



**EIGHTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OPEN WORKING GROUP ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

3-7 February 2014

**“Conflict prevention, post-conflict peacebuilding and promotion of durable peace,
rule of law and governance”**

Key Notes on behalf of Bulgaria and Croatia

Statement by Vesna Batistić Kos, Assistant Minister for Multilateral and Global Issues

Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia

Mr. Co-Chair,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of Bulgaria and Croatia.

Today, we are addressing one of the most important aspects of sustainable development agenda. The Future We Want Outcome Document, may have mentioned the word “peace” only once, but we can surely agree, that without sustainable peace there cannot be any meaningful sustainable development. Building peace and effective, open and accountable institutions for all is recognized in the Report of the High-Level Panel as one of the main drivers of development. Millennium Development Goals didn’t give proper attention to the said issues, and now, we have an opportunity to address these shortcomings while setting the new development framework.

The consequences of the past conflicts still linger on and continue to hinder progress in many different aspects. These obstacles often have potentials and tendencies to spill over the borders and cause broader instabilities.

There are unfortunately many examples of this all over the world. In recent past, the conflicts have been a true impediment for the development of my own region of Southeast Europe. That has additionally challenged the political, social and economic transition processes that the region was going through at the same time.

Nowadays there is a broad understanding that, for the region of Southeast Europe to overcome such hurdles, the crucial opportunity lied in the European integration process, as it has included systematic and effective country reforms. That requires a genuine political will and a true commitment to reform, including the transparency and accountability of the leading political elites and the functioning of the state institutions. The critical basis but at the same time the key requirement for the success remains in the sense of a national ownership throughout the whole reform processes.

Another benefit of the regional integration policy is also the fact that it helps alleviate open issues among neighbours. Embracing the joint values and normative framework, forging common goals and policies, integrating societies and cultures – all this most definitely improves governance and the rule of law, promotes durable peace, helps post-conflict peacebuilding and prevents conflicts from occurring.

Mr Co-Chair,

Resolving conflicts and building peace play a substantial part of the UN work, and significant effort is invested in making sure that a parallel focus on political, security and developmental is given. We should also take the opportunity to look into the current state of play regarding institutions, mechanisms and tools that are already at our disposal.

There is an evident and ever growing need for further and greater synergy between all relevant UN bodies, larger roles of certain bodies (e.g. Peacebuilding Commission), more frequent and effective use of alternative dispute resolution tools, greater respect for and adherence to the mechanisms, instruments and institutions of international justice that need to be up-to-date and ready to meet new challenges.

Mr Co-Chair,

One of the most forward-looking mechanisms for sustainable development rest in comprehensive public education systems. Those should be universally applied, since only knowledge-based and educated society can become economically developed, responsible, independent and self-sustainable, socially advanced, less prone to corruption and tolerant.

In order to secure development process in fragile countries, people's core demands for security and justice must be ensured. Additionally, in order to fully enjoy all the benefits of modern international development mechanisms, every citizen has the right to transparency, non-discrimination, fairness and equality in their economic and social interactions, as well as before the law.

Efficient public institutions guaranteeing and safeguarding the rule of law and universal access to justice to all citizens should be provided by national governments. In order to secure that all these development drivers are available to citizens around the world, they should be placed at the very top of the Post-2015 agenda. Without peace and the rule of law we cannot expect any sustainable development nor prosperity and progress.

Therefore, Croatia and Bulgaria support the recommendations of the High-level panel with regards to those issues.

In conclusion, Mr Co-Chair,

Allow me to express our appreciation to both of you for your important work, guidance and support throughout the process. We are looking forward to the outcome of this first phase of the Open Working Group's work.

Thank you for your attention.