

2018 High-level Political Forum Ministerial Declaration: Zero draft

We, the Ministers and high representatives, having met at United Nations Headquarters in New York,

1. Reaffirm our commitment to effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ for all people everywhere, ensuring that no one is left behind;
2. Reaffirm our commitment to the Addis Ababa Action Agenda,² which is an integral part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We welcome the third Economic and Social Council Forum on Financing for Sustainable Development and take into account its intergovernmentally agreed conclusions and recommendations;
3. Welcome the adoption of resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system. Its full and early implementation will improve support to countries in their efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda;
4. [Placeholder for outcome of review of 68/1]
5. Emphasise that the High-level Political Forum has a central role in overseeing the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda at the global level. We look forward to the convening of the forum under the auspices of the General Assembly in its 74th session, and welcome the work of the 15 eminent scientists who are preparing the quadrennial Global Sustainable Development Report, which will inform the 2019 forum;
6. Welcome the report³ of the UN Secretary-General on the progress made towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals;
7. Welcome the preparatory work that has been undertaken by the Economic and Social Council, including its functional and regional commissions, and recognize the contributions made by its segments and its forums. We also welcome the inputs from the 2018 regional forums for sustainable development. We appreciate the input and expertise of all other stakeholders;
8. Commend the 47 countries⁴ that delivered voluntary national reviews at the 2018 High-level Political Forum. The reviews highlight the importance of effective and coordinated government, including at the sub-national and local levels as well as evidence-based policy making and innovation underpinned by high quality, timely, reliable and disaggregated data. We encourage all countries to make use of the lessons learned from these reviews to enhance their domestic implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and urge all countries who have not yet done so to carry out a voluntary national review;
9. Stress that three years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, progress has been made across many of the goals and targets, but it has not been at the pace required to achieve this ambitious agenda. In particular, we must urgently accelerate progress toward targets with a timeframe of 2020;

¹ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#)

² General Assembly resolution [69/313](#)

³ [E/2018/64](#)

⁴ [List of 2018 VNRs](#)

10. We stress that the 2030 Agenda is people-centred, universal and transformative and that its Sustainable Development Goals are indivisible and balance the three dimensions of sustainable development – the economic, social and environmental. They seek to realise all human rights;
11. Reaffirm that poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development and that inclusive and sustainable economic growth is essential for prosperity;
12. Recognize that the most vulnerable countries and, in particular, African countries, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing states deserve special attention, as do countries in situations of conflict and post-conflict. There are also serious challenges in many middle income countries;
13. Stress that the commitment to leave no one behind is at the core of the 2030 Agenda and should be a guiding principle for all levels of government. Leaving no one behind requires addressing the specific needs of people in vulnerable situations but also empowering them and engaging them in decisions that impact their lives;
14. Reaffirm our commitment to promoting gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls and the full realization of their human rights throughout policymaking and programming, including in development cooperation, peacebuilding, fiscal policies, finance, labour markets and other areas, with due recognition of care work where unequal gender roles continue to hold women back in the economy. To achieve inclusive, sustainable and resilient societies, we call for the full, effective and equal participation of women in decision-making and the design and implementation of policies and programmes. This is particularly crucial with respect to accessing water and sanitation and household energy management;
15. Recognize that meeting the human capital required to build sustainable and resilient societies must begin with investing in children and ensuring they grow up free from violence and exploitation. As torch-bearers of the Agenda for current and future generations, we emphasize the importance of engaging children, adolescents and young people in Sustainable Development Goal monitoring and implementation, and empowering them with information, knowledge and awareness of sustainable development;
16. Emphasise that data and statistics are central to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We commit to building capacity, at the bilateral, regional and global levels, for collecting, producing, disseminating, analysing and using quality data and statistics, disaggregated by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migration status, disability, geographical location and other characteristics;
17. Recognize the synergies between the implementation of the Paris Agreement⁵ and the 2030 Agenda. We stress that climate change is one of the greatest challenges of our time and its widespread, unprecedented impacts disproportionately burden the poorest and most vulnerable. We highlight the

⁵ FCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex

specific needs and special circumstances of developing countries. We acknowledge the importance of continued support for, and international cooperation on, adaptation and mitigation efforts and on strengthening resilience, as well as adequate and predictable financial resources from a variety of sources, including public and private ones. We reaffirm the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. Action towards sustainable and resilient societies requires a risk-informed approach and we call for augmented efforts to integrate disaster risk reduction, into national and local sustainable development strategies and plans;

18. Commit to embracing diversity in cities and human settlements and to strengthening social cohesion, intercultural and interreligious dialogue and understanding, tolerance, mutual respect, gender equality, innovation, entrepreneurship, creativity, inclusion, identity, safety, and the dignity of all people. We also commit ourselves to taking steps to ensure that institutions at all levels promote pluralism and peaceful coexistence within increasingly heterogeneous and multicultural societies;
19. Reiterate that while our 2018 review emphasizes Sustainable Development Goals 6, 7, 11, 12, 15 and 17, the integrated, indivisible and universal nature of the Goals makes it essential that we pay particular attention to leveraging synergies and co-benefits, while avoiding or minimizing trade-offs;
20. Note with concern that 844 million people lack basic water services, 4.5 billion lack access to safely managed sanitation and 892 million still practice open defecation. Water pollution is impacting water quality and decreasing water availability in a world that has lost 70 per cent of its wetlands over the last century. Implementation of integrated water resources management is lagging behind and water governance structures are often weak and fragmented, at all levels. Creating multi-stakeholder partnerships, ensuring quality public participation and integrating water across all policy sectors is key to effectively tackling these issues. We aim to ensure that our limited water resources are shared effectively among competing demands and to strengthen the resilience of communities to water-related hazards. To achieve universal access to sanitation, substantial investment will be required, particularly in rapidly growing urban areas. Strengthening the capacity of local and national authorities to manage and regulate sanitation systems is a high priority. We welcome the *International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development*⁶ and the report of the High-level Panel on Water;⁷
21. Note with concern that almost 1 billion people currently live without electricity. Almost 3 billion people lack access to clean-cooking solutions and are exposed to dangerous levels of air pollution, which results in about 4 million deaths each year. We are encouraged that the transformation of the world's energy systems is being accelerated by advances in technologies, rapid declines in the cost of renewable energy, policy support, new business models and sharing of best practices. We emphasize the need for strengthened political will and increased levels of investment and action by all stakeholders to increase access to clean energy research and technology,

⁶ International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028

⁷ Making Every Drop Count: An Agenda for Water Action

scale up the deployment of renewable energy technologies, increase energy efficiency and make clean energy more affordable. We strongly call upon governments and all stakeholders to make clean-cooking solutions a political priority and to close the electricity access gap. We call upon Governments and other stakeholders to accelerate the pace of transition towards renewable energy, especially in end-use sectors such as transport, buildings and industry. It is also critical that we scale-up capacity-building, including by sharing experiences and promoting innovation and investments in energy efficiency across all sectors of the economy;

22. Acknowledge that rapid urbanization means many cities are facing challenges in ensuring there is adequate housing and resilient infrastructure to support their growing populations, as well as in managing environmental impacts and vulnerability to disasters. We note with concern that with rapid migration to cities and corresponding increases in the global urban population, the number of people living in slums has increased to 881 million globally. In many cities populations still breathe air that falls short of the World Health Organization's Air Quality Guidelines value for particulate matter. Managing solid waste continues to be a challenge in many regions with significant and adverse effects from uncollected waste in cities, including direct and indirect effects on the health of residents and the environment. We stress that cities can act as agents of positive change, catalysts for inclusion, and powerhouses of equitable economic growth. We recall the New Urban Agenda. We will embrace modern technologies, especially information and communication technologies, in managing cities more effectively and holistically, including intelligent transport systems and new efficiencies in energy consumption and waste management. We call for the strengthening of normative and regulatory frameworks for disaster risk reduction in urban areas, including improving and enforcing land-use plans and building codes. We underline that cities should not be developed in isolation from the surrounding peri-urban and rural areas;
23. Note with concern that decoupling economic growth from resource use continues to be challenging. While an increasing number of countries have put in place national policies and initiatives related to sustainable consumption and production, efforts need to be scaled up. We will accelerate action on the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. We call on all stakeholders to develop effective strategies and innovations to reduce food losses and waste. We will encourage sustainable lifestyles by providing reliable sustainability information to consumers, increasing education and awareness raising, and making it easier to reuse, recycle, recover and remake products and materials and prevent and reduce waste generation. We call for intensified efforts to achieve the targets for environmentally sound management of chemicals and all wastes throughout their life cycle by 2020;
24. Recognize that global drivers of biodiversity loss are climate change, invasive species, over-exploitation of natural resources, pollution and urbanization. While protected areas in forest and terrestrial ecosystems are on the rise and forest loss has slowed, other facets of terrestrial conservation continue to need accelerated efforts to protect biodiversity, land productivity

and species and genetic resources. We acknowledge that the success of the biodiversity-related targets depends on mitigating impacts from other sectors, such as agriculture, urbanization, infrastructure, mining and energy development, and cannot be achieved without mainstreaming biodiversity across these sectors. We urge governments, the private sector and civil society to scale up integrated landscape management approaches to land-use planning and decision-making within and across jurisdictions in a participatory and transparent way. We will increase efforts to facilitate investment in gender-responsive programmes that address problems of land degradation, desertification, drought, biodiversity loss and water scarcity, including through implementation of the UN Strategic Plan for Forests. We will improve monitoring and reporting, including use of ICTs and remote sensing and tackle illegal logging and wildlife poaching and trafficking;

25. Recognise that a scale-up of effort is required to fulfil our pledge of a revitalised Global Partnership for Sustainable Development. While the upturn of the world economy has underpinned progress across all action areas of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, it remains vulnerable to financial and economic volatility and gains have not been equitable across countries and regions. Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services is on the rise, however the regions most in need of resources still face challenges collecting taxes, net Official Development Assistance decreased in real terms in 2017 and global remittances also declined. A substantial gender digital divide and digital divide between countries and regions persists. We share common goals and common ambitions to strengthen international development cooperation and maximise its effectiveness, transparency, impact and results. In this regard, international public finance plays an important role in complementing the efforts of countries to mobilise public resources domestically, especially in the poorest and most vulnerable countries with limited domestic resources. Contributions from robust, cross-sectoral, effective and transparent multi-stakeholder partnerships, including traditional, South-South and triangular cooperation, are required. Capacity development that is country-driven, addresses the specific needs and conditions of countries and reflects national sustainable development strategies and priorities is essential. We welcome the operationalisation of the Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries and progress made towards operationalisation of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism. We acknowledge the importance of international trade and a universal, rule-based, open, transparent, predictable, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system as an engine for inclusive economic growth. We commit to taking continuous, concrete and immediate steps to strengthen the required means of implementation for the attainment of all Sustainable Development Goals;
26. Pledge to step up our efforts and take the bold actions needed to effectively implement the 2030 Agenda and build sustainable and resilient societies everywhere, reaching the furthest behind first and ensuring that no one is left behind.