

Statement by Honorable Mr. Kamal Thapa, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister  
for Foreign Affairs, at the High-Level Thematic Debate on Achieving the  
Sustainable Development Goals at the UN General Assembly

(New York, 21 April 2016)

*Please check against delivery*

Mr. President,

I thank you for your leadership in convening the high-level debates on important pillars of the UN, and I am pleased to participate in today's thematic debate on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

I align my statement with those of the Groups of 77, LDCs and LLDCs, and wish to highlight some points from the perspective of the land-locked, mountainous and least developed economy of Nepal, which is also emerging from conflict.

Last year in New York, we adopted the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We did so with great determination to leave no one behind while transforming the lives of our people and the planet.

Also last year, Nepal confronted profound challenges: the devastating earthquakes and the obstruction of supplies.

As Nepal struggles to recover and build back better, we are acutely aware of the immense impediments to the sustainability of our development, such as landlockedness, climate change, natural disasters, shortfall in capacities and weak means-of-implementation.

Accordingly, we have prepared the groundwork to implement the new Agenda:

First, we have made good progress on the MDGs; we will build on that success as well as on lessons learned.

Second, we have promulgated a rights-based constitution, which provides a solid foundation for our development endeavours; we will make the best use of it. On this, I am very happy to inform this august gathering that the new constitution drafted by the elected representatives of the Nepalese people incorporates universally accepted democratic and inclusive values and norms, which help create conducive environment for implementation of the SDGs.

Third, we have prepared a national assessment report on existing policies and the institutional environment with respect to each SDG. This report informs the formulation of a new development plan and its implementation beginning mid-July this year.

Fourth, our national effort to combat climate change is robust and supports the SDGs, and

Fifth, we aspire to smooth and sustainable graduation from LDC status by 2022.

Mr. President,

We are aware that implementing the Agenda is ultimately a national responsibility.

To enhance our capability for the purpose, we are ready for collaboration with the international community for means of implementation: financial resources, technology, and partnerships, so as to complement our own efforts under national leadership and ownership.

At home, our collaboration involves meaningful partnerships among the public, private and the cooperative sectors as well as academia, media and civil society.

Mr. President,

Global effort and cooperation at the current level are not adequate to help disadvantaged countries to come out of their difficulties.

Most LDCs have remained LDCs for too long; landlocked countries have suffered immensely; smallest and weakest countries continue to bear the weight of action and inaction of others, especially in climate change.

These are also the core issues that deserve serious attention in discussions on United Nations reform so that it remains 'fit for purpose'. We underline the need to strengthen the development pillar of the UN, and to ensure that we are 'delivering as one' for the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme.

Mr. President,

The 2030 Agenda is a result of the special momentum generated by special collaboration.

We need to keep up the momentum; we need to promote solidarity and partnership; and we need to focus on early and effective implementation with all our energy, resources and wisdom to transform the lives of our peoples. Nepal is committed to playing its part in that vision.

I thank you for your kind attention.