



# **REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

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SECOND COMMITTEE  
SIXTY-NINTH SESSION  
Item 19: Sustainable development

Check against delivery

## STATEMENT

by

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COUNSELLOR

New York, 16 October 2014

Mr. Chairman,

Since this is the first time that I am taking the floor in the Second Committee, I would like to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election and wish you every success in your work.

Mr. Chairman,

As a member of the Open Working Group, Serbia participated, actively and constructively, in the formulation of the proposal for sustainable development goals and the work of the Intergovernmental committee on sustainable development financing. We shall continue to support the intergovernmental process as we strive to develop an ambitious and universal post-2015 development agenda.

For various reasons, my country's pursuit of the Millennium development goals has been less successful than we would have wanted and expected. Once halved, the poverty rate is rising again due to the economic crisis and more than 8 per cent of the population is below the poverty line now. Also, we registered an increase in overall unemployment, youth unemployment and long-term unemployment. No doubt, the economic parameters will be affected also by the devastating floods of last May as they caused extensive damage to infrastructure, energy production and manufacture and agricultural industries; they will certainly be reflected in the country's GDP.

In the circumstances, it is imperative to continue to implement the Millennium Development Goals and pursue future sustainable development goals in order to achieve a viable recovery and stability of the country.

Mr. Chairman,

Serbia is looking forward to the Secretary-General's Synthesis Report. It is expected to be balanced and reflect all 3 dimensions of sustainable development and take into account the needs of all countries, including those of the middle-income ones. In the period to come, the eradication of poverty will remain my country's priority, its key and overarching goal. Also, the rise of inequality, within and among countries, causes concern and Serbia will address the relative issues with diligence, too. For, if we are to tackle poverty successfully, we must achieve progress in promoting a sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and full and productive employment and decent work for all. With a helping hand of a United Nations country team, my country is now in the process of devising a new United Nations Development Agenda Framework for the period 2016 to 2020, a strategic partnership between Serbia and the United Nations system in fulfilling the sustainable development goals.

My country believes, Mr. Chairman, that sustainable development cannot be achieved if we do not achieve peaceful and inclusive societies, promote the rule of law at all levels, provide justice for all and build effective and capable institutions nationally and internationally. After all, no development is possible without peace and stability.

As a country hit by massive and unprecedented floods this spring, Serbia is well aware of the relevance of climate change and the need for urgent mitigation and adaptation measures. Goal 13 to combat climate change and its prospective impact are extremely important and their cross-cutting nature is evident. Finally, issues of accountability and measurement remain vital and every country, with international support for capacity development, must invest substantial efforts in measuring the extent to which its commitment to the implementation of the goals is being carried out.

Mr. Chairman,

Serbia has been elected by the United Nations Development Group to be one of the countries to take part in consultations on the subject of culture and development which will allow a diversity of stakeholders to articulate their vision of culture and its integration into the Post-2015 Development Agenda. It is evident that culture plays a most important role both as a driver and an enabler of sustainable development. The contribution of culture to poverty reduction, education, gender equality, sustainable cities and urbanization, the environment and climate change, as well as to inclusion and reconciliation, will be debated in the consultations and my country believes that culture should find appropriate place in the SDG in a cross-cutting way.

Thank you.