

**Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region,  
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**High-Level Policy Segment: Transformation towards sustainable and resilient societies in  
the UNECE Region**

*Speech delivered by H.E. Zbigniew Czech*

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen

In order to achieve sustainable development, we must find an answer to enormous challenges, hammer out integrated solutions based on new models of production and consumption. Of course, there is no single recipe for doing this, yet we think that it is the role of states and governments to initiate this process, providing positive impulse for the creation of a modern, innovative and sustainable economy.

Poland strongly supports the concept of sustainable development. We consider Agenda 2030 and its goals and targets as universal roadmap, which should serve not only as a signpost for changes in our country, region and the world, but also as a vehicle of effective cooperation with other countries in counteracting narrow-minded thinking, creating synergies in different areas, and building a sustainable future for all, with no one left behind.

Last year, Polish government adopted a new development strategy named “The Strategy for Responsible Development”, which constitutes a response to the challenges our country faces in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The new development model for Poland formulated in the Strategy meet the expectations identified in Agenda 2030 and are consistent with five big transformative shifts (5 P).

Poland recognizes **People** as the highest value. Our Strategy is human-centered, with the ambition that all social groups should benefit from the fruits of economic growth while simultaneously increasing cohesion in the social, economic, environmental and territorial dimensions. We are targeting high levels of employment, good quality workplaces and a large scale of entrepreneurship everywhere, including small towns and rural areas. Our priority is to reduce social exclusion, poverty, all kinds of social inequalities, improve quality of life, the healthcare, access to knowledge and education as well as improve skills and competences.

In case of **Prosperity**, Poland sees the way towards achieving these goals in building a strong industry, coherent and comprehensive investment projects, especially investments in innovation, foreign expansion of Polish business, and the full use of the digital revolution. These line of action will be supported by necessary measures to build adequate transport, energy and ICT infrastructure.

In order to benefit from the wealth of our **Planet**, Poland strives to improve the environment and sustainable resource management. Our goal is primarily to increase the available water resources and achieve high water quality, rational management of natural and geological resources and effective waste management. The actions taken are also aimed at improving air quality and protecting the soil against degradation as well as reducing the impact of noise and electromagnetic fields, which will have a positive impact on the health of residents.

Achieving these priorities will not be possible without strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the state and its institutions that ensure **Peace** and citizens' trust. Improving the quality of the law and its application, increasing the efficiency of public institutions,

including above all breaking the silos will increase the ability of the state to ensure coherent and effective implementation of development goals and increase the level of trust and security of citizens.

We focus on cooperation, **Partnership** and joint responsibility of public entities, business and citizens for the course of development processes. It is necessary to move away from the administration system towards the co-management system, which requires the involvement of state institutions, socio-economic partners, academia, private entities and civil society. The key is to build a social dialogue, broad public support and trust between public entities and their partners for achieving development goals.

The implementation of sustainable development goals is a process spread over many years. Poland refers to processes with great responsibility. We chose an integrated approach ensuring coherence between priorities of the new model of Polish development policy with the global challenges and objectives of Agenda 2030, as well as joint management for both processes and a multi-sectoral partnership. We are convinced that it will allow for the concentration of activities undertaken by individual entities - the government, self-government, economic entities and social partners, ensuring at the same time equal access to benefits for all social groups.

We are going to present our experiences and achievements in SDGs implementation on the Voluntary National Review (VNR) within High Level Political Forum this year. For the purposes of the Polish VNR, a special Task Force for the coherence of the Strategy for Responsible Development with the 2030 Agenda, has been established.

The Task Force integrates cooperation between representatives of various groups of interests. Not only representatives of government administration, but also local communities, people from sectoral organizations, employers organizations, trade unions, NGOs, academia and civil society organizations have been invited to the cooperation. This body adopted a participatory model in the preparation of VNR Report, designating thematic coordinators for each SDGs.

Poland appreciates the role of the High Level Political Forum in conducting a structured debate on the implementation of SDGs and the organization of national reviews. We also appreciate the contribution of the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE Region to the implementation of Agenda 2030. It gives us the unique opportunity to share positive experiences in sustainable development with other UN member states.