



Remarks

by

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for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries

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at the

High Level Breakfast Event

“The 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement:

Harnessing synergies through coherent implementation”

7:30 am – 9:00 am

Friday 22 September 2017

Delegates Dining Room, West Terrace, UNHQ

Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen, dear Friends, Colleagues

Thank you first and foremost for getting together at such an early hour. As they say: the future belongs to those who rise early....

Our topic is the 2030 agenda and the Paris Climate Change Agreement and how to bring them together. These two issues can be likened to the human body – without air to breathe, water to drink, food to eat, the body cannot really work. So it is not a question of either/or.

These two agendas are inextricably linked. So bringing them together is not IF, it is a MUST.

2017 has brought and continues to ferociously bring us alarming reminders of the devastating and relentless impacts of extreme weather events and their truly catastrophic impacts on human life and activity. 2017 – and we are not yet done with it! It has brought terrible wildfires, earthquakes, the worst drought in decades in the East and Horn of Africa, more than a thousand people lost their lives in the floods in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. Hurricane Irma caused tens of billions of dollars of damage to buildings and infrastructure across the 11 islands and the US mainland in its path.

Once more, it is the peoples of the least developed countries, the small island states and the landlocked developing countries being among the most vulnerable to these and more adverse impacts of climate change on human existence.

Will this now put these countries and their people even further behind? A famous French thinker, Voltaire, a long time ago said “Men argue, Nature acts”

ACTION is our only choice, men and women **TOGETHER**.

And that action is to accelerate implementation of the 2030 agenda hand in hand with the Paris Climate Change agreement.

The present reality is that the key socio-economic indicators of the countries OHRLLS serves has consistently been below and the gap even widened with those of the rest of the world. This growing inequality bears major risks to peace and security.

LLDC face high challenges in implementing both Agendas. This is due to capacity constraints, limited public finance, patterns of global FDI flows, their

high risk if not instability perception, ODA dependence, and their small shares in world trade.

We must hold and transform this down spiral. As SG Guterres stressed throughout this week, this is a must for peace and security.

We must work harder, in greater partnerships, we must work smarter to accelerate implementation of the inextricably linked SDG and climate mitigation and adaptation goals.

They are the two arms of one body. Let me just give one practical example.

Food insecurity, malnutrition and conflicts cannot be addressed if they are compounded by droughts reducing food production and increasing competition over productive land and water.

Only if we can build resilience in the most vulnerable countries in a pro active way rather than each time reacting to crisis – that actually is much more expensive than pro-active investment, then will we be able to safeguard hard-won development gains and begin to protect the livelihoods of the poorest members of society to finally give them a chance at decent living and hope for the future.

In the immediate, what would this take at a minimum?

First, Climate Change Finance and increasing capacity. Finance, innovative finance must be increased and made more accessible for countries in special situations. At an earlier panel, I drew already attention to the capacity issues and constraints countries experience and how access to finance needs to be simplified without jeopardizing transparency and accountability.

Priority must be given to adaptation projects that result in reduced vulnerability. This is highlighted in OHRLs recent “2017 Report on the State of the Least Developed Countries.”

This is also needed for the most vulnerable developing countries from the discussions under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.

Second, supporting affordable access to SUSTAINABLE ENERGY will be key and transformative driver for enhancing private sector development, contribute to productive capacity building and trade expansion.

Such path to growth must benefit health, education, water and food security.

Third, investing in BROADBAND will be key so that countries are not left behind further at a time where ICT is more and more important to development and especially employment generation. This is key to creating futures for the young. Getting up to speed on the ICT front means job creation in finance, education and healthcare and so many other vital sectors including agriculture. This will also greatly contribute to scope for more proactive disaster risk reduction and resilience building.

Fourth, EMISSIONS. Global efforts to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions must be stepped up in order to reach the aim of limiting the temperature increase to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels, which would significantly reduce the risks and impacts of climate change.

The ambitions of the Nationally Determined Contributions must be increased to close the emissions gap.

Let me add, it is equally important and notably for the SIDS that our addressing climate change includes the oceans.

This week's meeting co-hosted by the Republic of Palau and Norway, "The oceans – a wealth of opportunities" made that very clear. Oceans are 70 percent of our shared planet's surface and I do not need to tell you what their rising temperatures play a role in climate change.

The words of the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Hon. Hilda Heini ring especially true: "My country's survival depends on every country delivering on the promise they made in Paris. Our own commitments to it will never waiver."

We are just a few weeks away from the very important COP23. I urge you all to seize the opportunity we have to build momentum for enhanced climate action and strengthening the Paris Agreement by fleshing out a robust rule-book.

I urge all of us to redouble our efforts to implement the goals we set as it is nothing less we owe to the peoples of the world who ultimately will judge us in our and future generations on our action and results or lack thereof.

Thank you and I look forward to hear from you how my office can best support you and how we can best jointly move forward.