

Unanimously Adopting Historic Sustainable Development Goals, General Assembly Shapes Global Outlook for Prosperity, Peace

Seventieth Session,
4th, 5th & 6th Meetings (AM, PM & Night)

- [General Assembly](#)

[Meetings Coverage](#)

World leaders today embraced a sweeping 15-year global plan of action to end poverty, reduce inequalities and protect the environment, known as the Sustainable Development Goals, at the opening of a United Nations special summit.

Titled “Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” and contained in document A/70/L.1, the agreement on a set of 17 goals and 169 targets would come into effect on 1 January 2016, replacing the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000.

“We have reached a defining moment in human history,” Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said prior to the unanimous adoption of the post-2015 development framework, describing it as “a promise by leaders to all people everywhere”. The Goals formed an agenda “for people and the planet”, as well as “for shared prosperity, peace and partnership”, he said. It conveyed the urgency of climate action, enshrined gender equality and respect for the rights of all, and pledged to leave “no one behind”.

“The true test of commitment to Agenda 2030 will be implementation,” he said, stressing the need for action from all States. The Agenda also required global partnership involving all stakeholders, including parliaments, local governments, civil society and academia. “No one can succeed working alone.”

Mr. Ban said the Millennium Development Goals had demonstrated the possibilities of working together. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda, adopted at the International Conference on Financing for Development in July, had provided a solid funding framework. The new agenda must build on those foundations.

With the Goals taking effect in 2016, he stressed the need for starting the new era “on the right foot”, urging all Governments to adopt a robust universal climate agreement in Paris in December. Recalling the creation of the United Nations 70 years ago, Mr. Ban said the Agenda would advance the goals of its visionary Charter dedicated to “We the Peoples”.

The President of Uganda and the Prime Minister of Denmark, whose countrymen held the presidency of the sixty-ninth and seventieth General Assembly sessions, respectively, served as Co-Chairs of the Summit, which was held as a high-level plenary of the 193-nation body.

Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Denmark’s Prime Minister, said that the presence of so many leaders testified to the transformative potential of the new Agenda. Much had happened over the past 15 years as the world strove to meet the Millennium Development Goals. More than 1 billion people had been lifted out of poverty; more girls than ever before had gone to school; and more people had access to clean drinking water. Those goals had shown that setting targets worked, but the work was not yet completed.

“Today we begin a new journey,” he said. Since 1978, Denmark had committed to contribute 0.75 per cent of its gross national income to official development assistance (ODA). Other countries should also meet

that goal, although the Agenda was ambitious. As President of the seventieth Assembly session, Mogens Lykketoft (Denmark) would lead the world towards its sustainable objectives to guarantee that words would be followed by deeds.

Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of Uganda, said today marked the dawn of a new era towards eradicating poverty, transforming economies and protecting the planet. World leaders who gathered here were sending a message to every village and every nation that they were committed to taking steps to change people's lives. The Agenda carried forward the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals.

The new Goals must be integrated into national and regional strategies and policies. One major challenge facing the developing world was access to long-term financing for infrastructure development. That gap must be closed, and he urged action to ensure the voices of developing countries were heard by multinational institutions while also confirming the fulfilment of ODA and trade agreements.

Salil Shetty, Secretary General of Amnesty International, representing civil society, said that the sceptics couldn't be blamed when they saw yet another summit declaration. To prove them wrong, implementation of the new Goals must pass four objectives: the ownership test, which made poor and marginalized people the primary decision-makers at every stage; the accountability test, which required Governments to inform their people what had been promised and delivered; the non-discrimination test, which meant that exclusion based on gender, race, descent, religion or other status would not be tolerated; and the coherence test, which gave people broad information for action.

"You cannot claim to support sustainable development when you are reluctant to reduce the consumption of the rich or transfer technology [...] you cannot lecture about peace while being the largest manufacturer of arms [...] you cannot launch Sustainable Development Goals and in parallel deny a safe and legal route to refugees," he said.

Following the unanimous adoption of the Agenda, many Heads of State and Government rose in applause. However, while expressing determination to implement the new Goals, many developing countries voiced concern about the lack of financial and other resources.

José Maria Pereira Neves, Prime Minister of Cabo Verde, said his country had been considered unviable at the time of independence in 1975, but today, it was a middle-income country on the right track to achieving the Millennium Goals. Yet, small island developing States faced huge constraints to sustainable development and difficulties in accessing financing. Special attention should be paid to those and lower- to middle-income States, as well as to Africa's least-developed and landlocked developing countries, so that they could meet their commitments to achieving the new Goals by 2030.

Jim Yong Kim, President of the World Bank Group, said that, as discussed in Addis Ababa, multilateral banks planned to provide financial support of more than \$400 billion for sustainable development and would work to increase financing and build on their record of accomplishment.

Neneh MacDouall-Gaye, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gambia, said it was imperative to muster courage, mobilize added resources and marshal human capital to ensure the Sustainable Development Goals completed the unfinished agenda of the Millennium Goals. The Sustainable Development Goals were a contract with humanity, and the United Nations was the only global institution capable of ensuring the security and development of the world.

Erna Solberg, Prime Minister of Norway, said the international community met at a time of great optimism, as well as grave crisis. There was hope in the success of the Millennium Development Goals, and in the historic 2030 Agenda. At the same time, 60 million people were now refugees or displaced. The war in Syria had forced 12 million from their homes. The war in Syria had forced 12 million people from their homes. Others were fleeing economic hardship and fragile States. Business as usual would not lead to real sustainable development. The international community must follow up on the Secretary-General's call for human dignity by scaling up humanitarian assistance. She called on all nations to be generous in order to prevent a "lost generation".

The Assembly also held two interactive dialogues: “Ending poverty and hunger” and “Tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind”.

Also speaking today were Heads of State and Government, as well as ministers, senior officials and representatives of the following: Croatia, Finland, Turkmenistan, Colombia, Egypt, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Bahamas, Germany, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Côte D'Ivoire, Trinidad and Tobago, Afghanistan, Latvia, El Salvador, Togo, Chile, Malawi, Guyana, Kenya, Liberia, Kiribati, Panama, Nigeria, Palau, Bolivia, Viet Nam, Hungary, Mongolia, Spain, Switzerland, Honduras, Zimbabwe, Botswana, Guatemala, Albania, Liechtenstein, Antigua and Barbuda, Slovenia, Tuvalu, Barbados, Ethiopia, Bhutan, Nepal, Namibia, Seychelles, Bahrain, Kyrgyzstan, Niger, Congo, Suriname, Uzbekistan, Belize, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Burkina Faso.

Representatives from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), African Union, Eurasian Development Bank, Inter-Parliamentary Union, International Organization of La Francophonie, League of Arab States and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and also spoke.

Representatives from the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) also spoke.

Non-governmental organization representatives of the following also spoke: International Union for the Conservation of Nature, International Anti-Corruption Academy, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Education International and HelpAge International.

Mark Wilson spoke for the private sector.

Statements

KOLINDA GRABAR-KITAROVIĆ, President of Croatia, said that today, more than ever before, real leadership was needed to affect change as the international community was facing well-known and long-standing problems alongside new challenges. Her country had been suddenly encompassed with the migrant crisis that had begun far from its borders. The tide of migrants, mostly of Syrian origin, was leaving a profound impact on Croatia and southeast Europe. “Our world is not our own,” she said, urging a quick, coherent and determined approach to the Sustainable Development Goals. Despite the agreement reached in Addis Ababa on how to generate sustainable development financing, work was far from done. Looking ahead to the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Paris, she said a successful outcome was needed to ensure the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals framework.

SAULI NIINISTÖ, President of Finland, said that for 15 years the Millennium Development Goals had guided efforts. While many successes had been achieved during that period, he also said much remained to be done. He stressed the need for well-resourced actions towards achieving gender equality, noting that there could be no sustainable development if half the world was left behind. If sustainable development in its three dimensions — economic, social and environmental — was to be achieved, an effective outcome was needed from the upcoming Climate Conference in Paris. Calling the 2030 Agenda a global deal in which “each and every one of us” was responsible for success, he said “we must succeed”. Pointing out that the alternative was too grim, he urged that “we must choose between despair and hope.”

GURBANGULY BERDIMUHAMEDOV, President of Turkmenistan, said the new agenda would serve as a solid basis for action over the next 15 years. A new global strategy must be based on the new reality and the Agenda had reflected that, with the 17 global goals and 169 targets designed to address major development challenges. The establishment of a new global coordination mechanism for implementation was crucial, he said, noting that his Government was ready to submit specific proposals in that regard. It was also vital to reinvigorate regional commissions. He also proposed that the seventieth session of the General Assembly considered convening a high-level forum on food to advance the goals relating to eradicating poverty and hunger. The United Nations should actively develop broad dialogue in the field of

education, he said, adding that his country was prepared to foster constructive cooperation with key partners.

JUAN MANUEL SANTOS CALDERÓN, President of Colombia, said the Goals were laying the conditions for peace. Noting national progress that had been made to reduce poverty, he said that for the first time, the middle class made up a larger segment of society in Colombia than the poor. Colombia had reduced poverty by a greater extent than any other Latin American country. Another success story was the country's headway in reducing inequality. Yet, there was much to be done, he said, adding that Colombia had aimed to eradicate extreme poverty in a decade, by 2025. In its struggle with climate change, Colombia faced two realities: the country had great biodiversity and had a great vulnerability to the impact of climate change. He stressed the need for follow up, with credible indicators, to show where headway was being made and where the international community was falling behind.

ABDEL FATTAH AL SISI, President of Egypt, said his country had launched "The Sustainable Development Strategy until 2030" in March, which concurred with a national economic development conference. That conference's success had shown that the international community considered Egypt to be a cornerstone for stability in the Middle East. To recognize his country's pivotal role as a bridge for promoting cultural interdependence and development cooperation, Egypt launched the new Suez Canal last month. That development project would allow his country to become a regional and international hub for trade and investment. While hopeful about adopting an ambitious action plan, Egypt was concerned about the lack of appropriate tools needed to implement the Agenda in order meet the challenges.

RALPH E. GONSALVES, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, said making Mother Earth a much better place for all required deeds that matched words. The current model of a "perverse" and environmentally-destructive global capitalism must be restructured in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. His country, like all small island developing States, had a special vulnerability to the deleterious effects of climate change. Around the world, the poor suffered most from the maddening acceleration of global warming. To the people of his country, in particular, it represented an existential issue of survival. Noting his country's progress toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals, he expressed its commitment to build upon those accomplishments in pursuit of the new Sustainable Development Goals.

JOSÉ MARIA PEREIRA NEVES, Prime Minister of Cabo Verde, said at the time of independence in 1975, his country had been faced with extraordinarily difficult conditions and had been considered unviable. Today, it was a middle-income country on the right track to achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals. Although challenges continued in reducing poverty, unemployment and the effects of climate change, Cabo Verde had, in 2014, carried out an assessment of the implementation of its development agenda and committed to building a developed nation by 2030. Noting that small island developing States faced huge constraints to sustainable development and difficulties in accessing financing, he urged that special attention was paid to those and lower-middle-income countries, and to African least-developed and landlocked developing countries, so that they could meet all of their commitments to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

PERRY GLADSTONE CHRISTIE, Prime Minister of the Bahamas, said the Goals, centred on the planet and its people, were built on the common goals and principles of the United Nations. The issues of environment, crime and security and the education and training of young people were very important to the Bahamas. It was the international community's responsibility to protect the Earth and its resources and people. While the international community could be proud of the Millennium Development Goals set in 2000, more work was necessary on many fronts. The Bahamas was committed to the full implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, he said, adding that the assistance of the international community would be needed. The economic vulnerability of the Bahamas would also have to be taken into account. Continuing, he said the Bahamas would align the Goals with its national priorities, but cautioned that small island developing States remained a special case. The world was now watching to determine whether the international community would truly transform the planet. Looking ahead, he said educating and preparing young people for the future was key to eradicating poverty.

ANGELA MERKEL, Chancellor of Germany, recalled that 70 years ago, creating a United Nations had been a

dream, and 15 years ago, the success of the Millennium Development Goals had been unclear. International partnerships were important for progress that had been made and for future efforts. Seventy years on, the United Nations remained essential, she said, adding that Germany was prepared to contribute to reforms that would keep the Organization relevant. Stressing the need for resources to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, she said the Addis Ababa Conference had shown how those resources could be mobilized. Germany was committed to contributing 0.7 per cent of gross national income for development. Commitments must be met, she said, highlighting that Germany would work to see that countries met pledges that had been made in Copenhagen to provide \$100 billion annually for developing countries so that all countries could develop in a sustainable manner. The need for peace and for a serious commitment to combat climate change should be reflected in the upcoming Climate Conference in Paris.

NARENDRA MODI, Prime Minister of India, said the new goals gave priority to enduring problems and reflected an evolving understanding of the social, economic and environmental linkages that defined human life. The goals centred on eliminating poverty, recognizing that economic growth, industrialization, infrastructure and energy access formed the foundations of development, he said, welcoming the prominence given to protecting the environmental. Much of India's development agenda mirrored the Sustainable Development Goals, with conventional schemes, such as building skills, accompanying a new era of inclusion and empowerment, the creation of a new sector of microenterprise and a focus on housing, power, water and sanitation and improving farm production. A national plan was creating new capacity for renewable energy over the next seven years. Working with development partners in Asia, Africa and small island States, he said international partnerships must be at the centre of development and climate change efforts. Lifestyles must change and he hoped the developed world would fulfil its financing commitments. The United Nations, including the Security Council, must be reformed for greater credibility and legitimacy to effectively achieve the new goals.

ENDA KENNY, Prime Minister of Ireland, said each country's actions were critical to other countries. As a small island with a history that included much suffering, Ireland's past had taught it that no one country could stand alone. For the benefit of all men, women and children, all countries had had to draw on a common humanity and compassion to help one another. Ireland was dedicated to all the Goals and would promote good governance and continue to work to achieve development assistance and focus its aid on the poorest countries, especially in Africa. It would also work to eliminate extreme hunger. The achievement of the Goals was the work of all the Member States as everyone had a shared humanity. The United Nations had to act together, he concluded.

ARNOLD J. NICHOLSON, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, welcomed the commitment to a more robust and revitalized global partnership for development in the new Agenda. One lesson learned from the Millennium Goals was that deviating from a commitment to partnerships could lead to underachievement. The launch of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism at the Summit was pivotal, as access to scientific research, technology and innovation was central to ensuring the Agenda's successful implementation. As a small island developing State and a middle-income country, his nation was familiar with the range of challenges in their implementation efforts. The support for small island developing States had been built into the new Agenda, particularly in relation to the means of implementation. There was a need, however, for capacity building in the area of data collection and statistical analysis. It would be difficult to measure progress without that capacity, he said.

CHARLES KOFFI DIBY, Minister for State and Foreign Affairs of Côte d'Ivoire, said his country had made progress on the Millennium Development Goals, particularly with regard to lowering infant mortality, maternal death rates and HIV infections. A new mandatory education policy was in effect for children age 6 to 16 and social sectors must be developed and infrastructure improved to that end. The 11 major themes of the Sustainable Development Goals were being included in national development plans. While Côte d'Ivoire had a legal framework in place on the environment, the Climate Conference would provide commitments. Stressing the importance of establishing national ownership of the new goals, he invited the United Nations system and development partners to support his country in achieving them.

DENNIS MOSES, Minister for Foreign and Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Affairs of Trinidad and Tobago, said his country's implementation of the 2030 Agenda would be guided by its 2015-2025 national strategy consisting of 12 priority areas. His Government placed strong emphasis on social and economic

empowerment of its people through incentivizing sustainable growth and diversification, achieving macroeconomic stability and job growth and protecting the environment. His country aimed to achieve those national development goals through progressive institutional reform, the establishment of a permanent mechanism for improved dialogue among the Government, labour, the private sector and civil society, and focused interventions to improve data collection and analysis. As such, the Agenda required accurate, timely, high-quality and disaggregated data, he concluded.

ABDULLAH ABDULLAH, Chief Executive of Afghanistan, said that as a landlocked, least-developed and conflict-affected nation, his country would benefit profoundly from the new Agenda. In the past 14 years, some of its gains had suffered from a lack of consolidation, continuity and sustainability as the country began to pursue the Millennium Goals five years behind other Member States. According to a 2005-2015 report, results had been mixed. The poverty rate had remained at 36 per cent for several years, but considerable progress had been made in primary education, gender equality and women empowerment alongside reductions in child and maternal mortality rates. Despite those achievements, security, instability and equal access to basic health services for all citizens remained key challenges to sustained economic growth. A large part of the Afghanistan's Transformation Decade (2015-2025) coincided with the 2030 Agenda, he said, highlighting that his country remained committed to aligning national development strategies and policies with the new Agenda.

MARK WILSON, speaking for the private sector, said that, in order to deliver the goals and ultimately win, as in sports, all must play as one team. A global coalition must be mobilized. As a founding partner of Project Everyone, the duty of his company, Aviva, was to transform messages into action. The United Nations Global Compact had helped companies to implement the Millennium Development Goals and its work was even more important in connection with the Sustainable Development Goals and, in particular, to determine how to align businesses and the Goals together. Noting that more remained to be done to mobilize \$300 trillion of capital in financial markets, he said the General Assembly should set 2017 as a target date to agree on a resolution on finance that provided a roadmap to sustainable capital markets. He also suggested convening the "best minds" in the United Nations, around the world and in finance to set out how to do that. The United Nations spoke rightly of its duty to look after future generations and its legacy would be determined by success in aligning actions by the Organization, Member States, civil society, business and finance globally. If that could be done, then all could play as one team and win with the global goals.

JIM YONG KIM, President of the World Bank, said the Sustainable Development Goals represented a commitment towards an ambitious agenda in international development, so that everyone could reach his full potential and seek to preserve the planet, or our "common home", for future generations. With its comprehensive experience, the World Bank sought to adapt the financial tools of the rich to serve the poor. As discussed in Addis Ababa, multilateral banks planned to provide financial support of more than \$400 billion for sustainable development. They had also sought to strengthen tax initiatives in lower-income countries in order to increase tax collection by 2 to 4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP). The World Bank would continue to help countries to grow their economies, invest in people and help them from falling back into poverty. Multilateral development banks would work together to increase financing and build on their record of great accomplishment. Noting that close to 1 billion people had been lifted out of poverty, he said that such progress indicated that the seemingly impossible goals were entirely possible. The international community must not turn away from the challenge of reaching those goals and making the world a more just and prosperous place.

CHRISTINE LAGARDE, Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), stated that the Sustainable Development Goals were ambitious, but they could be achieved with decisive action. Macroeconomic stability was a prerequisite for a sustainable economy, but it was not sufficient on its own. Structural reforms and efforts to diversify the economy were required. Inclusion was also a matter of priority. Improving girls' education and removing barriers to women's employment would boost growth and tackle income inequality. The environment was a third priority, she said, noting that countries had a crucial stake in managing their natural resources, but targeted interventions were required to limit the harmful impact of economic activity. In the pivotal year of 2015, the Fund was not only promising action, but also delivering. In policy advice and capacity-building, it was augmenting the traditional focus on economic policies with research and policy advice on social and environmental factors.

RAIMONDS VĒJONIS, President of Latvia, said that the Agenda had taken on the broad challenges facing humanity with a common vision of nations that was too grand for a single country to achieve alone. He called its recognition of the rule of law and good governance as universal principles “a great collective achievement”. Latvia’s experience had shown that those principles were the backbone of social and economic transformation, he said. They should be entrenched in national value systems promoting zero tolerance for corruption. The new Agenda provided for the empowerment of women, which, in Latvia, was supported by the Constitution, the education system and public opinion. Stressing that social, economic and environmental challenges were linked, he said that every country and every stakeholder had a decisive role to play in shifting the world onto a sustainable path, with united efforts and a collaborative spirit.

SALVADOR SÁNCHEZ CERÉN, President of El Salvador, stated that the international community was beginning a new era by committing to the Sustainable Development Goals. His country had made real progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals despite great natural disasters. In 2009, the country had decided to make social issues the main priority of the State. In 2014, his Government had set up a plan for restoring the environment. The country had also achieved various goals relating to the empowerment of women. Development must have the human being at its centre. The active participation of all countries and civil society had resulted in consensus on a new path forward. Developing countries must be duly represented in the process of revising the financial system. Willpower and capabilities and resources must be united to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

FAURE ESSOZIMNA GNASSINGBÉ, President of Togo, said that, no matter the results obtained by countries individually in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, most important was the ability to use the collective experiences of every one to move resolutely forward. He welcomed the selection of his State, among others, as a pilot country for the implementation of the new approach to integrate sustainable development. Through that initiative, his State had been able to bring its views to the 2022 agenda and had consolidated national progress that strengthened capacity and modernized the State in moving towards sustainable development. As development at its core was based on human factors, his country was resolute in capacity-building efforts with development partners at all levels. On maritime security, he said the African Union Commission in Togo planned to organize in 2016 a special summit focused fully on that subject as well as on development in Africa.

MICHELLE BACHELET JERIA, President of Chile, said the Agenda had benefitted from the experience of the Millennium Development Goals. Chile would honour the new Goals with reforms already under way, such as universal education, real gender parity, development in harmony with the environment and balanced relations between employers and workers. Still, in the South American region, almost 71 million people still lived in poverty, 7.5 million children under age five suffered from chronic malnutrition, and gender disparities persisted in employment and political participation. The new necessary measures must be used to build a fairer world and give millions of people a better quality of life.

ARTHUR PETER MUTHARIKA, President of Malawi, stated that his country had implemented the Millennium Development Goals through a number of medium term development strategies, making achievements in four of the eight Goals, including reducing child mortality, and combating HIV and AIDS. However, the Goals relating to women’s empowerment remained unachieved. Therefore, as his country started implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, it would take a keen interest in implementing the gender-related goals, with a special focus on ensuring access to education for the girl child. Further, Malawi had learned a number of valuable lessons during the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, such as the use of smart indicators in measuring progress, localizing the international commitments, and impact of natural disasters on the Goals.

DAVID ARTHUR GRANGER, President of Guyana, said achieving the Sustainable Development Goals required sustained cooperation among and within countries. Unity of efforts would be essential to confront difficult but necessary choices and vigilance would be required from leaders and all stakeholders. A reformed and revitalized United Nations development system needed to, among other things, provide the impetus and enable accountability. All sources of financing should be required to contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and all countries should play positive roles in accordance with their diverse circumstances. The Goals represented the finest aspirations of humanity, he said, adding that “the world we want for future generations is within our grasp.”

UHURU KENYATTA, President of Kenya, said many of the Millennium Development Goals had been achieved; however, “we must acknowledge that progress has been uneven across the world and across the Goals.” Within countries, rural poverty remained unacceptably high, while urban poverty was extensive, growing and under reported by traditional indicators. Describing progress made in his country, including the adoption of free universal primary education and the promotion of gender mainstreaming, he said that lessons learned from the Millennium Goals had shown that much could be achieved when the world was focused around a shared vision and common goals. Many of the Goals of the new Agenda resonated with Kenya’s own development aspirations. Those Goals were extremely ambitious and required an equally ambitious means of implementation, he said, urging development partners to substantially increase the resources available to developing countries through official development assistance. Effective mobilization of resources in the context of a global partnership would also be critical in going forward, he concluded.

ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF, President of Liberia, said the new development agenda called the attention of the United Nations to the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals while broadening the vision to incorporate new challenges. She noted that the African Union had established the Common African Position, which reflected the priorities of the continent and integrated them into the 2015 Development Agenda, as well as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Those documents demanded a universal commitment to eradicating poverty and hunger, safeguarding the planet and opening the doors to prosperity everywhere. The Addis Ababa agreement provided the toolkit for countries to galvanize the needed resources in implementing the new global agenda. Based on that common framework, Member States could move forward in crafting national development policies and strategies, but only in the recognition that every country would have to define its own priorities. Liberia called for a renewed and revitalized partnership among nations, with specific attention on fair trade, taxation and technology, and the elimination of illicit financial flows and terrorism. The successful implementation of the 2030 Development Agenda would depend largely on strong follow-up and review mechanisms, as well as the creation of capacities for development planning, monitoring and evaluation.

ANOTE TONG, President of Kiribati, said the Sustainable Development Goals reflected the realities and the multitude of challenges facing humanity today. For his country, the adoption of the Agenda was timely as it finalized its own development plan. In particular, Goal 13 on the need to take urgent action to combat climate change — especially for low-lying countries which were already experiencing the impacts of climate change — was critical. His people lived on an atoll no higher than three metres above sea level and faced natural disasters with an increasing frequency. The first test of the world’s commitment to the new Agenda was the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. “The new development Agenda will mean nothing if the Paris Climate summit in December does not come up with a meaningful and legally binding agreement” that would address climate change for those on the front lines, he said. There was a need to step up collective efforts to mitigate global greenhouse gas emissions, he said, urging major emitters to do their part.

JUAN CARLOS VARELA RODRÍGUEZ, President of Panama, confirmed his country’s strong commitment to the new 2030 Agenda. Above and beyond any differences that might emerge between them, Governments must seek to agree on the same criteria and work together to combat crises both within countries and spanning regions. Millions of people who still lived on the margins of society depended on the new Agenda. Panama’s development plan was in line with that of the Agenda; the country had recently broadened its access to safe water, basic sanitation and other services. “Education is the key,” he added, noting that his country’s development plans were aimed particularly at young people. Coordinating resources was key to delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals, as was the effective use of information communication technologies. Environmental goals were also crucial. In Panama, the Government’s environment departments aimed to restore 50 per cent of deforested areas in the coming years. The Sustainable Development Goals gave the world new hope; it was now up to Governments to ensure that politics was “understood as serving others”.

MUHAMMADU BUHARI, President of Nigeria, said that with a new global cooperation in putting forth the Sustainable Development Goals, Member States had agreed to create partnerships and to adopt the means of implementation for an international development agenda with clear-cut social and environmental goals. Together with Addis Ababa, those Goals offered an opportunity to address the unfinished business of the

Millennium Development Goals and usher in a new commitment to human rights. National efforts had rescued millions from extreme poverty, maternal and child mortality and the prospect of war. Threats to international peace and stability were now more enabled by non-State actors, which required a more significant effort and vigour to prosecute. Poverty also posed a significant threat to global peace and development. States needed to address the evils that went hand in hand with poverty, as well as the bottom billion that had no safety net. The success of the 2030 Agenda must be guided by countries' ownership. For its part, Nigeria had committed to improve and streamline the collection of funds from migrant and overseas workers, as well as to put in place a system to combat problems detrimental to the economy and ecosystems created by the demand for oil.

TOMMY ESANG REMENGESAU, President of Palau, said there was now a strong set of imperatives for the transformational change that countries and peoples needed to safeguard the planet for future generations. As the Pope's speech this morning had shown, repeated high-level calls for swift action on climate change were starting to focus the world's attention on a fundamental truth: what was done — or not done — about climate change today would affect the lives of millions of people for generations to come. Those who contributed least to the crisis were suffering the most from it; that realization must be part of the agreement at the Climate Conference in Paris. The Sustainable Development Goals were the next "great step forward". They must raise the bar in addressing the root causes of poverty and environmental degradation. The new Agenda recognized that there was no region, country or people which was not suffering, and that suffering would not stop until action was taken. The hard work lay ahead for rich and poor nations alike to make the Goals "real". "Global partnership is our only hope," he said.

EVO MORALES, President of Bolivia, said that the world needed to ask itself why the Millennium Development Goals had not been achieved. The root causes of poverty lay with the policies of the capitalist system, which, with concentration of wealth in the hands of a few individuals or countries, plundered natural resources and destroyed the environment. That system bolstered banks and robbed the poor. The capitalist system forced people into extreme poverty; conflict, violence and death were commonly the result. Now more than ever before, military expenditures had risen to astronomical levels. Refugees were dying at sea while "war feeds the economy of a capitalist system". Indeed, today wars were simply being manufactured and anti-capitalist States were being criminalized. In Bolivia, to change the social situation, the country had tried to free itself from that neo-liberal model. It promoted a policy of good living and was working to regain ownership of its natural resources. "Today, it is the people in Bolivia who are in power," he said, stressing that the capitalist system must be ended if the world was to achieve an end to poverty by 2030.

TRUONG TAN SANG, President of Viet Nam, said the Sustainable Development Goals could not be realized in circumstances of war, conflict or instability. It was therefore incumbent upon countries to find peaceful solutions to conflicts, exercise self-restraint and strengthen cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit. Having achieved most Millennium Development Goals ahead of schedule, Viet Nam believed that the success of the 2030 Agenda required strong political will and effective mobilization of domestic resources. The United Nations should play the critical coordinating role in strengthening the global partnership for sustainable development. To that end, he urged developed countries to support their developing counterparts particularly through capacity-building, technology transfer, trade facilitation and access to financial resources.

JÁNOS ÁDER, President of Hungary, said that, over the past 40 years, the world's population and greenhouse gas emissions had doubled, the quantity of fresh water had diminished, and agricultural land was being lost at a rapid clip. Sustainable Development Goal 13 left a lot to be determined, and the road to the Climate Conference in Paris was still a "long one". In other areas, the Sustainable Development Goals were indeed "spectacular", but if the climate change goal was not met, and if the Paris Conference was not a success, they would come to nothing. If Goal 13 was not met, inequality and poverty would not be reduced, and peace and security would become impossible. The effects would be war and mass migration on a scale much larger than what was being seen now. The Assembly had given a standing ovation to the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. If that enthusiasm was genuine, then he urged all States to reconsider their positions before the Paris Conference. "Please think about what we stand to risk if we do not have a tangible agreement" at the end of that conference, he said.

ELBEGDORJ TSAKHIA, President of Mongolia, said the global community had largely passed the Millennium Development Goals test, having learned lessons and made huge strides. Now Member States had the responsibility to ensure the full implementation of a truly universal and ambitious action plan for the next 15 years. The success of the Sustainable Development Goals would mainly depend on a revitalized global partnership, active engagement of Governments and synergy with civil society and the private sector. While each country had the primary responsibility for its own development, many countries, including landlocked developing States, still needed help. Robust, inclusive, open policies and reliable implementation, monitoring and accountability were critical to the Agenda's implementation. Every nation must actively contribute to the global good within its respective capability and differentiated responsibility.

DON FELIPE VI, King of Spain, said the peoples of the world were gathered together today to change the world "everywhere and for everyone" over the next 15 years. The new Agenda reflected the voice of millions. Part of that work would involve returning what had been taken from nature; the Climate Conference in Paris must therefore result in a tangible outcome. "Interdependence must make us think about a common project," and must make States act as one, he said. However, development had never been a uniform process. Wars, epidemics and other crises could undo years of progress in developing countries and deserved the attention of the international community. All States were responsible for ensuring that the Sustainable Development Goals were met, he said, adding that his country's commitment to that Agenda had been the largest of all the funds committed.

SIMONETTA SOMMARUGA, President of Switzerland, said the 2030 Agenda was one "of the people, by the people, for the people". Although it was not a magic wand that would wish away the problems of the world, the Agenda was an extremely promising approach to resolving many of them. The international community would do justice to the Agenda by firmly adhering to the principle of leaving no one behind. Switzerland had given special attention to five issues: sustainable water management; gender equality; building peaceful and inclusive societies; health-care that also addressed non-communicable diseases and sexual and reproductive health and rights; and specific targets on disaster risk reduction, the role of migrants and sustainable consumption and production. In implementing the Goals, her country would proceed with the approach of its system of direct democracy that gave wide-ranging rights to its people for self-determination.

JUAN ORLANDO HERNÁNDEZ ALVARADO, President of Honduras, said a reduction in drug trafficking, greater security and development, and increased opportunities had led to a reduction in migration flows. Despite those gains, his country, one of the three most vulnerable in the world according to the Risk Index of Germanwatch, had continued to deal with the effects of climate change. Its vulnerability was made evident with the onset of El Niño, which had brought to Honduras the second consecutive year of drought and the most severe recorded since the middle of the twentieth century, generating critical risks to food security for its people and increasing the risk of exacerbating once again the migration process. Underscoring the need for shared responsibilities in addressing climate change, he said those that had contributed the most to triggering the crisis should have contributed the most to solving it. He called especially on developed countries to address the Sustainable Development Goals and to assume co responsibility in dealing with the effects of climate change as a moral and political imperative.

ROBERT G. MUGABE, President of Zimbabwe, said progress on the Goals had been insufficient and uneven, which had widened inequalities and in cases deepened poverty. The gathering at this Summit confirmed that the battles against poverty, inequality, exclusion and global warming were far from being won. The success of the new Agenda depended on several factors; key among them were actions taken at the national level. In the context of implementation, Zimbabwe's key priority was to bring the economy back on a sustained growth trajectory. The reforms undertaken, including measures to attract investment, would materialize if unjustified sanctions to which Zimbabwe had been subject to the last 15 years were removed. Freed from those sanctions, his country stood a better chance of achieving its national vision of sustainable, inclusive growth, human-centred development, structural transformation and poverty eradication. Additionally, Africa needed international cooperation in stemming the haemorrhaging of its resources, as well as a redoubling of efforts to agree on the Doha Development Agenda and the creation of a universal, rules-based, transparent and equitable trading system.

MOKGWEETSI E.K. MASISI, Vice-President of Botswana, said the 17 Sustainable Development Goals had

the potential to significantly and irrevocably alter the course of human development by charting a new era of sustained prosperity for all. Therefore, the international community should make every effort to garner the necessary political will and resources to ensure successful implementation of the post-2015 Agenda. That Agenda resonated with Botswana's development plans and objectives, he said, stressing that inclusive governance, democracy and respect for human rights and the rule of law should form the bedrock of efforts. The need to ensure the sustainability of consumption and protection patterns as part of broader strategies to address climate change was not an option, but a compelling moral obligation. Beyond financial support and technology transfer, successful implementation of the Agenda would require effective follow up and review taking into account national circumstances.

JUAN ALFONSO FUENTES SORIA, Vice-President of Guatemala, recalling the peaceful protests that had taken place in his country since mid-April of the current year as well as the elections held in September, stated that it was vital to remove conditions preventing people's full participation in economic, political and social life. The problem in Latin America, the region with the greatest inequality in terms of wealth and income, was poverty caused by the absence of justice. Further, empowerment for women was essential. He also expressed solidarity with the migrants suffering humanitarian tragedy at the borders of Europe. The Guatemalan identity was defined by "the volume of the migration and the quality of the exiled". The Summit had successfully brought the international community together to finalize an ambitious programme with 17 new goals to eradicate poverty, promote prosperity and protect the environment, he concluded.

EDI RAMA, Prime Minister of Albania, said that, despite progress and growth, the world remained home to unbearable poverty and multiple challenges. The new, "bold, ambitious, transformative" Agenda was a path from poverty to prosperity. "It is a pact of a generation" with a solemn promise that no one should be left behind, he said. The Agenda was universally applicable and concerned all countries. For Albanians, it meant strengthening the rule of law, deepening social harmony and improving social cohesion, among other things. The Pope, in his visit to Albania, had said the country was a unique example of peaceful religious coexistence. Listing other priorities, he said the country aimed to further refine an inclusive domestic agenda while respecting the environment. Quality education and free health care for all would also be crucial components on the country's road to sustainability. Albania was embarking on European integration, which affected every aspect of the country's policies. Meanwhile, his country worked to increase peaceful cooperation among Balkan States.

ERNA SOLBERG, Prime Minister of Norway, said that the international community was meeting at a time of great hope as well as grave crisis. There was hope in the success of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as in the historic 2030 Agenda being set today to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, conserve oceans and ecosystems, and leave no one behind, including those most vulnerable. However, at the same time, there was a global humanitarian crisis unfolding. Sixty million people were now refugees or displaced. They were fleeing conflict, poverty and poor governance. The war in Syria had forced 12 million people from their homes. Others were fleeing economic hardship and fragile States. Business as usual would not lead to real sustainable development, but rather the international community must follow up the Secretary-General's call for human dignity by scaling up humanitarian assistance, saving lives and meeting urgent needs. She called on all nations to be generous so as to prevent a "lost generation".

ADRIAN HASLER, Head of the Government of Liechtenstein, said that adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals meant that the world was crossing a threshold to a new era of international collaboration. "We are promising nothing less than a better life for future generations," he said. With the new Agenda, the world was building on the success of the Millennium Development Goals while also learning from their weaknesses and designing a blueprint for the future. Sustainable development could only be achieved by tackling all of its three dimensions: economic, social and environmental. The international community could not increase prosperity without preserving the planet or investing equally in men, women, girls and boys. The targets were highly ambitious and monitoring their implementation was therefore key to their success. Accountability was an individual but also a collective responsibility and the world must seize the opportunity, for the sake of people and the planet.

GASTON ALPHONSO BROWNE, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, said previous declarations, including the Millennium Development Goals, had failed to deliver on a number of their promises. Inequality within

and among countries remained unjustified. Today, the majority of the world's poorest people lived in middle income countries. "I appeal to developed countries to hold true to past commitments, including fulfilling their official development assistance mandate," he said. Both North-South and South-South cooperation were crucial. However, the economic and social development initiatives by small countries, particularly in financial services, were crippled by the unilateral actions of large countries and their institutions. In addition, unfair and uneven trade and investment pacts were imposed upon developing countries. The United Nations did nothing more than "urge" States against such policies. Indeed, the international community had done nothing to prohibit those acts. Any celebration of the Sustainable Development Goals should await their delivery, he warned, calling the declaration "the mirror in which we will see our faces in 2030".

MIROSLAV CERAR, Prime Minister of Slovenia, called the new Agenda comprehensive, global, universal, visionary and concrete. That initiative would implement the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals, reaffirm commitment to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, and recognize the connection between peace, security and sustainable development. The Agenda also addressed the global migration crisis, a shared responsibility of the international community, as well as climate change. He hoped that the adoption of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would be complemented by an ambitious, durable, universal and legally binding agreement in Paris. Everyone must participate in the new Agenda's implementation. Slovenia's Development Strategy would implement it at the national level, while the country would update legal and strategic documents on international development cooperation, demonstrating that small donor countries could make a vital contribution.

ENELE SOSENE SOPOAGA, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, said his country supported the call for partnerships and for the inclusion of the Technology Facilitation Mechanism. The new Agenda also required targeted institutional reforms at the United Nations and a reformed Security Council that included climate change as a security issue and a permanent agenda item. Tuvalu welcomed the "special case" recognition of the small island developing States in the 2030 Agenda, which acknowledged their unique vulnerabilities — socially, economically and environmentally. If the post-2015 Agenda sought to respect, protect and fulfil all human rights, then the United Nations needed a credible and comprehensive agreement at the Climate Conference in Paris that set a temperature stabilization level well below 1.5°C and included a new stand-alone and permanent loss and damage mechanism. But the vast disparity and distance of small island developing States from world centres also made increased connectivity and the presence of the United Nations on the ground necessary. The United Nations must not continue marginalizing those most vulnerable Members simply because of distance.

FREUNDEL STUART, Prime Minister of Barbados, said the Addis Ababa Action Agenda specified the policies and actions to finance sustainable development, and reached beyond the narrow scope of gross domestic product per capita in developing transparent measurements of progress. Furthermore, the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States reinforced the status of those countries as a special case for sustainable development in view of their unique vulnerabilities. The long-term effects of climate change, including the ravages of more frequent and destructive natural disasters, posed an existential threat to those island States. Barbados and other Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries firmly believed climate change could only be tackled by a comprehensive international effort. Additionally, the region required a strategy of debt relief in order to create more fiscal space and engineer much-needed economic development to realize the goals set out in Agenda 2030. As the United Nations considered the post-2015 Development Agenda, it needed to mobilize and allocate adequate, consistent and predictable financial support to achieve those new Goals.

HAILEMARIAM DESSALEGN, Prime Minister of Ethiopia, said that it was difficult to conceive of a more fitting time than the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations for embarking on a newly revitalized international partnership for development. The genuine hope was that the Summit would signify the commitment of the international community to transform the world, which was what the 2030 Agenda called for. The world now stood at the dawn of a new development era, and the Sustainable Development Goals that the international community were about to implement required much more concerted and resolute efforts than what had been witnessed with the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals. This was not due to the fact that the new Goals were simply more numerous, but because they

were universally applicable and far more ambitious. The adoption of the new Goals today meant a lot of things to the developing world, particularly in Africa. It meant the beginning of the fight to eliminate extreme poverty once and for all, the transformation of economies, and the development of human capacity. For its part, Ethiopia was committed to embarking on this important journey of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, and had launched a five-year national development plan to that effect. Realizing the Goals could be done more fully and effectively if his country's efforts were supplemented by support from development partners whose contributions had been paramount over the years. Through continued and strengthened collaboration, Ethiopia could do even more to achieve that transformative agenda.

LYONCHOEN TSHERING TOBGAY, Prime Minister of Bhutan, said that in its 70 years, the United Nations had worked to maintain global peace, protect human rights and uphold international law. It had led the global fight against poverty, disease and hunger. As the international community concluded the Millennium Development Goals, the peoples of the world were healthier, lived longer, and were better educated. Since as early as the 1970s, Bhutan had stressed the importance of "gross national happiness" over "gross national product". Focusing on happiness was a holistic approach to development that improved the well-being of people by balancing material growth with social inclusiveness and environmental sustainability. Bhutan was not only carbon neutral, but carbon negative, because more than half of the country was protected as national parks and wildlife sanctuaries. To transform the world, countries must transform themselves, and he hoped that in 70 years hence, future generations would meet at the United Nations to celebrate a more secure, prosperous and peaceful world.

PRAKASH MAN SINGH, Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal, said the new post-2015 development agenda was universal in scope and transformative in nature, with the people, planet, peace, prosperity and partnership at its core. However, adoption was not adequate; implementation was a huge challenge that would require commitment, resources and international cooperation. People had to be at the centre of governance, and have a sense of ownership in the development process. Development and democracy were complementary; that approach would orient implementation to ensure that the aspirations of the most vulnerable were met and no one was left behind. It was against that background that Nepal was recovering from the massive earthquake it had suffered in April. In that regard, there was a gap between commitment and delivery, he said, calling for a monitoring mechanism to ensure that commitments were translated to action and results in a time-bound manner. Finally, he said, last week Nepal had promulgated a Constitution that was the culmination of nine years of dialogue among political parties. Having been agreed in a democratic, inclusive and transparent manner, that document was a historic achievement.

NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia, said poverty eradication must remain the central and overarching objective of the post-2015 Agenda. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would require an ambitious, comprehensive, holistic and transformative approach to their implementation that should be supported by accountable and inclusive institutions, sound policies and effective governance at all levels. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda should anchor, reinvigorate and strengthen financing for development, identify obstacles and support implementation of the new Goals. She called on developed countries to scale up their existing bilateral and multilateral official development assistance commitments. By leaving no one behind, the international community could collectively bequeath its best legacy to posterity.

JOËL MORGAN, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Seychelles, said that as the world came to the end of the 15-year process of the Millennium Development Goals, it was important to note that there remained huge disparities within and among countries. Seychelles had achieved almost all of those Goals; nearly 100 per cent of children attended school, women gave birth with the best of care, and environmental protection was already a flagship cause for his country. Looking forward, there should be no reason not to achieve the new Agenda. The Sustainable Development Goals were a to-do list for people and the planet, and were the most important long-term plan the world had for its survival. For small island developing States, the ever-increasing threats surrounding their oceans boosted their vulnerabilities, and weak global governance of oceanic spaces undermined collective security. His country had however established itself as a global leader in marine conservation, which was of vital importance for the whole planet. The first conference on the blue economy, held this year, was a success, and established a solid partnership for future research.

FAEEQA BINT SAEED ALSALEH, Minister for Social Development of Bahrain, noted that a key strength of the post-2015 agenda was that it allowed countries to achieve their highest aspirations for sustainable development based on their specific situations and circumstances. Her country had been pursuing a comprehensive development plan that encompassed many of the principles and objectives of sustainable development. The forward-looking vision of the Kingdom had been recognized through international awards and in United Nations reports. As part of its commitment to implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, Bahrain was stepping up work at the national and regional levels, including on periodic follow-up.

ERLAN ABDYLDAYEV, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kyrgyzstan, welcomed the fact that the new Agenda took into account the needs of countries in special situations. The Agenda's success would depend on proper focus on financing for development, he said, stressing that countries should scale up mobilization of domestic resources. Combatting hunger and poverty should remain the primary task of the international community, which required a holistic approach. Only with a balanced focus on all three pillars of sustainable development could actual results be achieved. Kyrgyzstan's national strategy for sustainable development was oriented towards the people and addressed the special vulnerability of the country resulting from climate change. The development of hydropower as part of the green economy was the most effective way of promoting sustainable development

AÏCHATOU KANE BOULAMA, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Niger, said that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals was of the utmost importance for not only the poorest countries but also for the world as a whole. The bold and far-reaching agenda to transform the world in 15 years through 17 Development Goals and 169 targets would be difficult. However, together all nations must commit to it with determination. The people of Niger would rise to the challenge, and had expressed their desire to eradicate poverty and hunger. The desires to overcome the effects of climate change, to develop agriculture, to promote a flourishing society where women were equal to men, as well as other aims, were at the heart of her country's efforts. Niger believed in the United Nations capacity to ensure success, and that the current generation would be remembered for positively transforming the world.

JEAN CLAUDE GAKOSSO, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Congo, said that the Millennium Development Goals had been adopted 15 years ago with the hope of guaranteeing a good life for the peoples of his country and the world. Significant progress had been made since then. Global poverty continued to recede, more children than ever were in primary school, and child mortality rates had plummeted. Targeted investments in combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis had saved millions of lives. In Congo, notable progress had been made in attaining the Millennium Development Goals. To go beyond those goals and ensure more inclusive development with the Sustainable Development Goals, his country had adopted a new development strategy. He hoped that COP21, held later this year, would break new ground, since it was a crucial component for the goals the international community had just adopted. "The future we want can only be lasting if we take action together," he said. The world needed to act on different fronts and base future action on the new paradigms of the Sustainable Development Goals for a more brotherly world and more generous humanity.

NIERMALA S. BADRISING, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Suriname, said closing inequality gaps was a top priority for her country. Accordingly, her State had placed a strong emphasis on improving education, health and socioeconomic conditions. In the face of declining prices in international commodity markets, it was working to accelerate the transformation from a basic mineral and agricultural economy to a more diversified one. Many countries, including middle income countries such as hers, faced challenges in making the Sustainable Development Goals a reality; she therefore supported the recognition in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the special challenges those countries faced. On climate change, she said that her State — which had maintained a forest cover well over 90 per cent of its total land area and had kept its deforestation rate at 0.02 per cent — showed that countries could be carbon negative. Her delegation looked forward to a successful outcome at the Climate Conference in Paris.

ABDULAZIZ KAMILOV, Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, after listing many of the accomplishments the country made under the Millennium Development Goals, said the problems of global ecological and climate change remained the international community's focus of attention. The largest of those, the catastrophe of the Aral Sea, whose drying up had left a vast desert carrying dust and poisonous salts thousands of kilometres, was

now observed throughout the world. The Aral Sea tragedy had rendered the most serious impact on the 65 million people of Central Asia, however, causing the extreme decrease in potable water, an uninhabitable area and the spread of disease. Uzbekistan hoped the United Nations would take into consideration that catastrophe when implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and establish, under the United Nations auspices, a special trust fund for the Aral Sea region. For that region, the fund would provide social and economic development, preserve ecological balance, recover the flora and fauna on the brink of extinction, and bring the two transboundary water arteries of the former sea – the Amu Darya and Syr Darya rivers, under international authority.

WILFRED ELRINGTON, Attorney General and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Belize, said that, as a natural resource and people-based economy, his country had long pursued a holistic, socially and environmentally sensitive development agenda. Its national strategy integrated the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and spoke to an ambitious vision: to live in peace, tranquillity, and in harmony with nature, enjoying a high quality of life, and being able to look after its own development in a sustainable way. “We know that the task ahead is a daunting one,” he said, stressing that limited financial resources were an enduring challenge for Belize. In that regard, he expressed his concern that the graduation criteria unilaterally imposed by financial institutions upon countries such as his made it difficult for those countries to access grant-based and concessional financing internationally. He also called for better policies to facilitate enhanced access to international public sources of financing for small island developing States; better multilateral trade policies to ensure improved market access for small, vulnerable economies; and more inclusive governance structures at the international level to ensure that the concerns of small island developing States with middle-income status were taken into account when setting and executing policies.

RAYMOND TSHIBANDA N'TUNGAMULONGO, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, noted that the Millennium Development Goals had resulted in remarkable progress in the fight against poverty and hunger across the globe and had fostered a strong spirit of international partnership. However, progress on specific indicators varied in his country, which underscored the continuing challenge in the fields of education, health, gender equality and environmental protection. Underdevelopment and poverty represented an affront to humanity, which the post-2015 agenda aimed at removing. To that end, Member States must take concrete measures to strengthen cooperation and solidarity, he said, stressing that development and justice could not be envisaged without peace. The United Nations remained the natural space to pursue the comprehensive and bold agenda.

YVES GERMAIN JOSEPH, Minister for Planning and External Cooperation of Haiti, said the Millennium Development Goals had led to robust policies leading to remarkable results, including in reducing poverty. Greater access to water, health care, and education had improved the quality of life around the world. However, those results could not obscure the challenges that remained in diverse areas. Haiti had focused on people-centric development in a comprehensive way and had achieved notable progress across development indicators. The enormity of the population's needs underscored the scale of the development challenge, which the country was committed to addressing through a democratic path. Donors needed to put together more flexible procedures that would enable greater absorption of assistance.

NENEH MACDOUALL-GAYE, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Gambia, said that the new Development Goals were no doubt the supreme manifestation of the world's collective will and desire to enhance the lives and livelihoods of humanity. It was therefore imperative to muster great courage, mobilize added resources and marshal human capital to ensure the Sustainable Development Goals effectively and expeditiously completed the unfinished agenda of the Millennium Development Goals. There was cause to celebrate in that significant progress was made during the implementation of those initial goals, and Gambia had made its own strides. The Government of Gambia would further redouble efforts to sustain and improve upon its gains, as well as address challenges and improve livelihoods of all Gambians. Worldwide, conflicts remained the biggest challenges to development. Millions, if not billions, of dollars were spent on lethal weapons when that money could have been used to accelerate development. The Sustainable Development Goals were a contract with humanity, and although the United Nations may not be perfect, it was the only global institution capable of ensuring the security and development of the world.

MARIAME FOFANA (Burkina Faso) welcomed the adoption of the new Development Agenda contained within the Sustainable Development Goals. That reaffirmed the principles for eradicating poverty, fighting

hunger and addressing inequalities. The Goals gave States an opportunity to draw up new and more ambitious perspectives to benefit their peoples. The 169 targets would ensure the expected success. Her delegation was resolved and committed to work towards the full achievement of those objectives, but wished to particularly stress Goal 8 on youth, the most important segment of her country's population. It was necessary to establish a stringent follow-up mechanism, which would in due course provide transparent, trustworthy and disaggregated statistics, so that in the end it could provide an outcome that was gradual and full of challenges, but would nevertheless be achieved.

ANTHONY MOTHAE MARUPING, a representative of the African Union, welcomed the 17 new Sustainable Development Goals and their focus on a balanced agenda that covered the three principles of development. Africa had hosted the third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa earlier this year, which would support future achievement of the Goals. Gender and women's empowerment in all spheres of life needed to be pursued vigorously, and the engagement of youth must be given high priority. The required capacity to achieve those aims had been assessed, and methods to close capacity gaps had been defined. Goals, targets and indicators were clear, and had been quantified, to ensure credible results-based monitoring. Without adequate, reliable and timely statistics, effective monitoring would be constrained. With the cooperation of the international community, Africa should be able to achieve the new development Agenda.

DIMITRY PANKIN, Chairman of the Board of the Eurasian Development Bank, stressed the need to redesign the model for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in order to ensure that attainment of certain Goals did not undermine others. The need to finance infrastructure projects had led to the emergence of a number of development banks around the world in recent years. Coordinating the activities of those banks would be central to effectively attaining objectives, he said, stressing that the United Nations should play the role of the coordinator.

SABER CHOWDHURY, President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, said the summit presented an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to steer the world towards a safer and prosperous future. The perspectives of parliamentarians had been incorporated in the Goals through the outreach efforts of the United Nations. The Charter of the United Nations began with the words "we the people", which parliamentarians, as elected representatives of the people, were closely intertwined with. Through their core functions of budget appropriation, oversight and national ownership of international commitments, parliaments were an important agent of achieving the post-2015 agenda.

ZHANG XINSHENG, a representative of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, said his group believed that the Sustainable Development Goals provided an important framework to address the challenges of the day. Today's adoption was more than a symbolic act. Rather, it was a promise to all people and to future generations of a world where resources were used sustainably and people lived in harmony with nature. All life on Earth depended on well-functioning ecosystems. If a nation failed to deliver ecosystem services, the new goals would not be able to be achieved. The Sustainable Development Goals showed that they could only be achieved if the international community protected the planet's natural systems and put energy into conserving and restoring them. Investing in nature was investing in people. The last few years were spent on talking and agreeing, and now it was time to shift attention towards implementation, wherein every stakeholder played a part.

MARTIN KREUTNER, Dean and Executive Secretary of the International Anti Corruption Academy (IACA), said "we will all be judged by concrete and tangible results" as the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted and implemented. The world was seeing turbulent times, and there was declining trust in political, institutional and corporate leadership, as well as scepticism about the ability of national and international actors to make the world a better and fairer place. Besides the journey to achieve the 17 Goals, there was a second journey beginning — one against corruption. A strong, relentless fight against corruption, with leadership from the very top, both nationally and internationally and from both the political and corporate worlds, was essential for realizing the new Agenda. Corruption cost more than 5 per cent of global gross domestic product and added 5 to 10 per cent in any single contract in business, and hit vulnerable people the hardest. There was a growing awareness of corruption's devastating effects. There was strong anti-corruption language in Goal 16, which aimed to "substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms", among other things. Meanwhile, the Academy's programmes and trainings had empowered

professionals from some 140 countries and would soon deliver new programmes in Latin America and Africa.

ELHADJ AS SY, Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), said his organization was pleased with the emphasis placed on the most vulnerable and most marginalized when it came to the new Sustainable Development Goals. There were an estimated 250 million people affected by humanitarian crises. The world was seeing an increase in the intensity, frequency and unpredictability of disasters, often as a result of climate change and unplanned urbanization. Tens of millions of people were affected by conflicts that were becoming more and more protracted, stretching the capacity and imagination of humanitarian organizations. The ambitious new Development Agenda needed to be backed with sufficient resources, and must go “from billions to trillions” if the international community had any hope of delivering on the promises being made today. He endorsed the 2030 Agenda, and the network of Red Cross and Red Crescent National Societies stood ready to partner with Governments, United Nations agencies, civil society, the corporate sector and communities themselves to turn the ambitious Agenda into reality.

MICHAELLE JEAN, Secretary-General of the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF), said 2015 would be left to posterity as a year of milestones. Her organization was present at all of the conferences where commitments had been made to create a peaceful and prosperous planet. It would also remain at the forefront of efforts to implement the ambitious post-2015 Agenda in a spirit of solidarity and interdependence. The globalization of problems must be addressed by a globalization of solutions based on accountability and collective responsibility. Inaction, arrogance and indifference had accumulated challenges that required immediate and concerted action. By instilling hope in women and youth, the world would have created the foundation for true compassion and humanism.

BADRE EDDINE ALLALI, Under-Secretary-General for Social Affairs of the League of Arab States, said his organization had adopted important resolutions within the framework of the new Development Agenda, demonstrating political will at the highest level. The League would continue to coordinate with Member States to organize a ministerial conference on implementation of the post-2015 Agenda, among other activities. The challenges were enormous and required coordinated action, he said, stressing the role of youth in particular in attaining sustainable development in the Arab world.

BRENDA KILLEN, Deputy Director of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), said that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals required synergies across policy areas and the reconciliation of difficult policy trade-offs. Nowhere was this more evident than in the international effort to tackle climate change. For too long, the world economy had relied on fossil fuels. That needed to end. When it came to financing the Goals, official development assistance remained a crucial source of funding for development, especially for the poorest and most fragile countries. Far-reaching follow-up would also prove essential to encourage action and learning around the 2030 Agenda. That monitoring depended on robust data to pinpoint needs and capture progress at the global, regional, national and local levels. Finally, countries would benefit from the Global Positioning System — a way of piecing together evidence, triangulating their position and guiding them on the journey ahead. The OECD stood ready to help design, build and deliver the system to help countries turn commitments into actions and demonstrate tangible progress.

FANG LIU, Secretary General of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), said that aviation could transform lives and societies by connecting the world, allowing access to new technologies and opening global markets for rural producers. For landlocked developing countries and small island developing States in particular, aviation represented an essential lifeline to enhance connectivity, which in turn promoted greater tourism, trade, and other vital business activities. ICAO had launched a “no country left behind” campaign to better identify and coordinate assistance to needful States so that they could foster sustainable local and regional prosperity and fully benefit from improved air connectivity.

JOSE GRAZIANO DA SILVA, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), said that the new development agenda clearly recognized the centrality of food security, nutrition and sustainable agriculture in Sustainable Development Goal 2. However, it was also clear that the full range of goals could not be achieved without rapid progress in reducing and eliminating hunger and malnutrition by 2030. The

number of hungry people had dropped by over 200 million since 1990, and 73 out of 120 countries monitored by the FAO had met the Millennium Development Goal hunger target. However, nearly 800 million people still suffered from chronic hunger, which was “unacceptable”. The world could only rest when it had achieved zero hunger. Agriculture and rural development were central to that effort. However, one third of agricultural land had been degraded and 75 per cent of crop biodiversity had been lost in the last century. Furthermore, a third of the food produced globally was lost and wasted. The current methods of production and consumption were not sustainable, and the world must act to change them.

MUKHISA KITUYI, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), said the new Agenda offered a universal consensus on dignity for all, a better planet and prosperity, in close accordance with the founding vision of UNCTAD. The challenge now was to turn from decisions to actions, from negotiations to implementation. In that regard, the Sustainable Development Goals would require a massive investment push over the next 20 years into a broader set of sectors and industries than had ever been seen on a worldwide scale. UNCTAD estimated that there was an unmet need of \$2.5 trillion annually in developing countries alone. The least developed countries would be the “testing ground” for the Goals, he said, adding that massive needs must be met in those countries. However, the Goals could also reinvigorate the ambition of international cooperation. “We have the tools needed to generate the massive push of investment needed,” he said, stressing that UNCTAD would help to accomplish that aim.

MARIE-PAULE ROUDIL, speaking on behalf of IRINA BOKOVA, Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), said the 2030 Agenda had provided a bold road map for a great collective journey. To succeed, the international community must remain guided by the moral compass at the heart of the United Nations for 70 years. The human rights and dignity of every woman and man were the starting point for all action and the measure of success. It was important to nurture the power of every development multiplier, every accelerator of inclusion, poverty eradication and sustainability. Her organization was fully committed to taking the Agenda forward through its normative work, upstream policy dialogue, capacity-building, inclusive partnerships and field-level work.

JAN BEAGLE, Deputy Executive Director of Management and Governance of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), said it was the responsibility of the international community to support development workers on the frontlines to implement the bold post-2015 agenda. Those working in the field of HIV/AIDS had defied naysayers and made remarkable progress in the fight against the pandemic. However, there was no room for complacency when it came to creating a world where all people enjoyed all rights. UNAIDS was proud to be among the first United Nations organizations to align its strategy with the Sustainable Development Goals.

SUSAN HOPGOOD of Education International said she was proud to represent the world’s trade union movement. The movement’s very reason of being was to combat and end poverty, reduce inequalities, achieve decent work and dignity at work, protect public services and infrastructure, champion women’s participation and improve fiscal, wage and social protection. “We are leading where too often our Governments fall short,” she said, adding that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would be more difficult than adopting them. It was obvious that the current means of implementation fell short. Commitments were not real unless they were binding. The success of the Goals would require tax justice, strong public education, and health, water and sanitation systems. She called on States to move quickly to add the structures that would show the world that the Goals were designed for success.

SYLVIA BEALES of HelpAge International said that, working together with the Stakeholder Group on Ageing, her organization represented 800 million older people worldwide. Commending States on the adoption of the new Agenda, she called on them to “count us in” and to embrace all people from birth to death. It was right that the Sustainable Development Goals took into account ageing and older people. Basic requirements for living well later in life did not exist. The lack of regular income was a “blight” on millions of people, and older women in particular were often the invisible victims of abuse and violence. Among other things, she went on to call on States to: recognize that population ageing was a success and not a burden; analyse, prepare for and invest in population ageing in national planning; and create and finance programmes that addressed the needs of older persons and protected their human rights.

Interactive Dialogue I

The morning's round table, co-chaired by Miro Cerar, Prime Minister of Slovenia, and Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, was entitled "Ending poverty and hunger". It explored the types of support that would likely be priorities over the next 15 years, as well as ways to revitalize partnerships and how to use science, technology and innovation in the service of the poor and hungry.

Opening the discussion, Mr. GONSALVES said today's dialogue spoke to the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals. "Time is not on our side," he said. Changes were needed in political economy, and in addressing climate change, peace and justice.

Mr. CERAR said 14 per cent of the population in the developing world — 836 million people — were extremely poor, and 800 million were chronically undernourished. Poverty and hunger must be tackled in a multidimensional way, which required strong political will, the involvement of all stakeholders, accountability and adequate resources. "I count on you to present bold ideas and views," he said.

When the floor was opened for discussion, leaders from around the world decried that 1 billion people — one sixth of humanity — were extremely poor. They underlined their determination to end poverty and hunger, with many describing strategies for pro-poor growth, improved human capital and decent work for all. Others focused on the need for sustainable food systems and reducing food waste. The poor were "one loss event away from calamity", some said, arguing that cash transfer schemes and job creation programmes would help protect against shocks.

Still others said women and children were disproportionately poor. CATHERINE SAMBA-PANZA, Head of State of the Transition of the Central African Republic, said some rural areas of her country had been forgotten, which had led young people to take up weapons. "We need to offer young people a new vision" that gave them hope for the future, she stressed.

Along those lines, ERNA SOLBERG, Prime Minister of Norway, said gender equality led to social progress and economic growth. If a girl attended school, it brought multiple benefits. With that in mind, Norway would double its aid to education for vulnerable children and refugees.

Such work, others said, spoke to broader issues of human dignity. IBRAHIM BOUBACAR KEITA, President of Mali, said that while his country was underdeveloped, his Government had allocated 10 per cent of its budget to ending famine, a figure which he would raise to 15 per cent. HAGE GEINGOB, President of Namibia, said his country was in the second phase of its war against poverty. Yet, the United Nations, by dividing Namibia's gross domestic product (GDP) by its small population, had wrongly categorized it as a "rich country". It did not receive grants or soft loans. Rather, it had set up a food bank.

PRAYUTH CHAN-OCHA, Prime Minister of Thailand, said his country's "economy sufficiency philosophy" focused on people-centred development, as well as moderation, reasonableness and resilience against internal and external shocks. "We must live modestly and in harmony with nature," he said.

Many speakers urged a focus on the economy and sound management. DAVID ARTHUR GRANGER, President of Guyana, said food waste in low- and middle-income countries at times stemmed from poor planning. Governments could work better with the private sector to put in place tools such as crop insurance. Some Governments were unwilling to enact "radical" fiscal policies that would, for example, fund school food programmes.

ARSENIO BALISACAN, Socioeconomic Planning Secretary of the Philippines, urged promoting economic growth while empowering the poor to participate in it, which in turn required dismantling barriers and recognizing the heterogeneity of poverty. Development planning must be inclusive, based on the latest data and informed by lessons learned.

Countries were replete with best practices, many said. TEREZA CAMPELLO, Minister for Social Development and Fight against Hunger of Brazil, described a programme to increase water access for rural communities, which had spared women from carrying water to their families.

SARTAJ AZIZ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, said his country was ready to share its experience in the creation of social safety nets. Eliminating poverty by 2030 would be difficult to achieve with existing policies. It required strong political commitment to accord the highest priority to that goal. Policies that discriminated against poor farmers must be reformed and microfinance should target the poor, ensuring their access to the credit markets.

The meeting also heard from business, philanthropic and non-governmental leaders, many of whom stressed the importance of collective efforts. PAUL POLMAN, Chief Executive Officer of Unilever, said business should be a powerful force for innovation, alongside Government and civil society. One in nine people still did not have enough food, yet half of what was produced did not make its way onto people's plates. Consumer Goods Forum members had pledged to halve consumer food waste. "We need a stronger mechanism for public-private partnerships," he said, as well as clear metrics and accountability across goals, targets and indicators.

Highlighting one best practice, MICHAEL J. MORRISSEY, International Insurance Society, said one European company provided crop insurance for 125 million farmers in India and China. Such efforts linked the worlds of finance and development.

BILL GATES, Co-Chair of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, urged investing "far more" in improving seeds and transporting them to farmers. MELINDA GATES, Co-Chair, added that investing in women and children allowed them to take advantage of educational and economic opportunities that reaped lasting changes for their communities, economies and countries. "The end of poverty begins with them."

WINNIE BYANYIMA, Oxfam International, Uganda, stressed the need for fair global tax rules, noting that an opportunity had been lost when leaders at the Financing for Development Conference failed to create a collective tax body. Power must also shift within countries.

At the local level, ÅSA SKOGSTRÖM FELDT, The Hunger Project, underlined the need for accountable local institutions. "We must move away from top-down, siloed projects," and shift towards community-led development that allowed women to be change agents, she said.

Representatives from United Nations agencies also stressed the need for a holistic approach. ERTHARIN COUSIN, Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP), advocated multisectoral action driven by robust national plans, which in turn must identify the structural obstacles limiting people's ability to feed themselves.

ROBERTO AZEVDO, Director-General of the World Trade Organization (WTO), said poor infrastructure, conflict, and rural isolation were just some of the factors obstructing peoples' ability to join trade flows. "We have to give people the tools and skills needed to compete," he said, noting that \$245 billion had been disbursed through the WTO Aid for Trade programme. It was also important to reform trade rules to make them more "pro-development", including in agriculture.

JOSE GRAZIANO DA SILVA, Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), said the vast majority of the world's poor and food insecure lived in rural areas. Drastic changes were required in how food was consumed and produced. "We know how to do this," he said. "The challenge is to put tools in reach of the poor."

Also speaking in the discussion were Heads of State and Government and senior officials of Malta, Zambia, Panama, Ethiopia, Viet Nam, Turkey, Kuwait, Sudan, Gambia, Pakistan, Belize, France, Cambodia, Canada, South Africa, Lao People's Democratic Republic and Myanmar.

A representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) also spoke.

Additional speakers included senior representatives of Action on Disability and Development; African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States; UPL; Sovereign Military Order of Malta; and the League of Arab States.

Interactive Dialogue II

The afternoon's round table, co-chaired by Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of Croatia, and Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, was entitled "Tackling inequalities, empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind". A concept paper prepared for the discussion noted that inequality, including gender inequality, could increase even during periods of economic growth and could harm entire societies. It stressed the need to address inequality's multidimensional nature through not only efforts to reach Sustainable Development Goals 5 and 10, but also by attaining targets in a number of other areas and by measuring policy impact through the disaggregation of data.

Opening the discussion, Ms. GRABAR-KITAROVIĆ said that equality was a matter of human rights. Inequality remained one of the most persistent challenges to sustainable development and must be addressed through the application of all United Nations ideals. By adopting the new Agenda, however, a new world of equal opportunity was envisaged. For that to happen, she said, it was not enough to repeat the mantra of "no one left behind". Greater expenditures and reforms were needed at all levels. Root causes must be addressed. Gender equality was a crucial objective, as it had a catalytic effect on inclusive human development. Equitable growth and redistribution were needed, as well as universal education to create global citizenship and community.

Mr. KENYATTA, in his introduction, also stressed the gravity of the problem of inequality in and among States, which he said had grown since the global economic crisis and was worsened by lessened spending on services. There continued to be rural and urban disparities in developing countries, and millions had been left behind in the unfinished work of the Millennium Development Goals. He asked how wider coverage of education and health services could be provided, and how gender disparities could be overcome, stressing that highly unequal societies had worse prospects for development. The new Agenda defined the means to achieve equality Goals 5 and 10. Mobilizing resources, building institutions, eliminating institutions, and providing education and health care were crucial in that regard. All relevant stakeholders must be involved in devising and applying best practices.

During the ensuing discussion, high-level officials of Governments, international organizations, civil society and the private sector spoke on overcoming inequality, with many expressing great hope for the new Sustainable Development Agenda in that regard and committing their countries or organizations to its implementation. Many country representatives outlined national programmes to overcome inequality due to marginalization, gender, age, disabilities, endemic poverty and other factors.

Most country representatives focused on the gender perspective of inequality, with the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Estonia, MARINA KALJURAND, celebrating the fact that the Agenda adopted today had stand-alone goals addressing women's equality. She stressed the importance of education in reaching that goal, as did the President of Costa Rica, LUIS GUILLERMO SOLIS RIVERA, the Prime Minister of Albania, EDI RAMA, and others. The adoption of the new Agenda would help his country promote equality in those and many other areas, the Vice President of Guatemala, JUAN ALFONSO SORIA, said, underlining the challenges presented by entrenched attitudes. For that reason, public education remained key to overcoming all challenges and passing necessary legislation, the Prime Minister of Lesotho, PAKALITHA MOSISILI, stressed.

Iceland's Prime Minister, SIGMUNDUR DAVID GUNNLAUGSSON, outlined persistent challenges in gender equality despite much progress, citing pay gaps and under representation. His country prioritized enlisting men to promote gender equality, in concert with the UN-Women "He for She" project. Noting persistent challenges in gender equality to small island developing States, including trafficking in persons, Jamaica's Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, ARNOLD NICHOLSON, affirmed the importance of national policy, particularly in the justice sector, to counter them. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Maldives, DUNYA OROZCO, described step-by-step programmes in her small island State to provide wider education and health opportunities for women. Colombia's Minister for Social Prosperity, TATYANA OROZCO, described projects to overcome gender inequalities exacerbated by years of armed conflict.

The Minister of Social Development of Bahrain, FAEQA SAEED ABDULLA AL SALEH, outlined legislation that had been adopted to protect women from violence and trafficking and to afford women equal

opportunities, and expressed hope that the next 15 years would see more progress. Also describing national programmes, Qatar's Assistant Minister for International Cooperation, SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN ABDULRAHMAN BIN JASSIM AL-THANI, stressed the importance of strengthening the family to fight inequality and achieve gender equality. The Minister and President of the National Institute for Women of Mexico, LORENA CRUZ, described a wide range of Government programmes under way as well.

Some representatives outlined the manner in which they incorporated women's empowerment and other considerations of equality into their development cooperation while working for equality at home. The Minister for Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Netherlands, LILIANNE PLOUMEN, stressed that domestic and partnership challenges must be addressed simultaneously. Affirming that without greater opportunities for women, there was no development, the European Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, NEVEN MIMICA, pledged European commitment to implement the new goals. The Director of Israel's MASHAV programme, GIL HASKEL, described work with African women at the community level. AKIHIKO TANAKA, of Japan's International Cooperation Agency, stressed the need for women to be leaders in all areas of development.

Pledging the support of the philanthropic community for the new development goals, REETA ROY of the Mastercard Foundation prioritized girls' education for addressing inequality. The Chair of the Board of Directors of the Global Partnership for Education, JULIA GILLARD, said that more financing in education was critical or in Sub-Saharan Africa some goals would only be reached in a century. Saying that the new Agenda had "changed the narrative" in equality issues, VLADIMIR CUK of the International Disability Alliance urged that the new Agenda be implemented in concert with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

To truly ensure that no one was left behind, the Secretary General of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), ELHADJ AS SY, said that the new Agenda must assist persons in crisis. The problems of the growing number of migrants must also be addressed, the Director-General of the International Organization for Migration, WILLIAM SWING, stressed. Affirming the importance of universal education for equality as well as the magnitude of the challenges to reach goals in that area, the Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), IRINA BOKOVA, stressed that other cultural factors of equality must be addressed as well. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), ALICIA BARCENA, described the various "autonomies" women required in order to attain equality.

"The countdown to 2030 starts today," UN-Women Executive Director PHUMZILE MLAMBO-NGCUKA said, looking forward to a world in which gender equality reigned. The first step was eliciting new commitments from national Governments at upcoming international forums and ensuring implementation. Close monitoring of progress, or lack of progress, was critical, as was repealing all discriminatory laws, addressing extremism and ending crimes against women. Men must join in that effort, ensuring that all women's rights were respected. "That is the future we want," she said, pledging that UN-Women would be an integral part of the journey.

Surveying the many kinds of inequalities that had to be overcome within and between countries, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, ZEID RA'AD AL HUSSEIN, said that addressing the issue at national and international levels was a "binding duty". "We must recognize the new Agenda for what it is: an Agenda of equality," he said.

Representatives of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Republic of Tanzania also spoke.

Also making statements were representatives of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

Also speaking were representatives of the Global Campaign for Education, Partners in Population and Development, Directions Consulting, the International Trade Centre, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Care Group and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.