

Islamic Republic of I R A N

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Statement by

H.E. Dr. Hassan Rouhani
President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

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In the name of God, the most compassionate, the most merciful

Mr. Chair

At the outset, I must express regret over the heart-rending incident that occurred in Mecca on Wednesday for thousands of Muslims including Iranians. I express my deep condolences to the many families who are mourning the loss of their loved ones in this tragic event, and emphasize the need for swift attention to the injured as well as investigating the causes of this incident and other similar incidents in this year's Hajj.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

Environmental problems have taught us humans living on planet earth that we are all in the same boat. What others do also impacts our destiny. We cannot be assured of our own peace and security, whilst ignoring how others are living. Without extensive cooperation at the national, regional and international levels, achieving the 'Sustainable Development Goals' will be very difficult. Such cooperation should be mindful of our common destiny and joint commitment towards important human responsibilities.

A common destiny requires a common goal. But this doesn't mean that the responsibilities of all are the same. It would be impossible to achieve the post-2015 sustainable development goals without considering the responsibilities of states and their share in creating the current environmental status quo and would result in fruitless argument.

Distinguished participants

As I said in the summit meeting of climate change, the West Asia region is not only facing hotter climate conditions and challenges of continued extensive drought. But, it is also grappling with the scourge of terrorism and extremist violence. In other words, violence against man and nature are the dual calamities befallen the West Asia region.

Two years ago when I spoke of WAVE (World Against Violence and Extremism), I had both of these disasters and their mutual impact in mind. Terrorists tend to grow and thrive in lands that are deprived and damaged by environmental disasters and easily pour across borders like haze. Terrorist groups crush the sustainable development goals. And the continuation of this situation results in further poverty and environmental destruction. Not only have terrorism and violence damaged the environment, but also they have taken sustainable development out of the agenda of countries, forcing them to expend their national resources on fighting against insecurity.

Ladies and Gentlemen

The Islamic Republic of Iran has already contributed seriously and deeply to the realization of the millennium development goals. My country has had an active participation in drafting the post-2015 development agenda and will continue its constructive cooperation to fulfill its commitments at the national, regional and international levels. As an environmentally friendly government, we have set our policies based on a balanced approach between economic development and environmental protection.

Increasing environmental awareness across the board, introducing environmental education in school curriculums, revamping dam-building policies, reviving endangered wetlands and exerting round the clock efforts to preserve endangered lakes are all examples of only a small part of our commitment towards the sustainable development goals.

The process of the past two years and the ensuing nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1 has created suitable conditions for regional and international cooperation including in the field of environmental preservation. We are eager to cooperate with our neighbors to promote regional sustainable development through active environmental diplomacy, constructive relations with other countries, transfer of technology and knowhow, and participation in joint scientific activities, in order to fulfill our share in building a more sustainable world immune from environmental threats.

I thank you for your attention.