

**INTERVENTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**  
**AT THE REGIONAL FORUM ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR THE UNECE REGION**  
**Delivered by: STATE SECRETARY FRANC MATJAŽ ZUPANČIČ**

March 1, 2018 at the High-Level Policy Segment (11.00–12.30)

**Dear Chair,**

**Excellences,**

**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

**It is an honour and a pleasure** to address the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development for the UNECE region less than a year since Slovenia prepared and presented its first Voluntary National Review at the High-Level Political Forum in New York.

The conduction of the VNR was very tightly connected with the preparation of the new Slovenian Development Strategy 2030. This new Slovenian development framework **was adopted by the Government in December 2017** and incorporates the SDGs and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. By including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Slovenia is recognising the importance of a sustainable, inclusive, and more conscious future in which society, as a whole, can flourish. Our 12 national development goals, therefore, share the characteristics of the SDGs, such as deep interconnections and cross-cutting elements, tackling and addressing the three pillars of sustainable development – economic, social, and environmental – and inclusiveness in aiming to *leave no one behind*.

While setting our new **path towards planning for the future**, Slovenia **embraced the VNR process as a significant and helpful tool**

- to raise awareness among stakeholders,
- to internalise the ownership among ministries,
- to understand the universal nature of the 2030 Agenda,
- as well as to foster coordination and cooperation to track the progress in implementing the global goals.

Through the process of drafting the new national development strategy and the VNR, the Government Office for Development and European Cohesion Policy carried out **numerous activities** involving **representatives of ministries and other state institutions**, as well as **representatives of non-governmental organisations, local communities, the private sector, professional organisations, and academia**.

All together:

- representatives of stakeholders from all segments of society participated in 9 regional discussions on strategic priorities organised, and.
- The discussions were followed by 5 consultations on specific issues, and
- a government-wide consultation with 56 directors-general from 16 ministries was carried out.

All events included special modules related to the implementation and integration of the 2030 Agenda into the national development framework.

**There were valuable lessons learned** during the preparation of the VNR, which Slovenia found necessary for the implementation of the SDGs:

- To successfully address the 17 SDGs and their 169 associated targets, which are integral and indivisible, **a whole-of-government approach is necessary.**
- To ensure greater policy coherence for development, **better mechanisms of horizontal and multi-level cooperation must be established.** As well as central planning, implementing and monitoring of those policies that call for better understanding of cross-cutting themes and interlinking elements is necessary.
- Although the first steps have been made towards the coordination of domestic and global development goals, **Slovenia recognises that this will be an on-going process.**

What will our next steps be?

The Slovenian Development Strategy 2030 will serve as **a basis for a comprehensive process of medium-term planning** that entails how the priority tasks and actions are determined and validated.

**There are few main points in the implementation process that Slovenia is, therefore, focusing on.**

Firstly, with the aim of **building a stronger integrated approach**, the Government established the **Permanent Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Development Policies** at the beginning of 2017 as a **coordination mechanism** to promote policy coherence, solve possible policy conflicts, increase the awareness among the ministries about the 2030 Agenda and the equal responsibility of all departments for its implementation, as well as to promote a long-term partnership with all stakeholders.

Additionally, a special advisory body – **Government Council for Development** – will be set up to oversee the delivery and potential revision of the Slovenian Development Strategy 2030. **The council will include a range of stakeholders** – representatives of social partners, the private sector, civil society, professional institutions, and representatives of regional and local communities and the government. We are all responsible for the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda and all its goals. Governments cannot and should not act alone. Slovenia is aware of the importance of establishing partnerships and cooperation with external stakeholders.

Thirdly, for the realisation of the national development strategy and successful implementation of the SDGs, it is necessary that **long-term sustainability of the public finances is ensured** and – in that framework – the drawing up of the budget and budget implementation as well. We are aiming towards addressing the individual **development documents and public finance system in much more equal and integrated way** that done in the past.

The strategy's delivery will, therefore, build on medium-term planning. To this end, a Four-Year National Development Programme and a Medium-term Fiscal Strategy will be prepared. And the Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development will continue to monitor the progress towards the strategy's objectives in its annual development reports.

Finally, building on the experiences and lessons learned through the 2017 VNR, **Slovenia will prepare its second VNR and present it at the HLPF in 2020** to show our approach in bringing the 2030 Agenda to life, which for Slovenia also means bringing to life our own Vision 2050 and the National Development Strategy 2030.