



BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

STATEMENT

by

**H.E. Mr. Nebojša Radmanović,
Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina
Head of the Delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

at the

General Debate of the 69th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 26 September 2014

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Mr. President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address the United Nations General Assembly on the 'Delivering on and Implementing a Transformative Post-2015 Development Agenda'. I will use this opportunity to once again thank the UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his last visit to Bosnia and Herzegovina and the region and especially for the support expressed on that occasion.

I will start with the issue I believe is of most importance today which causes the greatest concerns. Currently, the world is in state of chaos which is causing reasonable fear and concern of its citizens for peaceful and secure future. This world has never fought more wars since the late sixties. Today, in many parts of our planet, there are low and medium intensity conflicts which can potentially produce wider regional and global conflicts. From Afghanistan through Ukraine, the Middle East, Libya, Central Africa and other regions, we witness armed conflicts with no chance of stopping them and reach a lasting peace in sight. These conflicts conflict are accompanied by rarely seen escalation of all forms of violence and brutality particularly against the civilians. Increased numbers of the internal civil conflicts are causing the states to fall apart, some of them disappearing overnight, others spring up with the support of their outside mentors, with the public emergence of new political maps drawn with new borders, separatist movements are getting stronger, and international laws are being violated with use of force. This situation is result of unilateral actions of some great powers, double standards in the international relations, breaking the cohesive legal world order and other actions contrary to the norms of the international law. On the other side, years of economic and financial crisis has led to the dramatic social change with alarming socio-economic consequences. Despite the growing global prosperity the gap between rich and poor countries and nations is getting deeper. Middle class is getting smaller inequality within the same societies are getting greater. System of social support is declining with unemployment especially among the young people takes on the alarming proportions. Given this general situation we must think about the future development.

Bosnia and Herzegovina /thereinafter BiH/ is at present a developing country characterized by an open and fully liberal economy with the foreign trade and economic ties directed towards the countries of the region and the European Union. Unfortunately, as a developing country, we are facing the problem of large unemployment with over 25%, big trade deficit, lack of capital and major investment and insufficient and weak industrial production. BiH economic and social situation is similar to the region of the Western

Balkans, and is extremely difficult. Economic reconstruction and recovery of the country after the tragic conflict 1991-1995 has slowed down, in view of the fact that the global economic crisis has engulfed the whole world. However, the total economic growth in 2013 was 1%. Last year, industrial production increased to the rate of 6.7%. The biggest economic problem represents the foreign investment decline, which in 2013 was less than 34% compared to the 2012. Due to the general economic downturn in the country, and countries in the region, as well as the damage caused by the natural disaster, and the negative effects on the economic and production activities, decline in indirect taxes revenue significantly endangered fiscal stability of the country.

Regardless of current negative economic trends, due to the economic crisis, we believe that utilizing our natural resources, and its appropriate exploitation, we can achieve the economic growth and development which would result in a long-term progress and political stabilization of the country. In order to achieve that, we and the region do certainly need the support of the developed world, especially the developed countries of the European Union and the United States, Japan and BRICS countries. Sustainable development which involves investments in the real sector of the economy, building transportation infrastructure and development, poverty reduction, effective and rational use of resources, we cannot achieve by ourselves. We are too small of a country and region to achieve it alone. We do not have either enough capital to build industrial facilities to respect the principles of 'green economy', or sufficient capital in order to protect natural resources and put it in the position of the sustainable development.

When it comes to the economic determinants of sustainable development, I am convinced that most of the small countries share the same view and position. We cannot resolve the issues of progress alone and prevent the emergence of the 'vicious circle of poverty' which threatens to undermine our societies. Therefore in the future we need to continue to keep the principles of economic solidarity and mutual economic cooperation and support, as well as a common framework of values and actions. Moreover, I do hope, given the multi polarity of the economic world that we will find more partners from the developed countries on our development and recovery path. World of the future should not be put in the position of a false choice who should, or should not be saved. Every crisis has, apart from the uncertainty for the future, wrong belief that the rich countries and nations again fare better than poor. However, it is forgotten that in a situation of global interdependence and responsibility no one can be self preserved. Either we all survive or nobody does.

BiH remains committed to meeting the Millennium Development Goals, although the implementation is very difficult, given the demanding conditions after the war and the economic crisis.

BiH is committed to the regional cooperation with all interested countries, based on the principles of mutual respect and common interests. BiH is surrounded by the neighbors who are also in various stages of transition and democratic reforms and we share the problems of the complex processes on our way towards the EU. We bestow special importance to the regional cooperation. BiH has good neighborly relations with Serbia, Croatia and Montenegro and other countries of the former Yugoslavia and the Balkans, acknowledged by the long historical ties and regional interdependence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All of us gathered here today, representing our countries and people, need to find, in the future and in the near future, concrete and clear solutions to the problems and challenges including the broadest range of sustainable development, defined by a number of the UN conferences in the past 20 years.

Sustainable development of countries, regions and groups of countries, continents and the whole world is of a principal matter and the basic starting point for further strategic steps and activities for the modern humanity to resolve. The state of the world economy, environment and the entire contemporary society is full of problems and challenges that require our full commitment and dedication to the continued growth of the world economy, along with the growing possibility of building a sustainable development in the world, which was unfortunately slowed down and stopped with the emergence of the global economic and financial crisis, continuously since 2008.

I would like to point out a few words about the possibilities and problems of sustainable development in Bosnia and Herzegovina as well as the region of Southeast Europe, being the important European region aiming to build strong political and economic ties with the European Union and other countries in the world. I am afraid that in BiH we do not have the same starting position as other countries in the world when it comes to the inclusion into process of sustainable development conducted under the auspices of the UN. In 1992 when the first conference was held in Rio, we were at the beginning of the horrid chapter of our history and the tragic conflict, whose negative political and economic effects our society is still suffering. However, thanks to the support of the United Nations and the European Union, today we are on the road to recovery and we certainly do hope to achieve the ultimate successful goal that is, in the political sense, full legal integration into the European Union and the economic achievement of developed country status.

This year, the world celebrates the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War. Economic and political situation in the world incredibly resembles the situation of a hundred years ago. Economic crisis, depression, social disintegration and ineffectiveness of the international system, the rise of armed conflicts and wars, led

to the weakening of optimistic driving force, lack of global vision and joint action. Common goal which is necessary for a stable international order in the world fades on the horizon of spreading conflicts. It requires us to set clear priorities and seek new lighthouses. This year in BiH we marked the Sarajevo assassination, which is commonly taken as the direct cause for the start of the First World War with more than a million people killed. At several events dedicated to the anniversary together we have asked ourselves: Have we learned the lessons from the past one hundred years ago? When I see the local wars fought on all sides of the world today, I am afraid we have not learned the lessons; on the contrary in the meantime we repeated the old and made new mistakes.

World needs peace more than ever. It is only in the peace that one can develop and prosper. Maintenance of the international peace and security is imperative for the development of every country and the entire world. It is the responsibility of the member states to find acceptable framework and tools in order to improve the security situation in the world in the interest of development and progress.

Thank you.