



BELARUS

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UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
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High Level Thematic Debate
on Achieving Sustainable Development Goals
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Statement

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Belarus attaches great importance to the successful achievement of SDGs. At today's meeting we expect **concrete proposals for collective actions**. It is essential that no country is left alone facing difficulties in implementing development agenda.

Belarus proposes several principles of joint work to implement SDGs, including on UN working methods to achieve sustainable development, on using existing opportunities and on fair treatment of all participants of the process.

If we want to meet all the SDGs by 2030, the **UN working methods** should not be blindly subordinate to formalism. Yes, the need to synchronise the activities of the organisation with the process of achieving the goals. But let us be honest: so far the long as the synchronisation has been mostly nominal. We discuss issues that might be important, but are primarily bureaucratic: work of the committees, periodicity of resolutions, subjects of Secretary-General's reports. We run the risk of substituting real implementation of the agenda with conventional routine, with "optimisation" of the working methods of the UN bodies, with release of the reports, which, in the words of Churchill, "by their very length, defend themselves against the risk of being read". We cannot allow countries and the UN itself to become **hostage to the formal rules and procedures**. After all, the development agenda is about real destinies of nations, every single person, family and society.

Achieving SDGs requires **involvement of the whole society**, from the highest leadership to business and scientific communities, common people. To acknowledge this, in October 2015 Belarus in cooperation with the UN organised a national campaign "UN Express Train in Belarus for Sustainable Development Goals". **No other country in the world held an event comparable in scope and importance**. The event involved more than 150 thousand people. Participants got acquainted with the SDGs and learned how to contribute to their implementation.

Involving wider community poses the question of coordination. **Belarus is considering the establishment of an institution of national SDGs coordinator**. Such step would allow to conduct comprehensive national activities and to synchronise them with the international agenda.

Such work in every country must be supported by appropriate international assistance.

This requires **full involvement and coordinated use of all the available international resources**. It is necessary to set in motion all the mechanisms and processes approved at the 2015 summit. Countries requiring support should have access to a kind of "**one-stop shop**", **UN assistance coordination centre** that would accumulate expert advice, finance, technology, means of implementation. Frankly speaking, right now UN system-wide there is no feeling of

integral nature of availability and application of existing capacities, however limited they may be. This is, by the way, a task for the next Secretary General – to streamline and to simplify countries' access to resources and capabilities promised to them by the world leaders at last year's summit.

In conclusion, I would like to appeal to fully apply **our common basic principle of leaving no one behind**. Up to now a whole category of states – **middle-income countries** – is kept away from the coordinated assistance approach. And we are talking about more than a hundred countries, more than half of the UN membership, majority of the world's population, more than a third of global GDP, a quarter of world's exports and imports. The experience of middle-income countries shows that the problem of poverty and extreme poverty can be solved! Creating **conditions for inclusive, interested and mutually beneficial participation of all countries and groups of countries** in the development process should be a daily concern of President of the General Assembly, senior management of the Secretariat, and all of our countries.