

HLPF National Statement

Thank you, Mr. President

The UAE aligns itself with the statement of the G77 and China, and we would like to express our gratitude to the ECOSOC President and the organizers for convening us this month. We also thank the countries that have stepped forward for the first-ever voluntary reviews. As both a developing country and a donor, we value this opportunity for exchange and reflection.

Our aspiration for the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development is that it remains an **objective, credible, and annual** assessment of implementation of Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals. We would like to conclude each year with a sense of common mission and clear next steps, based on the strength of evidence we hear during the forum.

In this spirit, we would like to **highlight four areas** from our own experience that we think could form part of our collective action between now and the next High Level Political Forum.

First, we need a **stronger focus on capacity-building** for mobilization of private sector resources. We all agree that public finance alone cannot get us across the line in 2030. Therefore, in addition to ongoing work on the enabling environment and good governance, we would like to see the UN and the multilateral development banks spearhead enhanced capacity-building efforts for countries on

- project origination,
- project management, and
- de-risking instruments.

This capacity-building should not be prescriptive, because every country will have different circumstances, but we should aim **at scale** to equip Member States with the ability to build a pipeline of projects and see them through with financing.

In addition, potential complementarities between public and private sector initiatives, including corporate social responsibility programmes, should be harnessed to form effective, impactful partnerships that facilitate progress towards SDG targets.

Second, we need to get smarter about **ODA as a scarce, essential resource**. We know that some critical investments will only proceed with ODA, and we also see many sectors that are approaching the tipping point on commercial viability. **But they need a push from concessional finance to get there**. For instance, data from the International Renewable Energy Agency - headquartered in Abu Dhabi - shows that renewable energy is resoundingly the cheapest way to achieve universal energy access.

Yet deployment lags behind the business case in most markets due to experience gaps. **Those gaps could be overcome faster by ODA**. We would therefore welcome a conversation by all stakeholders about the prioritization and the best use of ODA, given the commercial potential of different sectors.

Third, we have seen repeatedly that **investments in education and health** for women and children in humanitarian situations disproportionately **prevent** development losses and **enable post-crisis gains**. We would therefore like to see the UN community **offer a minimum package of education and health services for women and children** in emergency responses, as well as a gender and age-sensitive focus on the resilience of education and health systems.

Initiatives like **Every Woman Every Child Everywhere** and **Education Cannot Wait** are promising examples of this dual humanitarian-development approach, and we would hope to see their model front and center at next year's HLPF.

Fourth, we must not flag in our **efforts on gender equality and women's empowerment**. It is not coincidental that the UAE's rapid economic growth has coincided with laws on equal pay for equal work, board quotas for female participation, and education initiatives that now see more women graduating from university than men. I am pleased to note that on 15 July, the UAE signed an agreement for a **UN Women Liaison Office** for Gulf Countries in Abu Dhabi. Its goal is to drive the policy and social change that will bring women's potential to bear on Agenda 2030.

Across the Agenda, I hope too that in coming years we will be able to share perspectives from innovation in our domestic implementation efforts.

In February, we retooled our government for the broader understanding of sustainable development, establishing **new ministerial posts**,

- from Tolerance
- to Happiness
- to Youth affairs – the latter led by a 22-year old woman.

We are furthermore currently integrating the SDG indicators into our national development strategy and monitoring and reporting framework, Vision 2021.

We hope to revisit all these points, and many more, at the UN's **Global South-South Development Expo this October**, which we are honored to host in Dubai. We also look forward to again welcoming the UN community to Dubai in February 2017 for the **World Government Summit**, the pioneering international event on public services, which this year instituted an anchor for the Agenda 2030 review that has fed into our HLPF discussions.

Through these global platforms and upcoming UN events like Habitat III, we see a unique opportunity **to articulate and drive action** from here to the 2017 HLPF and – most importantly – **to keep asking where we can all do better**.

We remain committed – domestically and as a donor – to achieving this historic sustainable development agenda.

Thank you again.