



STATEMENT
by Ms. Olha Stefanishyna
Deputy Prime Minister for European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of
Ukraine
at the UN High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

**Your Excellency, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council,
Distinguished representatives,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,**

In 2015, when the Sustainable Development Goals replaced the Millennium Development Goals, and at the same time Ukraine experienced a peak of Russian aggression on its territory, which was followed by the temporary occupation of the part of Ukrainian territory and deep economic crisis, caused by the conflict. Despite this, we always care about a better future of our citizens.

We realise that this achievement is possible only by ensuring sustainable development of the whole country. In this regard, I would like to underline that sustainable development is possible only with a strict adherence to the norms and principles of international law, including humanitarian law, which is equal for all parties. Therefore, my delegation expresses its regret regarding the Voluntary National Review presented by Russian Federation. It contains the reference and is based upon the data regarding temporarily occupied Crimea of Ukraine. I believe that this Forum and its outcomes should be guided strictly by its Charter and the relevant decisions of the General Assembly, which guarantee territorial integrity and sovereignty of Member States.

Your Excellency,

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, Ukraine has been fully committed to achieving of all its Goals. This is also indicated by the path of change that Ukraine has undergone over the past six years, by implementing many of the structural reforms in all spheres of public life. It is with pleasure that I

would like to highlight major findings of the Voluntary National Review regarding Ukraine's progress in a 15 out of 17 SDGs. The Government of Ukraine understands that values of the principle of "leave no one behind" and recognizes the 2030 Agenda as a broad framework to achieve our ambitious goal to transform Ukraine into a strong and competitive European democracy. With this in view we believe that the achievement of SDGs will accelerate our movement to the European integration. The leadership of the EU in the process of SDGs implementation will greatly enhance our capability in this direction.

And there are indeed some good, solid examples of Ukraine's approach to SDGs implementation on the political level. In 2019, the President of Ukraine issued a Decree setting SDGs as a benchmark for strategic documents of our country, and in June 2020, the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine adopted its Programme, putting SDGs at the core of its activities.

The next milestone on our path – the decision to share with everyone the Voluntary National Review. It is an honour for me to present for the first time the Voluntary National Review on Sustainable Development Goals implementation in Ukraine. We look forward to a frank dialogue on what was achieved by the country and where we stand right now. We plan also to integrate SDGs achievement into budget and strategic planning processes in our country. I am sure that it will facilitate the effective usage of limited resources our country disposes right now and will speed up the process towards European family. As we are in the decade of action announced by Secretary General, Ukraine also wants to join the global efforts and develop STI roadmap for SDGs, based on the good experience of smart specialization process, also supported by sustainable and industrial policies, and supported by the joint resource centre of the EU Commission and UNIDO.

However, SDGs cannot be achieved by the Government alone. It requires a "whole of society approach" which has been also proven by Ukrainian example. It means that the establishment of a true partnership between government, business, civil society, and the expert community is crucial. One of the challenges we also face in see in the coming years will be expanding the scope of socially responsible businesses in Ukraine.

Summing up, I would like to stress that for Ukraine the SDG-oriented policy and financing have a very concrete and practical meaning, which is already proven by concrete examples. Raising people's living standards up to the average European level is crucial for us. This is what the well-being both country as a whole and every individual depends on.