



**SERBIA**

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**SUMMIT FOR THE ADOPTION  
OF THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA**

**S T A T E M E N T**

by

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PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**New York, 27 September 2015**

**Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**Here in the Headquarters of the world Organization, we have adopted, at the highest level, an ambitious transformational Agenda, meant to change the reality of our civilization over the next fifteen years. A difficult, unprecedented task lies ahead of us: to eradicate, by 2030, poverty, extreme poverty in particular, and to lay the foundations for maintaining sustainable development of our planet to the benefit of future generations.**

**The positive results in the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, the halving of extreme poverty, which we achieved ahead of time, led us to believe that the transformation of our world is possible. We live in the twenty-first century, in an era of tremendous technological achievements which, for the first time in the history of mankind, provide a realistic opportunity for each country and each individual to achieve sustainable development lest no one be left behind or forgotten.**

**For over two years now, our diplomats, our civil societies, private business sectors and academia, have negotiated a new set of proposals for new seventeen goals to bring about sustainable development. They are comprehensive and touch upon almost all elements of economic, social, and ecological development. They are universal, too, and applicable to all countries, rich and poor, with a sizable part of the population of the latter ones still living on a dollar and twenty five cents a day.**

**Our generation has a moral obligation to create conditions that no man or woman goes hungry in the world today, that gender equality prevails and that women and girls are empowered. We must stop the pernicious warming of our planet, threatened by extensive climate change. All too often the alarm bell is ringing; all too often we are experiencing natural disasters, droughts and floods which hit, heavily and dramatically, my country and the region last year.**

**It was not easy to reach consensus on a new global agenda for sustainable development. Yet, we do share this planet of ours, we have no other home to go to and we have the duty and obligation to do everything to preserve it and ensure sustainable development, as well as the development of the most vulnerable amongst us.**

**Of course, the key question is how we implement such an ambitious Agenda properly. We reached consensus on sustainable development financing modalities in Addis Ababa last July. We agreed on the need to mobilize all financial resources: public, private and miscellaneous, domestic and**

**international. We agreed that we should fulfill the obligation to commit 0.7 per cent of the gross national product to ODA and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent to developing aid to the least developed countries. Technology transfer, indebtedness and reaching trade agreements were also high on the Conference agenda.**

**We reaffirmed the principle that, basically, every country has primary responsibility for its own development and that it must create conditions for progress and prosperity through good governance and the rule of law, combating corruption and illegal financial flows.**

**Serbia participated actively in the formulation of the global Agenda for Sustainable Development. The negotiations in the Open Working Group (of which my country was a member) to develop the sustainable development goals were kick-started at the time when a Serb presided over the General Assembly. We also took part in the work of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing.**

**A middle-income, landlocked country in transition, Serbia still shoulders the heavy burden of caring for a large number of refugees and persons displaced in and after the conflicts in our region, coping, all along, with the problems of development that beset many other countries. Dramatic and uncontrolled influx of migrants who, in dozens of thousands transit Serbia in search of shelter and better life, while having to wait for days to cross the borders and enter the European Union, is a challenge that we all have to address and work together to achieve a solution.**

**Serbia firmly believes that development is not possible without peace and stability. In particular, we support Goal 16 on peaceful and inclusive societies and, in that context, invest continued efforts in developing good-neighbourly relations in the region. For, the process of reconciliation and cooperation has no alternative.**

**Like in other countries of the region, unemployment in Serbia continues to be high, youth unemployment in particular, and the rate of economic growth is low. And like in many other countries, the recession has spiraled since the onset of the global financial crisis. In cooperation with, and with the support of, the International Monetary Fund, we have made considerable efforts towards fiscal consolidation. With painful cuts across the board, we managed to reduce the fiscal deficit from 7 to around 3 percent this year. This year, too, we expect that the gross national product will begin to grow.**

**As an EU candidate country, Serbia has harmonized its legislative system with the *acquis* of the Union and taken important steps to reform its economy, rebuild its infrastructure, tap into sustainable energy resources and solve problems affecting the environment.**

**We understand very well that success in attaining sustainable development is not possible without all-round regional cooperation. In that context, we shall organize regional consultations in Belgrade later this year to discuss with our partners from the region how to work together on implementing the Agenda.**

**Mr. President,**

**We have embarked upon an ambitious project that has no precedent. Failure must not, and cannot be an option. Our generation has an historic opportunity to set our civilization on course towards achieving sustainable development, prosperity and peace. This opportunity, I trust and believe, shall not be allowed to lapse.**