

AUSTRIA



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Statement delivered by

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Federal Chancellery of Austria**

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Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to represent Austria at this year's High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. Austria presented its Voluntary National Report for the first time this year, and the process of compiling the report, but also the COVID-19 crisis of the last months, has shown the scope and meaning of the SDGs. A multilateral forum like this reminds us of the global effects of COVID-19 and I hope that this also serves as a reminder of the importance of a multilateral response to it.

Someone I spoke to in the process leading to our report told me that for her, the SDGs simply translate to "a better life for all". I find this very true – and as COVID-19 is challenging all aspects of everyone's lives, the SDGs should also be guiding us both when fighting the results of the crisis and when building resilience for future challenges. We need to take the effort to keep up the trust between States in order to be able to cooperate in this spirit.

As Austrian Minister for EU and Constitution I want to stress one aspect: This crisis asks for strong responses of States in order to protect their citizens. Many freedoms we know have been temporarily suspended – in the interest of protecting others. In such an instance, it is crucial that citizens can trust their government. Governments need to work hard to earn this trust by obeying the rule of law. All citizens deserve strong institutions working in their interest, never against it.

People need to be able to trust in their governments' commitment to the SDGs. So, in this spirit, let's keep up our commitment to the SDGs!

Thank you!