



The Syrian Arab Republic Permanent Mission to the United Nations

PM/2019/274

**Excellency Ms. Mona Guul,
Permanent Representative of Norway to the United Nations
President of the Economic and Social Council**

Excellency,

upon instructions from the Government of my country the Syrian Arab Republic, allow me at the outset to express my country's appreciation for the continues efforts of the Presidency of the Economic and Social Council in organizing the High-level Political Forum for Sustainable Development as the most important platform for following up and reviewing the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals to which Member States have committed in Agenda 2030.

Kindly find enclosed a copy of the "First National Report on Sustainable Development" prepared by the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic, and launched on 14/2/2019 in the presence of representatives of all international and UN organizations and programs working in the Syrian Arab Republic.

In the same context, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to present the "Voluntary National Review" of the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, for the first time, at HLPF under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council to be held in July 2020.

As you may know, the Syrian Arab Republic is facing major challenges and obstacles in its pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals on the one hand, and in strengthening its efforts to launch the process of reconstruction and recovery on the other hand, mainly because of the terrorist war that Syria has been undergoing since 2011. Although the security situation in most areas of the country has recently improved significantly, the greatest challenge facing Syrian national institutions' efforts is to enable Syrian citizens, in particular the displaced and forcibly displaced people, to return to their homes and cities and live their lives normally. It is crucial to take into consideration that the Syrian Arab Republic was

normally. It is crucial to take into consideration that the Syrian Arab Republic was just around the corner from achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) prior to this terrorist war

Needless to say, that the Syrian Arab Republic suffers from special and exceptional situations and challenges that require special attention from the United Nations, particularly the development system. It is important to emphasize that these special and exceptional situations and challenges are not only resulted by the ongoing terrorist war, depleting the bulk of the resources and capabilities of the Syrian State to ensure stability, security and humanitarian relief needs, in cooperation with the United Nations and humanitarian partners.

These special and exceptional situations and challenges are also linked to the freezing of development programs and projects in Syria since 2011, and the obstruction of their re-launch today as a result of political conditions, financial pressures and constraints imposed by the governments of some donor countries in financing any programs and projects in the interest of reconstruction and rehabilitation of infrastructure and services in Syria.

These challenges are also linked to the imposition of unilateral coercive economic measures by the governments of some countries on the Syrian Arab Republic, which has hindered development work, and relaunching economic and industrial production and investment. Not to mention the serious repercussions of the continued Israeli occupation of the occupied Syrian Arab Golan, and the direct military aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic by the governments of some countries, notably Turkey, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other countries.

In conclusion, the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic emphasizes that it will continue the process of updating and developing the data contained in its first National Report on Sustainable Development. At the same time, the Syrian Government looks forward to a genuine effort and action by the United Nations development system to provide practical responses to these challenges, and to support the efforts of the Syrian Arab Republic in fulfilling its responsibilities towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda, which seeks to “leave no one behind”.

Finally, let us all take into account that a short time distance separates us from the deadline we collectively committed ourselves to, in order to achieve the sustainable development goals.

Bashar Ja'afari
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

