



**Address of the Permanent Representative of Iceland, Mr Guðni Bragason, on “*The OSCE and the UN Sustainable Development Goals*”, at the Security Days, 4th June 2019.**

Mr Moderator.

I would like to thank the Secretary General for making the Sustainable Development Goals a topic in the Security Days, and thus giving a clear signal of the importance of the SDGs in the work of the OSCE.

Iceland was from the beginning active in the formation of the SDGs, with the main emphasis on issues where we can place added value, such as on the goals of the oceans and fisheries, on sustainable energy, especially renewable energy, and land restoration, as well as gender issues.

The SDGs have a strong security dimension, and that is especially important in the comprehensive security concept of the OSCE. Thus the SDG 16 on *Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions* is of paramount importance for us.

This year, Iceland will present its first *Voluntary National Review* to the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) in New York in order to share experiences, challenges and lessons learned with the view to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. This kind of reportage is important for the implementation on the goals.

No country can, however, reach the SDGs with an order from above, from the authorities, since the goals involve all layers of society. We will not reach the SDGs unless everybody, the general public as well as all stakeholders, take part in integrating them and make them their own. This applies especially to youth, and the sense of ownership of youth in the future. The OSCE has recognized this through the Ministerial Declaration on Youth in Milano. Of other groups and

sectors, I particularly want to mention the role of civil society and the private sector.

The SDG 16 is important for the work in all three OSCE dimensions, as well in the three institutions. The Agenda 2030 calls for security, sustainable economic development and prosperity, environmental concerns, respect for international law, strengthening of democratic institutions, human rights, equality and democracy.

Allow me to mention few points of relevance in the SDG 16 in line with the thought of “leaving no one behind”.

When strengthening of the judicial system specific consideration should to be given to the various needs of individuals and groups, such as children, persons with disabilities, and people of foreign origin in order to ensure equal access to the judicial system and enable all individuals to exercise their rights.

Specific attention needs to be directed at vulnerable groups in greater danger of being subjected to violence, such as persons with disabilities, women of foreign origin and LGBTI individuals. The OSCE has addressed the issue through the Milano Declaration on Violence against Women.

We call for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) regarding children. We need to fight human trafficking and other forms of exploitation of children.

The OSCE has addressed the Safety of Journalists through the Ministerial Declaration in Milano. Freedom of expression and access to information are integrated into the Icelandic Constitution, which states that every person is entitled to express his/her views.

Mr Moderator.

The OSCE could play an important role in implementing the SDGs, and the SDGs could likewise be an important asset in the comprehensive security concept of the OSCE.