

**2017 HLPF
General Debate**

SLOVENIA



Intervention by H. E. Ms Alenka Smerkolj,
Minister for Development, Strategic Projects and Cohesion

New York, 17 July 2017

Mr President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

More than ever before our world and humanity is being torn between the gravity of man-created problems and natural catastrophes on one hand and the inability to overcome those challenges on the other. In this context, the 2030 Agenda is a sign of hope for the world as it stands at a crossroads. Slovenia is determined to grasp this opportunity and chose to continue the path towards sustainable development, at home as well as abroad through international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

In our contribution to global poverty eradication and all-embracing development, Slovenia places women and children, stable societies and environment first. To be successful, we will need to work together, learn from each other and build strong partnerships among all of us – governments, citizens, private companies, civil society, parliamentarians, local authorities, academia, international and regional organizations and youth.

Slovenia is strongly committed to implementing the Agenda 2030. For us sustainability has long been both the state of mind and a way of life. According to the latest SDG Index, Slovenia ranks among the top 10 countries regarding the performance in achieving the 2030 Agenda. We will continue our path of sustainable, inclusive and responsible development. At the same time: we will continue to support and evolve innovative approaches, programs and ideas that will further build Slovenia as a green reference country in a digital Europe. We want to build a responsible and innovative business sector, strong culture of collaboration and with the use of modern digital technologies improve the quality of life of all.

In this regard, we are developing a strong model of cooperation among the business sector, science and the government to introduce the modern digital solutions in everyday life that will ease people's lives, make public services even more equally accessible and will be environmentally friendly. We believe that circular economy, social innovation, new concepts of green mobility and sharing economy that will all contribute to changing the consumption and production patterns – can help to tackle many of our challenges – from high youth unemployment, and high carbon footprint to issues stemming from aging and rapidly growing population.

Slovenian companies with support of the government recently launched project EDISON (**E**co **D**iving **I**nnovative **S**olutions and **N**etworking). It aims to bring the **electricity powered mobility** closer to the mass users in a user friendly and competitive way. This initiative answers to some key mega trends, which will drive the mobility in the next decades. It will contribute to better and more affordable living with an advanced infrastructural and digital system in a wider South-East Europe. Slovenia has a strong potential to become the reference laboratory of green mobility and help the world to develop new technologies that will tackle the challenges of carbon emissions, energy consumption, resilient and modern infrastructure, automotive driving, driving security and accessibility of green vehicles.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Humankind is faced with a difficult dilemma. It is not clear whether our knowledge, discoveries and technological innovations are going to help us overcome our biggest challenges or will create an equal amount of new struggles. The speed of technological changes has well surpassed our ability to adapt. Can we learn to learn faster and how can we govern smarter? These are the question on the table today. And they might be wrong questions, because it is not **if we can**, but rather **how** can we learn faster and govern smarter. The 2030 Agenda is already a driver of transformation of the world towards more sustainable, fair, peaceful, green and prosper place.

This year's theme of the High Level Political Forum reminds us that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development as well as a precondition for prosperity of every individual, society, country and the world. Let us therefore BE BOLD and COURAGEOUS and let's begin transforming the world TOGETHER now.

Thank you.