

## **Malta's Main Messages in preparation of the Voluntary National Review**

As a small island state with limited natural resources, an ever-growing economy and high population density, the concept of sustainable development is at the heart of Malta's economic, social and environmental development. In fact, back in 2012, the Maltese Government adopted the Sustainable Development Act, resulting in a legislative framework which mandated Government to mainstream sustainable development in its policies.

Three years later, the global community came together and adopted one of the most ambitious Agendas the United Nations has ever agreed upon; that of committing each and every State to implement a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) so that by 2030, the world will reach a state of prosperity, protection, and dignity, for both citizens and planet. It is a promise the global community has made to leave no one behind.

Malta recognises the 2030 Agenda as the most comprehensive global development plan thus far and its value lies in its universal and transformative nature. The 17 SDGs and accompanying targets offer a blueprint for a better future; preserving what we have today whilst working towards a better tomorrow. Malta has embraced the 2030 Agenda and Malta's VNR is an opportunity for Malta to share its endeavours with the international community in terms of SDG implementation.

Malta's VNR covers all 17 SDGs, with some being reviewed in more detail than others, depending on their relevance for Malta and data/input available. The VNR follows a simple process, starting by an overview of Malta's country profile in order to place the SDGs in a specific country-context. The VNR provides an overview of Malta's policies in the field of sustainable development. A supplementary section provides an introduction to the Government's ongoing plans to launch *Vision 2050*. The *Vision 2050*, still in draft form at the time of writing, will offer guidelines towards long-term sustainable development in Malta, whilst integrating the 2030 Agenda by offering a framework for the mainstreaming of sustainable development across all levels of Government. Once adopted, *Vision 2050* will offer long-term guidelines towards more efficient resource utilisation and the long-term management of and investment in human, social and material resources, which is particularly relevant for Malta's specific country context.

The VNR provides information on ways through which Malta is increasing SDG ownership through a whole-of-government approach, whilst also sharing information on the methodology followed to conduct the review. Malta's VNR also includes information on its new Official Development Assistance (ODA) Implementation Plan and on the newly set up Malta Development Bank.

The VNR provides information on policies and programmes in place that contribute to sustainable development in general, and to the implementation of the 17 SDGs in particular, informing on measures taking place across the Maltese islands. The VNR also contains input from Malta's National Platform of Maltese Non-Government Development Organisations – SKOP, in terms of work being undertaken by the platform to further awareness and establish a

channel of communication among local Development NGOs and the public sector, on development-related issues.

Whilst this is the first VNR to be presented by Malta at the High-Level Political Forum, the preparation of the review has been a useful exercise in engaging all stakeholders in a comprehensive process of consultation, whilst also raising further awareness of the need to break silos and harmonise efforts towards long-term sustainable development.

Malta acknowledges that reaching the goals by 2030 is a challenge for all, and the journey is long and requires the collective efforts of all stakeholders within the international community. Malta remains committed to continue on this journey of sustainability and stands ready to work in partnership with other States and stakeholders in this regard.