

**Statement of H.E. Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy,
Emanuela Del Re**

Review of SDG implementation and interrelations among goals

Discussion on SDG 16 – Peace, justice and strong institutions

(Friday, 12 July 2019, 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM, Conference Room 4)

- Dear Moderator, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,
- I am particularly pleased to address the review of SDG 16 here at the HLPF and to report on the outcomes of the SDG 16 preparatory Conference, which Italy hosted last May in Rome. The Conference was organized in partnership with DESA and the International Development Law Organization (IDLO), a key partner in the field of the rule of law which we proudly host in our capital, Rome.
- Italy, as a strong advocate of SDG 16, has been particularly keen to host the Preparatory Meeting. Since the early negotiations of the 2030 Agenda, we have been committed to support the need to bridge peace and development through the pillars of justice, good governance, respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights and the rule of law.
- We live in a world where too many people's lives are still affected by violence, conflict, insecurity, injustice, and exclusion, especially in politically instable, conflict-affected or particularly fragile countries. Against this background, renewed efforts are essential to move towards the achievement of SDG16 by 2030.
- The Rome Conference has been particularly effective in fostering an honest, inclusive and deep discussion on the state of implementation of SDG 16, in preparation of the review at the HLPF. I would really encourage everyone to read the collection of key messages and recommendations that resulted from the very broad range of multi-stakeholders' participation that has not been confined to the margins of an intergovernmental meeting.
- As highlighted in the latest Secretary General's Report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, progress in ending violence, promoting the rule of law, strengthening institutions and increasing access to justice is uneven and continue to deprive millions of security, rights and opportunities. Structural challenges undermine the delivery of public services and broader economic development while attacks on civil society are also holding back development progress.
- I would now like to propose some of the key findings of the Conference, which I fully subscribe.
- One the of the main messages resulting from the Rome Conference is that SDG 16 is not just a goal in itself, but it represents a necessary enabler towards the implementation of the whole 2030 Agenda, in line with the wider "SDG16+" approach. Peaceful societies, good governance and justice are already relevant goals in themselves, but they also represent catalysts for

achieving many other targets: they are the basis for other SDGs and, at the same time, they are fed by progress on the whole Agenda. This is why SDG 16 is pivotal to advancing peace and sustainable development as mutually reinforcing processes.

- In order to achieve SDG 16 and to foster the 2030 Agenda implementation, we need to break the vicious cycle between insecurity, injustice and inequality. To this end, it is necessary to increase the quality and consistency of our policies and programs to build and sustain peace, as well as to tackle the root cause of fragility, remove the obstacles to development and unlock the potential of each society.
- A second concrete recommendation is to establish mechanisms for cross-sectoral coordination and addressing the interdependence between SDG 16+ components, creating opportunities for integrated outcomes promoting peace, justice and inclusion, from the grassroots initiatives which help marginalized women to access justice to increasing capacities of local and national institutions to deliver quality public services.
- We need to ensure that peace-building and sustainable development programs are aligned, interrelated and integrated, starting especially from the most vulnerable and fragile societies and for the most vulnerable and fragile people, therefore really leaving no one behind. Only in this way, we will be able to unlock the development dividend and strengthen the peace-development nexus.
- In order to do so, SDG 16 is specifically fundamental to achieve three essential elements for peaceful and prosperous societies: 1. access to justice and effective rule of law; 2. Transparent, representative and effective institutions; 3. Full respect of fundamental freedoms and human rights.
- These three elements together will foster social cohesion and revamp trust between people and institutions and the social contract at the heart of our societies.
- In order to be successful, we need to acknowledge that SDG 16+ requires a whole of government and a whole of society approach, including the key role of independent authorities, the judiciary and legislative powers.
- Such comprehensive approach demands appropriate resources invested in capacity building at national and sub-national level, aligned with the whole 2030 Agenda targets.
- As for the most fragile and conflict affected countries, we need to increase investments in inclusive peace, dialogue and reconciliation as a foundation for achieving sustainable development. In particular, we need to better promote, acknowledge and therefore support the role of women and youth as crucial peace-builders, especially at local and regional level.
- On this key matter, I wish to highlight the 'inclusive' element of the Rome Conference. In designing the Conference and its dynamics, we felt it was crucial to address the issue of the shrinking civic space and moving beyond rhetoric and tokenistic approaches when it comes to civil society and youth engagement.

- Together with IDLO and DESA, in imagining this dedicated reflection on policy and practice review, we ensured a meaningful and peer representation to civil society and youth representatives in all segments of the Conference, recognizing their critical role in promoting, implementing and monitoring SDG 16 in their own communities. In full compliance with SDG 16, we ensured that all actors had a safe, legitimate and meaningful space to express their views and their qualified opinions. As part of the outcomes of the Conference, a Rome Civil Society Declaration and a Rome Youth Call to Action on SDG 16 were also produced and presented to the Assembly.
- I am glad to see among us today Charles, from Jamaica, who was one of 16 young leaders part of the Italy-UNDP '16x16 Initiative', through which we had the chance to engage with committed young leaders showing their daily work and struggles in favor of peace, justice and transparent institutions.
- Dear friends, allow me to conclude in saying that I believe that today's Thematic Review should send a strong message to increase, intensify and elevate our actions towards a full SDG 16 implementation. It is critical that we re-commit to our common goals and I am of the opinion that the SDG Summit in September should have a clear focus on this matter.
- Thank you.