



REPUBLIC OF POLAND
PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

750 THIRD AVENUE, NEW YORK, NY 10017

TEL. (212) 744-2506

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STATEMENT BY

H. E. ANDRZEJ DUDA

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND

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

NEW YORK, 27TH SEPTEMBER 2015

Distinguished Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Speaking in New York today I represent the nation whose own country, just thirty years ago, was lagging far behind the model of the developed world as regards all economic and social indices. The sad reality experienced today by dozens of countries across the globe was, in not too distant past, also my own experience and that of my compatriots.

Finally we threw off the yoke of communism. We are rebuilding Polish freedom rooted in our national tradition. Democracy and entrepreneurship of Poles are the foundation of our development. At the same time, we must do our best to ensure that social cohesion, family bonds and traditional system of values are kept in place.

The credit for the model of Polish development goes to "Solidarity" – a unique social movement which we are so proud of today. The credit goes to millions of Poles who craved for freedom and were ready to fight for it. But the credit also goes to the other kind of solidarity – the one which we received from more affluent countries. We benefited from their financial support, their advice and experiences.

We know how much time and effort it took to travel down that road. And still there is much left to be done. However, as the President of the Republic of Poland I remain convinced that the energy of my fellow citizens, their diligence and sense of innovation will let us jointly attain that very level of development which we have been aspiring to, for a number of years.

When I look at the history of contemporary Poland I remind myself of a concise slogan coined by a well-known American politician. A slogan filled with vigor and hope: "Yes we can". We have made it. Can other make it too? I have no doubt that they can, that one day they will be able to say the same

phrase: "We have also made it. We can be better off, have better education, and our children will be able to feel safe".

Fifteen years have gone past since the Millennium Summit during which United Nations` member states drafted an ambitious plan for improving the existence of the nations of Africa, Asia and Latin America. The countries which suffer most due to hunger, epidemics, illiteracy, infant mortality.

The bar was placed very high. Not all Millennium Development Goals have been achieved. Nevertheless, a huge step forward was made in many fields.

The number of people living on \$1.25 a day decreased by more than 50% - from 1.9 billion to 836 million. It can be considered a success. Nonetheless, we must not forget that the above-mentioned 836 million people still live in extreme poverty. That is almost as many as the total population of the United States and the European Union.

The number of new HIV cases has dropped by 40% but the epidemics is still not under control.

Drinking water has been made accessible to almost 2.6 million people. This is another plausible achievement. However, more than 660 million are still denied access to it.

The areas covered by eight Millennium Development goals resemble a set of communicating tubes. Lack of clean water leads to dangerous epidemics. Illnesses result in the weakening of human organism. Children weakened by illnesses miss out on education. Lack of education, in turn, means that in the future the country and its resources, both natural and human ones, are going to be mismanaged.

Therefore, whenever we debate about 17 Sustainable Development Goals which we would like to achieve by 2030, we cannot be satisfied with successes in individual categories only. We should do our best to ensure equal progress in each of the priority areas.

Attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals will demand gigantic funds. Bearing that in mind, we should care even more to ensure that the allocated money is spent in a reasonable way, in order to bring concrete results. Donors cannot boast with the very fact of funding this or that project. Since it is not just about spending the money, but about making smart investments.

We should also avoid linking development aid with actions which are deemed by others as imposing upon them a system of values or an ideology. This goes mainly for such issues as: the model of the family, education, upbringing and protection of life. Let us focus on the norms which are going to guarantee freedom and better life to all, in equal part. Such norms encompass the rule of law, freedom and an inclusive social model. Everywhere where the law is respected, where justice is guaranteed, where public institutions are efficient and work for the benefit of the people, the real foundations are laid for true development and welfare.

Actions aimed at ensuring development should focus on promoting effectiveness which can be achieved through small, concrete projects. Let me point out that frequently a lot can be attained with little money. I will quote just one example: the joint report of the World Health Organization and UNICEF states that over the last 15 years the number of new cases of malaria has been brought down by 37%. Mortality index due to this disease has dropped by as much as 60%, which means that 6 million lives have been saved. Malaria is still killing people but the fight against it is becoming ever more effective. Why? Among others, thanks to the large-scale use of such a simple thing as a cheap mosquito net. The cost of its production and distribution is about \$10.

There are more such examples. Recently Pope Francis spoke about the unacceptable wasting of food. How much could be achieved if only we followed his appeal? To what extent could we mitigate the effects of climate

change provided that we not only limited Co2 emissions but also pursued a reasonable forest policy? Desertification is a problem afflicting many regions across the globe today, hundreds of hectares of forests are disappearing from the face of the Earth, the arable land is shrinking. Whereas forestation and rehabilitation of soil contributes to improved quality of air and water. It means fewer illnesses and less poverty. Hence, we need to address environmental issues in a comprehensive way, protecting the water, land and air.

Let us help those countries which are in need today. But let us assist them in a smart way. To help them stand on their own two feet. So that one day they are able to join, on an equal footing, the global economic system, without unnecessary limitations and barriers. To be able to take full advantage of the benefits of the free trade. To be able to produce and sell and to allocate the income for further development – for the construction of hospitals, schools and roads.

Two years ago Poland was admitted to the OECD Development Assistance Committee. This membership serves to confirm the position of our country which does not hide from its responsibility to help less affluent and less developed countries. In my capacity as the President of the Republic of Poland, I wish to declare full openness and readiness for co-operation with our partners in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. In line with our capabilities and tapping into Poland`s vast experience in building a free-market democracy. To make sure that these countries whom we are offering our support today can say soon: “We have also achieved success. We made it”.