The SDG Challenge as of Mid-2017

Prof. Jeffrey D. Sachs
High-Level Political Forum

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The World Economy is now $127 Trillion (IMF), Enough to End Poverty, Invest in Low-Carbon Energy, Stop Killer Diseases, and Build a 21st-Century Infrastructure.

2,043 Billionaires have $7.7 Trillion of Net Worth (Forbes).

Violence and Conflict cost an Estimated $13.6 Trillion per Year (World Peace Index)

Tax Havens have > $20 Trillion in Deposits (Tax Justice Network)
Five Great SDG Challenges

Quality Health (SDG 3) and Education (SDG 4)

Sustainable and Resilient Land Use (SDG 2, 6, 11, 12, 14, 15)

Decent Jobs and Infrastructure (SDG 1, 8, 9)

Decarbonization of Energy System (SDG 7, 13)

Good Governance (SDG 5, 10, 16, 17)
The Greatest Opportunities

Deployment of Information Technologies

Building Modern Infrastructure
(One Belt, One Road; Africa Mega-Infrastructure)

Deploying Massive Renewable and Hydroelectric Energy Scale-Up

Mobilizing Global Knowledge Pool (universities, businesses)
The Biggest Obstacles

Coal, Oil and Gas Lobby (resisting decarbonization)

The Super-Rich (resisting taxation and accountability)

Belligerent leaders in ongoing conflicts

Lack of Bold Strategies

Insufficient Financing
The Coal, Oil, and Gas Lobby in the United States, Led by Koch Industries, spent more than $100 Million in the 2016 Election (OpenSecrets.Org) to elect the Republican Congressional majority, in part to provoke the US withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement. This the most consequential act of political corruption worldwide, though legal under US law.
Strategic Next Steps

Global Compliance by the Oil and Gas Industry
ESG/PRI Investing by Asset Managers
SDG Fund for Low-Income Country Health and Education
Debt-for-SDG Swaps by Multilateral Institutions
Tax on Offshore Tax-Haven Accounts
UN Security Council Enhanced Responsibility for SDGs
Polluter-Pays Funding for Losses and Damages
Technology Roadmaps for SDGs (academia, business)