



AUSTRALIA



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High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development 20 July 2017

Australian National Statement

Statement by Gillian Bird, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Australia to the UN

Mr President,

The High Level Political Forum is an important opportunity to renew our commitment to the 2030 Agenda, as we reflect on the progress we have made. Australia thanks the 43 countries that presented their Voluntary National Reviews this year. We have valued the opportunity to draw lessons from the challenges others have faced and take inspiration from the range of initiatives introduced to support 2030 Agenda implementation.

Mr President

Australia will draw from these experiences next year. I am pleased to announce we will present our first Voluntary National Review at the 2018 HLPF.

Our review will outline a range of initiatives Australia is implementing to help achieve the SDGs domestically, including:

- the Smart Cities Plan - a plan for supporting productive, accessible, liveable cities that attract talent, encourage innovation and create jobs and growth;
- the Women's Safety Package – a series of measures to provide a safety net for women and children at high risk of experiencing violence;
- the National Disability Insurance Scheme – which will provide support for Australians with disability, their families and carers; and
- the leadership Australia has demonstrated, domestically and internationally, on oceans issues, including how we are implementing the commitments we made at this year's UN Oceans Conference.

Australia's VNR will assess the correlation between Australia's aid policy and the 2030 Agenda, including our strong focus on economic growth, private sector engagement, trade, gender equality, governance, and innovation.

We will work across the federal government – and with all stakeholders including civil society, NGOs and the private sector – to capture progress towards the 2030 Agenda, as well as to recognise areas where more is needed.

We will look for opportunities to build stronger civil society/private sector/government partnerships, in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, that can deliver on all our shared goals.

We will focus on the interlinkages between the goals and how they can be pursued concurrently; recognising they are indivisible and integrated is crucial to leaving no-one behind.

We will also consider our VNR through very strong gender lens. The 2030 Agenda is as much about human rights as it is about development and we firmly believe there is no hope of delivering on the 2030 Agenda unless we deliver for all members of society, including women and girls. This starts with strengthening gender data to ensure our policies and programs are responsive to the unique experiences of both women and men in society.

We also recognise a valuable part of lesson sharing includes acknowledging those targets that prove more challenging and we will be considering our challenges throughout the VNR process.

Mr President

The 2030 Agenda paves a long, ambitious and complex road ahead. Our success will depend on collective action at the global and regional levels, and domestically, with action by all stakeholders. We will continue to work to this end and look forward to sharing these experiences with you next year.

Thank you.