

STATEMENT OF MR. YURI STERK – VICE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF BULGARIA AT THE ECOSOC FORUM ON FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT, 23-26 April 2018

Madame President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It won't be an exaggeration to observe that we live in a very dynamic world and the challenges we face could easily divert our attention from the collective effort to meet the Sustainable Development Goals. That is why Bulgaria appreciates the holding of this forum to discuss the important issues related to financing for development. My country's efforts in that field are channelled through its membership at the European Union and through its national policies.

Currently, Bulgaria has the honour to hold the Presidency of the Council of the European Union. Commissioner Mimica has set out a clear vision for the collective EU effort to keep a strong focus on delivering on the Sustainable Development Goals by meeting our own Financing for Development Commitments. I just want to add that Bulgaria will continue to contribute towards the leading role of Europe in delivering development and climate change funding, as well as in being the main global provider of aid for trade for developing countries.

Implementing the Addis Agenda is not only about financing. In its essence, it is a shared commitment that also goes into a range of domestic, international, public and private means to support the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. That is why Bulgaria has been exploring ways to incentivize changes aimed at the better mobilization of domestic resources and enhancing of the private sector's engagement.

By adopting the Agenda 2030 and the Addis Agenda we all took the commitment to build a world in which no one will be left behind. We all pledged to reach furthest behind first, helping the poorest people and the countries they live in to eliminate poverty. Achieving gender equality, empowering all women and girls, as well as the full realization of their human rights, are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. Bulgaria has been devoting a lot of efforts to that end and, for example, is proud to be ranked first in female ITC specialists among all of the EU countries. We also have a high level of women's participation in decision-making and leadership, thus creating social cohesion and justice.

My country recognizes that investing in children and youth is critical for achieving sustainable development and is implementing programs on its own and in collaboration with UNICEF aimed at helping children to achieve their full potential as key agents of change.

Currently, Bulgaria is implementing projects as a part of its ODA commitment in 12 countries around the world. Most of those projects are related to the protection of the rights of the children and the right to education.

Let me conclude by reaffirming my country's continuing commitment to implement the Agenda 2030 and the Addis Agenda.

Thank you!