

19 September 2016

## 71<sup>st</sup> Session of the General Assembly

### **Opening Remarks by H.E. Peter Thomson United Nations Private Sector Forum 2016**

H.E. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

This time last year, we were celebrating the adoption of the 2030 Agenda.

But one year on, it is clear that far more needs to be done to turn this masterplan for saving people and planet into concrete action and meaningful change.

As President of the General Assembly, I have pledged to make the primary objective of the 71st session, overseeing a universal push to transform our world, by seeing meaningful progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals.

The SDGs are universal, integrated, and mutually reinforcing.

And effective implementation of the Goals will require all partners – governments, the UN, international financial institutions, the private sector, and civil society – to forge new ways of doing business – coherently, efficiently, and effectively.

Armed conflict, persecution, climate change, natural disasters, and the search for opportunity, are driving one of the largest mass movements of people in history.

135 million people are in need of urgent humanitarian assistance.

It is critical that we support these desperate people and address the root causes that are causing them to flee.

The 2030 Agenda is at the heart of achieving this.

The accelerating pace of climate change is adding new challenges, threatening our ecosystems, and pointing to an unsustainable future for humanity.

If we do not step up our efforts to counter climate change, the number of displaced people – and the duration of their displacement – could sharply rise – straining global systems, global relationships, and the global market.

While this is an issue of particular importance to small island developing states, no country is immune from the devastating impacts of extreme weather events.

In June 2017, the UN Conference on Oceans (SDG 14) will be held in New York, bringing together partners to contribute to long-term solutions for the conservation and sustainable use of our oceans and its resources.

I encourage you all to attend. The interconnected nature of the Goals means that the success of the Oceans Conference will be critical to driving broader momentum for implementing the other SDGs.

I also urge all stakeholders to work together in identifying new and innovative SDG financing options, and to increase dedicated resources towards SDG's implementation.

The welfare of our future generations depends on it.

Thank you.