



**Islamic Republic of Afghanistan  
Ministry of Economy**

**Statement By**

**H.E. Abdul Sattar Murad  
Minister of Economy**

On the occasion of the General Debate during the High Level Political  
Forum

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**Your Excellency, Nabeel Munir, Vice President of the Economic and Social Council,  
Excellency Ministers, Ambassadors,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentleman,**

Please allow me to begin by thanking the Economic and Social Council for convening the High Level Political Forum to review the progress we are collectively making towards realizing our *human rights* through sustainable development goals.

My delegation wishes to align itself with the statement delivered by Ecuador on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and by Bangladesh on behalf of the Least Developed Countries. I would now like to deliver some remarks in my national capacity.

As mentioned by a human rights expert, with regards to SDGs "the notion of their accountability to the people alone provides home for all areas of human rights."

As the SDGs are meant to achieve what the MDGs left behind and more, I would like to momentarily reflect on the latter.

Afghanistan adopted the Millennium Development Goals almost 5 years after the Millennium Declaration was issued. It was a remarkable event as Afghanistan, after suffering from decades of conflict, embarked on a socio-economic development path for its citizens.

The results are striking. In 2002, fewer than 900,000 students were at school with no girls among them. Today, that number is 9 million, with girls making 40% of the students.

Access to health services within two hours distance has risen from 9% to about 87%. Life expectancy at birth has gone up from 42 years to 64 years.

The infant mortality ratio has declined from 66 in 2005 to 45 deaths per 1,000 live births today.

Women are present at every echelon of our administration, parliament, civil society, private sector, and media. These are shared achievements between Afghanistan and the international community bound together by a spirit of genuine and formidable partnership.

**Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

Our Development Partners have provided significant support to our people in the past 15 years. The SDGs require new ways of working together, building partnerships, and



looking for innovative financing beyond the traditional aid system. Reviewing our Aid Management Policy will make aid delivery more effective by incorporating the key elements of the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States adopted by G7+. Despite our repeated calls, peace still evades us; the stunning improvements in health, education, and gender equality have come with a heavy price. While our brave security forces, on daily basis, are fighting extremism and those who attempt to deny our people dignity and rights, we are also committed to keeping all viable doors open to dialogue.

**Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,**

The nationalization process of the SDGs started with the formation of a National Coordination Committee consisting of ministers and deputy ministers of line ministries with the Council of Ministers overseeing and monitoring it.

The process went through a series of rigorous national consultations, conferences, seminars, and strategic planning workshops with various government and non-government stakeholders.

We have incorporated the SDGs national targets and indicators into our National Peace and Development Framework, including our National Priority Programs through the eight budgetary sectors of:

1. Security
2. Education
3. Health
4. Governance
5. Infrastructure
6. Social Protection
7. Agriculture and Rural Development, and
8. Economy

All targets, indicators, and baselines have been set and accustomed to Afghanistan's realities.

At the sub-national level, we are determined to develop a human-rights based implementation plan in order to ensure that everyone, including vulnerable and marginalized groups are placed at the core of our government efforts.

To this effect, a SDGs Executive Committee has been recently established by the Chief Executive of Afghanistan to support and strengthen the Ministry of Economy as the lead government institution with cross sectoral coordination, localization, and alignment.

Our people are resilient and we in the government are committed to implementing the SDGs as their basic human rights by making the SDGs a part of the national discourse.

Thank you Mr. President.