

United Nations Summit for the Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda

25 September 2015

General Debate

Statement by H.E. Ms. Erna Solberg
Prime Minister of Norway

President, Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

We are meeting today at a time of great hope, but also grave crisis.

Hope, when we see the success of the Millennium Development Goals. One billion people have come out of extreme poverty. Maternal mortality rates have been halved. Millions of people have been saved by vaccine partnerships.

Hope, when we look to the historic ‘2030 Agenda’ we have agreed on today: To eradicate extreme poverty and hunger. To conserve oceans and ecosystems. To leave nobody behind. Hope, for the most vulnerable people. For the United Nations. And for our common future on this planet.

Yet, at the same time, a global humanitarian crisis is unfolding. Sixty million people are now refugees or displaced. They are fleeing conflict, poverty and poor governance. The war in

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Syria has forced 12 million people from their homes. Others are fleeing economic hardship and fragile states. We need to spread good governance and rule of law to the most vulnerable people and societies.

'Business as usual' will not lead to real sustainable development. Let us follow up the Secretary-General's call for human dignity.

First, by scaling up humanitarian assistance. To save lives and meet urgent needs, also in protracted crises. This is an investment in resilience, and in human development. The UN appeals for the Syrian crisis are severely underfunded. We have to do more. This is why we have offered to host an international donor conference for Syria. And we have doubled our humanitarian aid to the Syrian crisis.

We call on all nations to be generous, so that we prevent a 'lost generation'.

Second, by investing in education and health. Almost sixty million children are still not in primary school. Another sixty million do not attend secondary school.

Gender equality and women's rights must be a top priority for all. When girls attend secondary school, this brings huge health benefits, not just for the girls themselves, but for their children, families and local communities. This is why Norway will double its assistance to education.

Globally, millions of children need good nutrition and education. We will build on the successful partnerships in global health. GAVI and the Global Fund are excellent examples. Education and health are the keys to inclusive growth and job creation.

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Third, by investing in stability and resilience in fragile societies. Without peace and stability, there can be no sustainable development. Goal 16 on stable institutions, rights and freedoms, the rule of law and justice is an important innovation in the 2030 Agenda. These are all key elements of good economic and democratic governance.

We must also step up efforts to find political solutions to conflicts. Norway will continue our support for peace and reconciliation. In the Middle East, Colombia, South-East Asia, and Africa.

Fourth, we must protect ecosystems and prevent climate change. Through close regional cooperation, we have secured sustainable management of common fish stocks in the North. Now, we support developing countries in the important mapping of their marine resources.

And we will continue to work with Brazil, Indonesia, Liberia, Colombia and Peru to protect forests and biodiversity.

Our goals are universal. They apply to all countries and all people. More than ever, the responsibility rests with all governments. To promote business investments and job creation. To create greener, more inclusive economic growth. Official development assistance remains important. Norway will continue to give one per cent of Gross National Income as development assistance.

But poverty reduction depends primarily on domestic resources and economic growth – in partnership with the private sector. We cannot solve this problem without achieving a more equal distribution of wealth. National governments must take ownership. We will use aid as a catalyst, to raise revenues and fight poverty. Norway will do its utmost, both at home and abroad.

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We can end extreme poverty – *and* save the planet. If we work together, in partnerships and through multilateral cooperation.

Let us build on the positive momentum from this Summit as we prepare for the Paris Conference.

Thank you.