



PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

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# **Statement by Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, Prime Minister of Iceland, 26 September 2015 at the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit 2015**

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Honourable President

This autumn has already produced a truly impressive harvest. The 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda alone, amount to a bumper crop and I am optimistic that we will see an excellent result from COP21, indeed Iceland recently pledged a 40% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda which we adopted at this summit is a remarkable achievement. It testifies to the power of the multilateral system. All the goals have equal weight and success in one area helps us to succeed in the others - ending poverty and hunger are obviously fundamental to human beings fulfilling their potential and improving infrastructure helps to alleviate poverty and hunger and vice versa.

The Agenda also correctly identifies sustainable management of natural resources as key to these aims. In the end we have only two sources of food – the ocean and the land. We must manage both with great care and responsibility. Utilizing marine resources in a responsible manner based on scientific advice plays a vital role in ensuring food security and prosperity. We must seriously address land and soil degradation and aim at least for a land degradation

neutral world. Iceland will continue to contribute to the sustainable management of both oceans and land at home and abroad.

The lack of access to sustainable and affordable energy is a major contributing factor to poverty. Here I would like to pay tribute to the Secretary General and his Sustainable Energy for All Initiative, which has given important impetus to establishing measurable goals and targets in this area. Iceland is aiming to become a carbon neutral economy.

Already almost all of our stationary energy comes from renewables. And Iceland will continue to support a number of developing countries in harnessing geothermal energy, to improve living standards and our climate at the same time.

Mr President,

Through the tragic experiences of many seeking a better life or safety from conflict, we have become keenly aware in recent months of the nexus between security, development and human rights. It is important that the Agenda addresses specifically the multidimensional reality of migration and the need for international cooperation to ensure it is safe and orderly. It is also important that the particular burden borne by communities hosting refugees is recognized.

The SDGs are a major challenge and will require the commitment and energy of all countries and all people. Therefore, Iceland is particularly gratified that we were all able to agree on an approach to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls for achieving all the goals we have set ourselves.

We also recognise the role that men and boys must play in eliminating discrimination and violence against women and girls. One campaign in support of this which has already proven effective is UN Women's HeforShe campaign, which I am proud to say Icelandic men have supported in large numbers. I urge all men and boys to join the battle for equality.

At this summit we are collectively committing to a number of reforms for women and girls in order to achieve equality by 2030. Iceland will continue to provide much needed funding for the issue of gender equality. The Icelandic parliament has agreed a huge increase in funding for issues of equality for the next five years. At least half of those funds will go to supporting equality measures internationally.

**Mr. President,**

**I am also particularly pleased that our agenda includes a reference to the prevention and treatment of neurological disorders. Progress in that field can improve the lives of millions.**

Mr. President,

Today we mark a major achievement. But we all know the proof of the pudding will be in the eating. Effective implementation of the Agenda will be challenging. The Government of

Iceland will join others in tackling these challenges at a national, regional and global level. Iceland is committed to taking action. Let us make global history.