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UKRAINE

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**Statement by President of Ukraine His Excellency Mr. Petro Poroshenko
at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit for the adoption of the
post-2015 development agenda and Sustainable Development Goals
High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations
27 September 2015, New York**

*Dear Co-Chairs,
Distinguish Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of Ukraine, I express full support for a new United Nations Development Agenda.

I would like to remind that back in 1992, Ukraine took part in the historic UN Summit in Rio de Janeiro where it testified its will to shape the future on the basis of principles of sustainable development.

For 23 year that have passed since then, we have accumulated extensive positive experience and at the same time tasted the bitterness of defeat as proponents of war and terrorism have been resisting fiercely to progress in many parts of the world.

The far-reaching Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets, which we declare at today's historic Summit, open up new horizons for humanity and lay down the foundations for sustainable development of our planet for the next fifteen years.

We commend transparency and inclusiveness of the preparatory process that culminated in the Post-2015 Development Framework. More than 25 thousand Ukrainians took part in the global consultations, having expressed their own vision of the SDGs.

Working hard to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which were set up fifteen years ago, our countries have considerably changed lives of millions of people worldwide.

As for Ukraine, I would like to emphasize that we have managed:

- to reduce threefold the poverty rates –yet, due to the Russian aggression, we expect this rate to drop,
- to improve the maternal health system,
- to almost halve child mortality,
- to reduce HIV/AIDS incidence rates,
- to make progress in combating tuberculosis.

We keep on working to fulfill our commitments on MDGs related to improving the quality of education, promoting gender equality, and ensuring environmental sustainability.

I am convinced that we have to build on the momentum generated by the MDGs to make further progress in the priority areas set out in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

Dear Colleagues,

There will be no sustainable development without peace and freedom.

Ukraine's bitter experience reveals that peace and freedom are principal pre-conditions for achieving the SDGs. Sustainable development is not achievable where explosions are heard and peaceful people are killed. It is not achievable where aggressive ideologies advocating suppression of some nations by other nations reign and key human rights and freedoms are violated.

Strengthening universal peace and promoting larger freedom should become a driving and unifying force behind our collective efforts towards achieving the SDGs.

Today Ukraine has to implement so much needed systemic reforms while opposing the Russian aggressor that tries to undermine the democratic European development the Ukrainian people have chosen.

As a result of Russia's treacherous annexation of the Ukrainian Crimea and its aggression in the Donbas region, thousands of people have been killed.

Critical infrastructure has been ruined; Ukraine has lost about one fifth of its economic potential.

Russia's military actions against Ukraine have also increased environmental and epidemiological threats, as well as the risks of the social exclusion.

Chemical sites in the conflict area in the eastern part of Ukraine and in the adjacent territories represent a particular danger.

Threats of the potential man-made technological catastrophes are awful.

In this context, Ukraine believes that it is high time for the United Nations to address the issue of protection of environment in conflicts and it will present specific ideas to this end.

The external aggression has led to the emergence of a new form of poverty –sudden or unexpected poverty –that affects lives of about 1.5 million of internally displaced persons in Ukraine. Each day of the war in Donbas costs us around 5 million US dollars that we could have invested into sustainable development.

Ukraine aspires to peace and prosperity and, together with partner states, exerts maximum efforts to settle the conflict by peaceful diplomatic means.

After putting an end to the military aggression, establishing peace and restoring Ukraine's full sovereignty over Donbas region and Crimea, it will be extremely important to bring millions of people back to a normal life, restore economic and social infrastructure on sustainable development principles.

Ukraine stands ready to accomplish this uneasy task and calls upon all international partners to cooperate towards this end.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Ukraine steadily follows the path of reforms set out in the Sustainable Development Strategy “Ukraine – 2020”. Despite existing challenges, we translate our strategic tasks into tangible actions.

Against the backdrop of implementation of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the European Union, as well as resistance to the ongoing Russian aggression, the Ukrainian society is focused today, first and foremost, on:

- fighting corruption;
- ensuring equal opportunities and social justice;
- effective public health system;
- promoting decent work;
- ensuring affordable education for all;
- promoting innovation development and sustainable infrastructure;
- ensuring sustainable energy supply;
- ensuring food security;
- healthy environment.

I would like to assure all of you that to achieve the SDG sat the national level, Ukraine will implement new programs and projects which are deemed to ensure in practice macroeconomic stability, environmental balance and social cohesion.

The SDGs will serve as an overarching framework for further transformation in Ukraine, including in the context of implementation of the “Strategy – 2020”.

As a responsible member of the international community, Ukraine strives to take an active part in addressing current global challenges as a prerequisite for achieving the SDGs.

In particular, in the environmental dimension we have to act vigorously to prevent threats provoked by climate change and degradation of the environment. Reaching a compromise on a balanced climate agreement would bode well for our collective efforts towards this aim.

Implementing new, expanded models of scientific and technical cooperation between UN Member States, in particular establishing a universal mechanism for technology transfer, is a key to bridging many gaps in sustainable development.

Dear participants of the Summit,

I am convinced that working hand in hand and implementing our Post-2015 Development Agenda goals, as well as jointly tackling existing challenges, we will ensure a success of the humankind on the path towards progress.

Thank you.