



Our common goals

The 2030 Agenda presents long-term solutions to the forces that threaten the world and human society. But success will only be possible through joint endeavour, between countries and across all communities

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We live in a dangerous and unstable world of multiple interlinked challenges.

These include old and new conflicts, global humanitarian and human rights crises, climate change and environmental decline, pervasive and entrenched economic and social inequalities and massive youth unemployment.

The 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted in 2015, provide a coherent, holistic framework for addressing these challenges and their interconnections.

The SDGs are universal; applicable to developed and developing countries alike. They require member states to address the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in a balanced manner. Their implementation must embody the principles of inclusiveness, integration and 'leaving no one behind'; they should be supported by an effective means of implementation; and they must promote social justice, effective institutions and durable peace.

Key priority

Inclusive and sustainable development is a key priority for the United Nations. It is also, by far, the best way to prevent conflict and maintain stability. Governments need to take the lead, but actions by UN member states alone will not be sufficient.

The 2030 Agenda recognises that all stakeholders need to work together in pursuit of common goals. Parliamentarians, civil society organisations, the private sector, members of the scientific and academic communities and other stakeholders were important in formulating the SDGs. They need also to play a prominent role in working to achieve the goals, reviewing progress and keeping governments accountable.

Exchange of experience

Achieving the SDGs can only be a joint endeavour if all stakeholders are aware of these global goals and understand how they can contribute. Follow-up, review and learning from the experiences of others are essential.

We can already see at this early stage the importance of integrating the SDGs into national and regional development plans, mobilising resources, building relevant capacity and engaging all stakeholders.

At the global level, such exchange of experience is occurring at the High-level Political Forum on sustainable development. This is the United Nations' central platform for follow-up and review of the 2030

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Agenda. At the 2017 Forum in July, 44 developing and developed countries will participate in Voluntary National Reviews in which they will present the steps they have taken to implement the SDGs. The Forum is a rich and practical resource for all countries to implement this universal agenda.

I commend the United Nations Association – UK for promoting partnerships for sustainable development and wish it every success in communicating the message of our common goals as broadly as possible.

Our collective responsibility in the coming years is to take the framework provided by the 2030 Agenda and translate the ambition of the SDGs into reality for all people, everywhere. ●

◀ António Guterres speaks with newly arrived Syrian refugees at a Jordanian government receiving centre. Conflicts present perhaps the greatest challenge to the SDGs, directly and indirectly