



ARMENIA

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AT THE UNDP 50TH ANNIVERSARY MINISTERIAL MEETING

NEW YORK, FEBRUARY 24, 2013

PREVENTING VIOLENT CONFLICT, BUILDING PEACEFUL SOCIETIES

Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The UN Charter guides the member states to take effective collective measures for the prevention of threats to peace. Over the years the concept of prevention has been gradually and effectively occupying an important space in the international efforts of building peace and security. However, conflicts continue to emerge and many of them turn violent with increasingly higher human cost, consuming significant resources of the international community and thus attracting stronger focus to the improvement of the prevention capabilities.

It goes without saying that the unambiguous implementation of the international commitments, in particular those enshrined in the UN Charter on developing friendly relations among nations based also on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples, can enormously contribute to the prevention efforts. If there is anything that history teaches us, is that there is a direct linkage between the brutal hindrances of the rightful exercise of human rights and violent conflicts. Usually the countries, which are disrespecting the fundamental right of peoples to self-determination, are also grossly violating human rights.

In its Agenda 2030 the international community has once again reaffirmed the inter-connection between sustainable development, peace, human rights and the rule of law. The

UNDP, with its extensive presence in the field has been duly recognized within the UN system as an important contributor to the function of prevention and early warning. Identifying, reporting and reacting to deteriorating human rights situations is amongst the key functions of the field missions to detect early signs of fuelling instability.

Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The link between global security and development is beyond doubt. Conflicts may impede the sustainable development. This is a reality. But there is another reality as well. Some protracted or frozen conflicts may continue for decades on the territories inhabited by people whose aspirations to achieve sustainable development goals are as legitimate as for anyone else. Pending settlement to the final legal status of certain territories, particularly those which are subject of negotiations under agreed format of conflict resolution, should not be used as an excuse to violate the legitimate right of the people to development. After all, «Leave no one behind» commitment is not about invoking a justification for exclusion but finding ways for inclusion. The international community should find ways to ensure involvement of the people from conflict areas in the international cooperation aimed at achieving sustainable development goals. The operation of the international organizations and agencies, such as the UNDP and others also should not be anyhow restricted for the people of the conflict areas.

It is important to transform the challenge imposed by conflicts to an opportunity of establishing positive agenda of partnership including through genuine confidence building among parties to the conflict. All people have universal aspiration for security and development. Common economic or environmental projects among parties to the conflict can entail first steps towards building trust and confidence and what is more important, a common vision of peace.

FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA: A DISCUSSION ON FINANCING FOR THE SDGS BUILDING ON THE ADDIS ABABA ACTION AGENDA

“It always seems impossible until it’s done”: These are the words of Nelson Mandela - a man who made the impossible come true. No matter how ambitious and challenging is the task, the joint determination and synergy of efforts that 50 years ago lay at the foundation of the United Nations Development Program to build a better life for all, without exclusion, should guide our endeavours. We need to act collectively and resolutely to alleviate the plight of the most vulnerable groups and communities, who need it most.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In its Agenda 2030 the international community has reaffirmed the inter-linkages between sustainable development and peace, good governance, human rights and rule of law. Humanitarian response to crisis situations and emergencies consumes significant resources of the international community and takes growing prominence in the global agenda, including within the UN system. Thus, it remains a priority for the UN system to advance its conceptual, normative and operational capacity aimed at strengthening and adapting its prevention function.

With a growing relationship of over 20 years, there have been a number of joint projects implemented in Armenia by the UNDP in key areas such as democratic governance, poverty reduction, integrated border management, the environment protection, and disaster risk reduction. Last year the Government of Armenia and the United Nations signed the third Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which is a strategic document that will guide our cooperation for the period of 2016-2020 reflecting Armenia’s vision and commitment for improving the living standards of its population.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The adoption of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Landlocked Developing Countries and its integration into the Agenda 2030 has been an important step to promote a

sustainable and inclusive development agenda. To ensure the effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action and mainstream it into our policies, a few weeks ago, our Government adopted a national strategy for its implementation. It will be important to give proper consideration to the implementation of the international commitments to address the specific needs of the landlocked countries within a comprehensive global reporting framework for the Agenda 2030. Such a follow-up and reporting framework should involve multiple stakeholders, including the transit countries.

The focus of our session today has a direct link to the synergies and links between the ongoing developmental processes, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as well as a number of other important agreements reached earlier - the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the COP 21 landmark agreement.

The conventional approach to financing the Sustainable development goals requires updating from a range of perspectives. Enhancement of infrastructure and sustainable investment, including through blended finance, will be critical to delivering on an ambitious development agenda. Addressing the issue of projects bankability and ensuring public-private solutions to financing projects is an important aspect of Armenia's work with international financial institutions, in particular, for the infrastructure projects we are currently implementing.

Coherent steps should be taken on a global level to address insufficient investment in infrastructure. The crucial need to bridge the global infrastructure gap has been recognized as an important priority in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We welcome the international commitment to bridge these gaps, including the annual gap of 1 to 1.5 trillion dollar in the developing countries.

It is important that together with limitations in finance we look at the barriers to sustainable development as well - closed borders, blockades, unduly discriminating trade

regimes. The fact that a highly important inter-state railway (Gyumri-Kars) between Armenia and Turkey is not being used in the vital interests of sustainable development and regional connectivity due to an ongoing illegal blockade is a vivid example.

Infrastructure development is a high priority for Armenia, duly reflected in the recently adopted Strategy for Prospective Development for the upcoming decade.

To address the inequalities both within and among nations, we need to continue to promote rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading systems, in line with the commitments under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. We share the view that it can effectively contribute to achieving the Sustainable development goals.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2016 is the first year to follow up on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In holding the Presidency of the Executive Board of the UNDP, Armenia looks forward to continue its cooperation within this organisation on the Sustainable Development Goals and related matters.

Thank you.