



Address by the President of the Republic of Croatia

Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović

**High-Level Thematic Debate on Achieving the
Sustainable Development Goals**

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SHORT INTERVENTION

Dear President of the General Assembly,
Secretary General of the United Nations,
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen...

- Our world today is facing so many difficult challenges. **Challenges that do not recognize borders and require a collective response. There is a clear need for improved cooperation and for well targeted development.**
- As stated in the UN Charter, it is our collective responsibility as members of the United Nations to maintain international peace and security, and to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace. **This can only be successfully achieved if we focus on the root causes of conflicts and instability and address them with sound and sustainable development policies.**
- After historical decisions in 2015 we have the necessary tools: an **integrated sustainable development agenda built upon the lessons and achievements of the MDG's** (Millennium Development Goals), accompanied and fortified with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.
- **To implement the new Agenda, we need a strong and effective UN. For this reason Croatia supports further reforms of the UN System. We must establish clear guidelines, increase our effectiveness, break the silo mentality, ensure strong monitoring and enforce accountability. The assistance must go where it is most needed.**

- **Stronger linkages need to be built between sustainable development and peace and security.** As political sensitivities should be taken into account, we cannot have a one size fits all approach. Cooperation between the work of the Security Council, General Assembly, ECOSOC (Economic and Social Council) as well as the HLPF (High-Level Political Forum on SDGs) must be strengthened and enhanced whenever possible.
- **Strong political leadership is imperative if we want to address new global challenges.** Without decisive leadership from the top we cannot guarantee that anything will take root, grow and sustain. But to achieve this, it is not enough just to meet at high level meetings.
- Croatia stands ready to support purposeful partnerships by sharing its best practices and experiences especially in post-conflict development. **It is important that we cultivate a new global partnership for the implementation of SDGs and follow through with our commitments to UN initiatives and national development strategies.**
- **To achieve the SDGs we need commitment and cooperation at all levels and from all segments of society.** We need real commitment from people from all around the world who are willing to do the work and not just speak about change, but instead, actively embrace it.
- **Far too many crisis and conflicts exist in the world today. We must do more to prevent the crimes and systematic abuses to human rights that have become the drivers of conflict.**

- **Agenda 2030 is not just another document. It is a blueprint for the future. We must take it to places where peace is constantly being threatened by catalysts of conflict: poverty, hunger, disease or climate change.**
- I believe that we can **foster a global community that goes beyond fully embracing the values of the UN charter.** That we can learn from each other's experiences, strengths, and failures and in doing so we can find partners from all over the world.
- Today global policy encompasses developed, developing and underdeveloped countries, providers and recipients of assistance. It demands that we acknowledge the geographic diversity of our planet, while at the same time realizing that we must be **truly united in this mission towards "Transforming our World."**
- This is not just a phrase, but rather an obligation for all of us, regardless of where each Member State finds itself in terms of its location, needs or economic development. **The true compass in our common effort towards reaching all of the SDGs will have to be one of common sense, honest dialogue and hard work.**
- **We have to approach all seventeen goals quickly, coherently and with passion. Otherwise, a lot more is to be lost than could ever be gained back.**
- Thank you.