



Closing statement by First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic at the sub-regional conference "Promoting Progress on Agenda 2030":

"Dear Minister Djukic Dejanovic,
Dear Ms. Hershey,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank you all for participating in and contributing to this important conference held with the aim of promoting progress in the implementation of the Agenda 2030. My special gratitude goes to the President of the Inter-Sectoral Working Group, Minister Slavica Djukic Dejanovic, for her tireless efforts and devotion to the realization of a series of activities the Republic of Serbia has committed itself to, the efforts made towards the promotion of Agenda 2030 and for organizing this conference. The UN Country Team has also made a major contribution to these processes, by supporting the activities in the build-up to this conference that is significant for all of us in the region.

Furthermore, I would like to particularly thank our neighbours for their part played in the success of the conference, as yet another indicator that cooperation and solidarity are the best instruments to employ in order to overcome challenges and achieve desired results.

I wish to underline that the Republic of Serbia has been fully committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly seeing that at one point, as a member of key fora such as ECOSOC, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing, our country had played an active role in defining the goals of the Agenda and the process of establishing its financing model.

Even though the leading role in this context is played by Governments, these goals cannot be reached without involving the widest variety of stakeholders in a society while also fostering partnerships at all levels, as we have witnessed at this conference as well. Within the scope of its capacity, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to support both monitoring and implementation activities regarding the Agenda in the Republic of Serbia, the achievement of SDGs and its targets, and to participate in the drafting of the report on its implementation. This

occasion has assured us again that these goals are interconnected and interdependent, and that it is vital to, while implementing the agenda, share experiences at sub-regional, regional and global levels. It is our wish to affirm Serbia as a pillar of regional cooperation, one that is strongly committed to and actively engaged in the promotion of relations in the region, including the deepening and concrete realization of cooperation - most notably in the framework of regional initiatives and mechanisms. This conference has truly demonstrated the need for us to continue to exchange experience and good practices, coupled with working on political solutions in the context of SDG implementation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would also like to emphasize that Serbia has attached utmost importance to the activities and the strengthening of cooperation within the UN, and it fully supports and adheres to the Organization's principles and goals. Building on this, Serbia will continue to act as a partner to all UN Member States that share the principles and interests of development for all and mutual respect. The exchange of experience and best practices is an indispensable step on the path of success. The motivation that drives us and connects us so strongly is at the same time a commitment. The survival of our planet hinges on the attitude we are fostering towards the environment today and also on our readiness to invest in environmental development and preservation. As a responsible member of the international community having signed and ratified the Paris Agreement, the Republic of Serbia endeavours to make a contribution to the global efforts aiming for maximum efficiency in responding to the challenge of climate change.

My special gratitude goes to the United Nations Country Team and UN Resident Coordinator in Serbia Ms. Karla Hershey for having carried out the MAPS Mission, which ended last week with success. It is our expectation that the report to be written by UN representatives will make a positive assessment of our country and provide useful guidelines for the further implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its harmonization with the chapters in pre-accession talks with the EU, i.e., with the national priorities. We see the path to EU membership that we share in common with other states in the region as a path to a greater stability, economic prosperity and the strengthening of democratic values. What we strive for is a prosperous society that will, as it shares its values with countries in Europe and the world at large, contribute to global stability and progress and, above all, cater to the needs and well-being of its citizens.

However long the road ahead may be, this event has demonstrated that we can succeed, provided that our efforts and activities are comprehensive, coherent and consistent.

Thank you."