

AUSTRIA



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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM 2021

Statement by the Republic of Austria

Delivered by

**Federal Minister for the EU and Constitution
at the Federal Chancellery of Austria**

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Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

COVID 19 has plainly shown the importance of resilience and sustainability. The 2030 Agenda and SDGs, as agreed upon all Member States of the United Nations, form an important long-term framework for recovery strategies. The current challenges make it no longer a choice, but a necessity to accelerate innovative and decisive joint actions.

Multilateralism, including EU efforts, is the necessary course of action. This pandemic highlights that we are all "in the same boat". This is the reason why we have to bear in mind that the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals have no borders by principle. They are a compass for decision-making and set out the issues that are viable for the future of our societies and the planet. At the same time, they contain a very strong potential for increased competitiveness and innovation.

Austria's commitment to the SDGs at all levels demonstrates that this agenda is of great importance to us:

- Austria is very honoured that Chancellor Sebastian Kurz has been invited to open this year's Ministerial Segment of the HLPF.
- I have the pleasure to transmit this national statement for the general debate on behalf of Austria for the second time in a row.
- Moreover, Austria was honoured to serve as co-facilitator of the recent ECOSOC/High-level Political Forum Review process. In this regard, I would like to express my gratitude to the trust that the international community of states has placed in Austria.
- While major challenges in achieving several SDGs remain, indicators and trends show that our implementation efforts start to bear fruit.

Together with other ministers of the Austrian government and some of the stakeholders that were involved in the preparation of the report, I had the honour to present Austria's first Voluntary National Review in the course of last year's High-level Political Forum.

Since then, a lot has happened in Austria with regard to the 2030 Agenda. The report was the impetus for intensified further work.

We had addressed many challenges and I am pleased to say that quite a number of structural and procedural measures that aim at improving Austria's coherent implementation for the 2030 Agenda have substantially progressed.

Ladies and Gentlemen: global action to contain the crisis and a ground-breaking advance in science are essential. The challenge now is to take action for a sustainable and resilient recovery and to build forward better!

Each of the 17 SDGs is equally important and only a joint approach and accelerated action can contribute to a sustainable future in line with the principle of "Leaving no one behind".

The pandemic has been a major setback for some of the global achievements in implementing the SDGs. Poverty, hunger and inequalities have increased, economic development suffered. The most vulnerable (women, youth, persons with disabilities and marginalised groups), have been affected particularly hard.

For this reason, I am very pleased that this year's High-level Political Forum is dedicated to explicitly addressing these SDGs, which will continue to receive special attention in the near future.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us continue to think positively, let us continue our strong commitment and even step up our efforts to implement the SDGs. Let us all contribute to ensure that a post-COVID-19 era is sustainable, green, digital, circular, inclusive and just.

Thank you so much.