



Statement of Archbishop Bernardito Auza
Apostolic Nuncio, Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations

High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development
United Nations, Economic and Social Council
New York, 20 July 2016

Mr. President,

“The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” Pope Francis said last September 25 in the General Assembly Hall, minutes prior to the opening of the Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, “is an important sign of hope.”

The Agenda is a sign of hope because it moved us beyond words and produced shared commitments for a better future. Priorities were set. It brought together the human family in solidarity as countries assumed the obligation to eradicate poverty, protect our common home, and promote sustainable and integral human development.

This is the first High-level Political Forum (HLPF) since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, and Governments are now six months into the Agenda’s implementation. My delegation appreciates that the focus throughout these two weeks has been on effective implementation, on “leaving no one behind” and on “solidarity with the excluded, solidarity with the poor of tomorrow, and solidarity with future generations.” This is a critical time to lay out firmly these two principles that are fundamental to the implementation and the achievement of the Agenda itself.

It is equally important to underline that implementing the Agenda requires political leadership, financial commitments and resources, and the transfer of technology to as many countries and people as possible.

Yet, even if all of these requirements were met, there would still be something lacking, namely, the heartfelt compassion that leads to solidarity that is necessary not just to meet needs but assist fellow persons in need. As Pope Francis remarked to the General Assembly last September, “Above and

beyond our plans and programs, we are dealing with real men and women who live, struggle and suffer, and are often forced to live in great poverty, deprived of all rights.”

Mr. President,

The Holy See appreciates the annual HLPF, this global review, and regional and national reviews. The reviews provide an opportunity for countries to demonstrate the progress that has been made and the challenges that have been faced in implementation. They also allow stakeholders to share best practices, which can reinvigorate political will and motivate grassroots actors toward more effective implementation of the Agenda. The reviews will help to improve the understanding of the global situation – what has been achieved, how to build on achievements and consolidate best practices, and what to expect moving forward. They should also serve as a steady reminder that the Agenda’s success depends on the commitment of the entire international community working together to act effectively on this shared responsibility.

Toward this end, my delegation expresses appreciation for the voluntary national review presentations delivered by twenty-two countries during this HLPF session. These provided practical and fruitful discussions surrounding the importance of political leadership, effective institutions, public and private finance and investments, and technology transfer.

Finally, Mr. President, my delegation expects the HLPF to assist Governments and other stakeholders to ensure that every effort and resource is truly reaching those furthest behind first, and that “leaving no one behind” continues to be the fundamental guiding vision of our universal solidarity. This is the means by which the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will fulfil the hopes Pope Francis has placed in it, the international community has placed in it, and in a special way the poor and all those who have been left behind have placed in it.

Thank you, Mr. President.