



# ITALY

**INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM  
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
“BUILDING THE FUTURE WE WANT: FROM RIO+ 20 TO THE POST-2015  
DEVELOPMENT AGENDA”**

**STATEMENT BY  
THE PRIME MINISTER  
OF  
ITALY**

**HIS EXCELLENCY  
THE HONORABLE ENRICO LETTA**

**(NEW YORK, 24 SEPTEMBER 2013)**

**Check against delivery**



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Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

This meeting is a significant step in the implementation of the “Future We Want,” the ambitious forward-looking document we adopted last year in Brazil at the Rio+20 Conference.

It was an honor for Italy to lead with Brazil the consultations that defined the format and organizational modalities of this Forum. I wish to take this opportunity to thank all Member States for their active participation in the long process that led us here today. A special word of appreciation to the UN Secretariat for its constant support.

The Forum allows us to strengthen international governance on sustainable development after successfully addressing the environmental pillar through the upgrade of UNEP and the establishment of UNEA, the environment assembly of the United Nations. But this is only a first step.

**The High-Level Political Forum should provide for a stronger global political leadership on sustainable development.**

At Rio+20, we reaffirmed that poverty eradication is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. As the United Nations Secretary-General stated in the recently-released report on progress toward the MDGs, “no person anywhere should be left behind.” We should not postpone this task. We have the moral and political obligation toward present and future generations to pursue this challenge.

Rio +20 has formalized the concept of the **green economy** as a key tool for sustainable development. We need to build on this idea also as a tangible way forward to ensure sustained economic growth and create opportunities for employment and decent work for all, while reducing the pressures on the environment and the use of natural resources. Stronger partnerships – in particular

with the private sector – are crucial to this endeavor. The High-Level Political Forum should be instrumental to this end.

A key set of issues related to sustainable growth, as well as a crucial element of our future, **is food. If we want to prepare a sustainable future for our planet and its inhabitants in which both can exist in harmony, we need to launch an updated global consensus on food that addresses the main questions of food security, distribution, origin and so forth.** As a nation rich in food tradition and culture, and in its capacity as EU Presidency in 2014 and host of EXPO Milan 2015, Italy will promote the achievement of just such a consensus. Milan will propel an effort toward progress on issues such as food education, food-waste management and the fight against speculation.

We need to make operational the recognition that well-being cannot be measured only through the lens of economic growth. We need to overcome the limits of GDP and address all the three pillars of sustainable development. Only in this way will we capture the true essence of human development and make adequate and informed choices to ensure greater equity for present and future generations.

To be accountable we need transparency. Therefore we welcome the progressive development of a strong and efficient review mechanism, which will require the active involvement of all stakeholders will be crucial.

The Forum needs to become the global hub for sustainable development implementation: therefore, it will be vital to define the working methods and substance of our discussions within this new body, starting with the crucial role that SDGs should play in the post-2015 development agenda.

The Forum must become the place where States and civil society generate the momentum for change, where progress can be measured through effective follow-up mechanisms, and where experiences can be shared.

Italy stands ready to work toward these challenging goals. Let us make the Forum a success.

Thank you.