that development will only be sustainable if it is inclusive, and it has embedded the principle of leaving no one behind in all its development policy frameworks. The Government commits to further institutionalizing the whole-of-government and whole-of-society approaches in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The pursuit of an inclusive development strategy, building climate resilience, natural resources management, value addition and beneficiation, sustaining macroeconomic stability, investment promotion and infrastructure development are key enablers of the attainment of the country's Vision 2030 and the Goals. Improving infrastructure and services is key to the achievement of the Goals. The priority infrastructure and

utility areas in the National Development Strategy 1 include energy, water and sanitation, housing, information and communications technology, and transport;

3. Enhancing domestic resource mobilization will be a key pillar in our funding mix to finance the National Development Strategy 1 and the Sustainable Development Goals, in addition to traditional sources of funding, such as loans, grants and foreign direct investment. In this regard, the Government is focusing on stopping illicit financial flows through a zero-tolerance policy on corruption, and building capacity in the relevant institutions, such as the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission and the Zimbabwe Revenue Authority. Enhancing the country's competitiveness and investment inflows, leveraging diaspora remittances and promoting public-private partnerships will be prioritized;

4. Progress has been recorded in reducing all forms of violence and related deaths. This has been achieved by conducting awareness-raising campaigns on exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against vulnerable groups; enhancing law-enforcement visibility in crime hotspots; and establishing crime prevention and peace committees. The alignment of laws with the Constitution, more inclusive access to justice and the creation of new laws that promote human rights have further embedded the rule of law. Improved coordination and collaboration with multiple stakeholders, justice sector members, civil society and the community have reduced fragmentation and parallel processes;

5. The country is promoting high agricultural production and productivity by improving land and water use and adopting climate-smart agricultural innovations, such as *pfumvudza/intwasa* (climate proofing agriculture), supported by the Government and the private sector. Improved agricultural production and productivity are addressing Goals 1, 2, 5 and 8 by increasing agricultural output, incomes, the participation of women and throughput from agriculture to agroprocessing industries. The Presidential Input Scheme is also addressing the needs of underresourced marginalized groups and communities;

6. Progress has been made towards universal health coverage through sustained investment in public health infrastructure, equipment, health staff training, procurement and the distribution of medicines and sundries, as well as the development and review of health-related legal and policy frameworks. This resulted in a reduced maternal mortality ratio, reduced under-5 mortality and a general decline in HIV prevalence. Increased access to education has been achieved through inclusive programmes, infrastructure, human capital development and innovation. Gender awareness has been mainstreamed in most of the country's legislative frameworks, policies and empowerment programmes, which has resulted in the increased participation of women in politics and decision-making and their greater access to productive and financial resources;

7. The Government of Zimbabwe is committed to supporting full and productive employment and decent work and addressing informality, the casualization of labour and the erosion of the value of workers' salaries and wages. The engagement and re-engagement drive in support of a shift from traditional to economic diplomacy will improve the country's image, strengthen relations with the international community and boost trade and investment as we march towards the Vision 2030.