

**Zero Draft Political Declaration to be adopted at the
High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF),
under the auspices of the General Assembly in September 2023**

I. [Our shared resolve]

1. We, the Heads of State and Government and high representatives, have met at United Nations Headquarters in New York on 18 and 19 September 2023, at the Sustainable Development Goals Summit,¹ to review progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
2. We renew our resolve to fulfil the promise of the 2030 Agenda and the principles enshrined in it. We will act with urgency to realize its vision as a plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership, leaving no one behind. The 2030 Agenda remains our roadmap for advancing sustainable development and overcoming the multiple crises we face.
3. We reaffirm that the 2030 Agenda is universal in nature and that its Goals and targets are integrated and indivisible, balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.
4. The promises of the 2030 Agenda are in peril. Our world is currently facing numerous crises. Despite years of sustainable development gains, millions of people have fallen into poverty, and hunger and malnutrition are becoming more prevalent, and the impacts of climate change more pronounced. This situation has led to increased inequality underpinned by weakened international solidarity. We remain hopeful, given that our world, its people, and the United Nations have a history of resilience and overcoming challenges. Our actions must match the magnitude and scope of the crises affecting our world.
5. We commit to bold, ambitious, and transformative actions, anchored in international solidarity, shared responsibility and robust cooperation at all levels. We will promote a systemic shift towards a more inclusive, peaceful and sustainable world for people and planet, for present and future generations.
6. We commit to upholding the United Nations Charter and international law, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights and international human rights treaties.
7. We emphasize that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development.
8. We commit to targeted efforts to realize the promise to leave no one behind. We will reach the furthest behind and create the necessary conditions to achieve all the SDGs for the benefit of everyone.
9. We must strengthen international cooperation for the poorest and most vulnerable countries to help them recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as from ongoing conflicts, inflation and the cost-of-living crisis and to build resilience to future shocks and climate risks. We commit to strengthening pandemic preparedness, prevention and response.

¹ High-level political forum on sustainable development convened under the auspices of the General Assembly (Sustainable Development Goals Summit).

10. We recognize the special challenges and needs facing all developing countries in pursuing sustainable development, especially countries in special situations, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as the specific challenges facing middle-income countries, in pursuing sustainable development.
11. We remain resolved, between now and 2030, to end poverty and hunger everywhere; to combat inequalities within and among countries; to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies; to respect, protect and fulfil human rights and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls; and to ensure the lasting protection of the planet and its natural resources. We also remain resolved to create conditions for sustainable, inclusive and sustained economic growth, shared prosperity and decent work for all, taking into account different levels of national development and capacities.
12. We reaffirm that gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls will make a crucial contribution to progress across all the Goals and targets. The achievement of full human potential and sustainable development is not possible if one half of humanity continues to be denied full human rights and opportunities.
13. We resolve to realize our vision of a world with access to inclusive and equitable quality education, universal health coverage and quality health care, food security and improved nutrition, safe drinking water and sanitation, affordable, reliable and sustainable energy and quality and resilient infrastructure for all.
14. Sustainable development cannot be realized without peace and security; and peace and security will be at risk without sustainable development. We reaffirm the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights including the right to development, on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions.
15. The 2030 Agenda remains our promise to the children and youth of today so that they may achieve their full human potential and carry the torch of sustainable development to future generations.
16. We reconfirm our commitment to the UN75 Declaration, the Political Declaration of the 2019 SDG Summit, the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, and the Paris Agreement. We will fully implement these agreements and build upon their strong commitments.
17. We also reaffirm the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as an integral part of the 2030 Agenda. We are committed to its full implementation which is critical for the realization of the SDGs and their targets.
18. We commit to enhancing global, regional, national and local partnerships for Sustainable Development Goals, engaging all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, the private sector, academia, and youth, recognizing the important contribution they can make toward achieving the 2030 Agenda.

II. [Our changed world - Progress and remaining gaps and challenges]

19. Our world has changed drastically since the first SDG Summit in 2019 and since we adopted the 2030 Agenda in 2015. Without immediate course correction and acceleration of SDG implementation, our world is destined to face prolonged periods of crisis and uncertainty.
20. We are concerned about the persistent impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic and the multiple interlinked crises that are pushing our world to the brink, particularly developing countries. The triple crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution threaten planet and people. The crises of

migration and forced displacement, the cost-of-living crisis, the water, food, financial and energy crises, and the growing impact of disasters are derailing progress on the Sustainable Development Goals.

21. In many parts of the world conflicts and instability have endured or intensified, and natural disasters have become more frequent and intense, causing untold human suffering and undermining the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. We stress the critical importance of sufficient humanitarian response and assistance, and we recognise that our ability to prevent and resolve conflicts and build resilient, peaceful, just and inclusive societies has often been fragmented and insufficient.
22. We are deeply concerned that once again people in vulnerable situations are hit hardest by these multiple and interlinked crises, across all countries, particularly developing countries, and countries in special situations, such as least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, with a deepening of the existing challenges for middle-income countries.
23. We welcome the Secretary-General's special edition progress report on the Sustainable Development Goals, and the Global Sustainable Development Report.
24. We are concerned that at the midpoint of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda the world is not on track to meet most of the Goals by 2030. There has been progress in some areas. However, progress against a very worrying proportion of targets is either moving much too slowly or has regressed below the 2015 baseline.
25. We recognize the positive role and contribution of migrants for inclusive growth and sustainable development in countries of origin, transit and destination, including by enriching societies through human, socioeconomic and cultural capacities.
26. In the face of the multiple and interlinked global crises, we must meet the moment and embrace change by taking immediate measures to scale up efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, including through development cooperation, SDG investments, reforming the international financial architecture, enhancing macroeconomic policy cooperation and implementing actions to accelerate sustainable development, in particular in support of developing countries. We welcome the Secretary-General's efforts towards an SDG stimulus to tackle the high cost of debt and rising risks of debt distress, massively scale up affordable long-term financing for development and expand contingency financing to countries in need.
27. We are deeply concerned by the marked increase of the SDG financing gap and recognize the urgency of providing sufficient development finance to developing countries. We are equally concerned by the unmet commitments for climate change adaptation and mitigation.
28. We note that there has been positive progress in a limited number of areas. We recognize the efforts of countries and stakeholders at all levels since 2015 to realize the vision of the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. We acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic produced valuable lessons in science, technology, and innovation and digital transformation for sustainable development.
29. We acknowledge efforts and commitments from several ongoing processes and recent events and conferences, such as the UN Water Conference, Food Systems Summit, Oceans Conference, Transforming Education Summit, Sendai Mid-term Review, LDC5 Conference, UNFCCC COP27, UNCDP COP15, HLPF under the auspices of ECOSOC, Financing for Development Forum, Fifth Session of the United Nations Environmental Assembly and Fifth Session of the Intergovernmental Conference on Marine Biodiversity of Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction.

30. We are encouraged by the progress achieved in the implementation of the Vienna Program of Action for Landlocked Countries 2014-2024 and SAMOA Pathway, and call upon the international community to take the opportunity of the Third International Conference on LLDCs and the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States to identify new and emerging challenges, as well as ways and means to address them, and opportunities for the sustainable development of LLDCs and small island developing States respectively. We welcome the Doha political declaration and look forward to the timely implementation of the Doha Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2022-2031.
31. We acknowledge the common purpose that has united governments, the UN system, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders to deliver on the 2030 Agenda.
32. We welcome the efforts of the UN development system to implement the reforms championed by the Secretary General and endorsed by the General Assembly, especially the role of the resident coordinators.
33. We recognize that the voluntary national reviews have generated valuable lessons learned and have helped countries integrate the Sustainable Development Goals into national plans and policies.

III. [Call to action – turning our world towards 2030]

34. Fundamental, transformative, and urgent change at all levels and by all stakeholders is needed to overcome the crises and obstacles facing our world. We commit to taking the actions necessary to reverse declines and accelerate progress to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the SDGs.
35. We will leave no one behind by focusing our policies and actions on the poorest and most vulnerable. We will endeavour to identify those who are being left behind and reach those who are the furthest behind first. People who are vulnerable must be empowered. Those whose needs are reflected in the 2030 Agenda include all children, youth, persons with disabilities, people living with HIV/AIDS, older persons, indigenous peoples, refugees, internally displaced persons, and migrants. We intend to see the Goals and targets met for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society. We will take action to combat inequalities within and between countries and pursue policies that stem the tide of rising inequality, including through social protection systems and universal health coverage.
36. We are determined to make all efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by the target year of 2030. To this end, we commit to:

Transformative actions for the SDGs:

- a) We commit to targeted and accelerated action to remove all legal, social, and economic barriers to achieving gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls, and the realization and enjoyment of their human rights.
- b) We will continue increasing investment in inclusive and equitable quality education, including early childhood education, youth and adult literacy programmes and initiatives, digital education, skills enhancement and lifelong learning, stressing the importance of addressing the gender gap in education and we take note of the 2022 United Nations Transforming Education Summit.
- c) We will take action to spread the benefits of digitalization. We will expand participation of all countries, in particular developing countries, in the digital economy. We will leverage digital technology to expand the foundations on which to build more comprehensive, dynamic and adaptive social protection systems. We commit to building capacities for inclusive participation in

the digital economy and to bridge the digital divide, including through strong partnerships to bring technological innovations to all countries. We look forward to the elaboration of a Global Digital Compact.

- d) We will take integrated action at all levels to accelerate the transition to sustainable food systems and promote healthy nutrition, diets and consumption practices, and to recover momentum and accelerate efforts to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition. We will address water scarcity and stress and drive transformation from a global water crisis to a water-secure world, ensuring the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
- e) Recognizing the need to increase the share of renewable and clean energy, we will take steps to provide access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all, including through enhanced international cooperation to assist developing countries.
- f) We recommit to reducing disaster risk and building resilience by mainstreaming disaster risk reduction, management and resilience across all sectors and at all levels, integrating disaster risk reduction with climate, sustainable development and humanitarian action. We will accelerate the pursuit of policy, investment and innovation to reduce disaster risk and build the resilience of countries, economies, communities and individuals, and we recognize the need for a broader and more people-centered preventive approach to disaster risk reduction.

Securing a sustainable future for Our Planet:

- g) We urge developed country parties to fully deliver on the goal of 100 billion United States dollars urgently and through to 2025 and emphasize the importance of transparency in the implementation of their pledges. We welcome the outcomes of COP-27 held in Sharm El-Sheikh, including the decision on funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including a focus on addressing loss and damage.
- h) We will take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of people and planet by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation. We will follow up on the goals and targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and aim to close the \$700 billion biodiversity finance gap.
- i) We will continue to support efforts to implement the strategic objectives of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, affirming that combating desertification, land degradation and drought and achieving land degradation neutrality have emerged as a pathway to accelerating progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Levers for SDG acceleration:

- j) We commit to use science, technology, and innovation as drivers of sustainable development. We will take action to enhance the ability of developing countries to benefit from science, technology, and innovation through promoting access to research and development, and through partnerships. We aim to increase funding for SDG-related research and innovation and build capacity in all regions to contribute to and benefit from this research. We will seek to better manage the benefits and challenges of artificial intelligence. We undertake to increase the use of science and scientific evidence in policymaking.

- k) We commit to bridging the science, technology and innovation divide and providing financial and technical support and technology transfer on mutually agreed terms to developing countries, including through South-South and triangular cooperation.
- l) We pledge to take action to strengthen national efforts to collect high quality, timely, and reliable data on SDG progress and to intensify efforts to strengthen data and statistical capacities in developing countries. We will continue to strengthen our efforts to collect, analyse and disseminate relevant and reliable data, disaggregated by sex, age, disability and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, for better monitoring and policymaking to accelerate the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. We commit to increasing the availability of SDG data and closing SDG data gaps at all levels, increasing domestic financing for data and statistics, and embracing new data sources and innovative approaches.
- m) We will strengthen the integration of the SDGs into our national policy frameworks and develop national plans for transformative and accelerated action. We will make achieving the SDGs a central focus in national planning and oversight mechanisms. We will further localize the SDGs and advance integrated planning at local and sub-national levels. We recognize the importance of policy frameworks that enable inclusive and sustainable growth.

Mobilizing resources, boosting investment, and building capacity:

We commit to scale up our efforts to finance sustainable development. We will take concerted actions at national and international levels, including steps to improve the investment environment, facilitate long-term lending at lower interest rates, enhance domestic resource mobilisation, combat illicit financial flows, and undertake measures to address unsustainable debt burdens of developing countries. We will endeavour to further align domestic and international resource flows towards SDG implementation. We recognize the need to promote quality, reliable, sustainable and resilient infrastructure, in particular in developing countries. We emphasize the importance of developing dynamic domestic private sectors to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in a sustainable and equitable manner by creating and strengthening an enabling business environment. We commit to take further actions to finance sustainable development, including the following:

- n) We will ensure significant mobilization of resources from a variety of sources, including through enhanced development cooperation, in order to provide adequate and predictable means for developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, to implement programmes and policies to end poverty in all its dimensions.
- o) We urge development partners to scale up and fulfill their ODA commitments, including the commitment by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance (ODA/GNI) and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of ODA/GNI to the least developed countries.
- p) We recognize the importance of new and emerging challenges and vulnerabilities in regard to developing country external debt sustainability. Strengthened multilateral coordination by all creditors is needed to address the deteriorating debt situation.
- q) We call for an urgent re-channeling of unutilized Special Drawing Rights to countries most in need, including through Multilateral Development Banks.
- r) We support reform of the international financial institutions, including their governance, to be more fit for purpose, and to broaden and strengthen the voice and participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making, norm-setting, and global economic governance.

- s) We support MDB reform efforts and encourage dialogue between MDBs and other financial institutions. We urge MDBs to bring forward actions to mobilize and provide additional financing within their mandates to support developing countries to achieve the SDGs.
 - t) We recommit to the promotion of a rules-based, non-discriminatory, open, fair, inclusive, equitable and transparent multilateral trading system, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core, as well as meaningful trade liberalization.
 - u) We commit to strengthening the means of implementation and revitalization of the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development and, in this regard, we will explore measures of progress on sustainable development that complement or go beyond gross domestic product to have a more inclusive approach to international cooperation.
 - v) We reiterate our call for enhanced international support for multistakeholder partnerships for implementing effective and targeted capacity building in developing countries, recognizing that capacity development is integral to achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.
 - w) We commit to convening a fourth international conference on financing for development in 2025.
37. We recognize that the integrated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals requires a global response. We renew our commitment to multilateralism, to find new ways of working together and to ensure that multilateral institutions keep pace with the rapid changes taking place. We further commit to finding peaceful and just solutions to disputes and to respecting international law and the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the right to self-determination of peoples and the need to respect the territorial integrity and political independence of States.
 38. We commit to fully support the UN development system, including the RC system and the Joint SDG Fund, to deliver better in support of Member States' effort to drive SDG transformation for inclusivity and sustainability.
 39. We commit to using the review of the high-level political forum at the 78th session of the General Assembly to further strengthen the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, harnessing data to track progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and targets, strengthening analysis of the interlinkages across the Goals and targets, including policy implications of their synergies and trade-offs.
 40. We look forward to the Summit of the Future and other processes, recognising that their outcomes can provide further impetus to our shared efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.
 41. Midway to 2030 we are considerably off-course for the world we want, but with political will, the promise of the Sustainable Development Goals remains attainable, and we resolve to fulfil it.
 42. We pledge to accelerate our common efforts to reach this vision by 2030. We pledge to act now, for present and future generations, turning our world towards a sustainable and resilient path by 2030, and leaving no one behind.