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STATEMENT

**By His Excellency Vladimir Andreichenko
Chairman of the House of Representatives
of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus**

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which will guide the work of the international community for next 15 years, will be a crucial step towards building a more thriving, sustainable and equal world.

It is of paramount importance that the national parliaments are involved in the process of elaboration of SDGs. We fully support the efforts of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to enhance cooperation between the parliaments and the United Nations.

The challenges we are facing today demonstrate clearly the significance of the Parliament as a core institution of any democratic State. By expressing the will of the people at the national level, the legislative branch should actively engage in addressing the most difficult issues on international agenda. This is the only way for us to build the world the people want.

While acknowledging the gravity of the problems the humankind faces today, one should admit that the implementation of the Millennium Declaration has demonstrated significant success.

Belarus has early accomplished the MDGs relating to eradication of need and hunger, ensured 100 per cent literacy, has lowered significantly maternal and infant mortality. The success of Belarus is confirmed by its 53rd place in the United Nations Human Development Index that places our country close to the group of states demonstrating highest level of human development.

We have made significant progress in ensuring gender equality. Belarus is a the 28th place in the UN Gender Equality Index. Around 30 per cent of Belarusian Members of Parliament are women.

Belarus pays serious attention to youth policies and engaging the youth in social life. Many cities have youth parliaments. Our participation in the activities of the Eurasian Youth Parliament is constantly increasing. The Consultative Youth Council has been created under the auspices of the UN regional office in Belarus.

Belarus focuses on the environmental issues. Our initiatives enjoy broad support at international fora. This is in particular so as far as the new and renewable energy sources and "green economics" are concerned.

In today's turbulent world Belarus prides itself with social consensus and stability, absence of discrimination on grounds of nation or religion.

All these achievements are a direct result of the policy of the President of Belarus aimed at building "The State for the People", where everyone is secure in all aspects and has opportunities to unlock their full potential.

Having entered the 21st century, the humankind has faced new threats to international peace and security. More than 60 million people have abandoned their homes due to conflicts. That is why today, as never, the politicians are bound to take extremely balanced and reasonable decisions.

Belarus has always advocated and keeps advocating the peaceful settlement of international disputes in strict accordance with spirit and letter of the Charter of the United Nations. We are deeply convinced that unwillingness to enter into equal and respectful dialogue, unilateral coercive measures and sanctions are contradicting the principles of sustainable development.

Belarus will spare no effort to further de-escalate situation in the region, carry out its international obligations with respect to combating organized crime, human trafficking, terrorism, illegal migration and drug trafficking.

It goes without saying that building a world the people want is impossible without further strengthening the role of the United Nations and creation of effective financing mechanisms. It is crucial to support the SDGs implementation in the post-2015 period by international assistance, which includes also fulfillment by the donors of their obligations with respect to financing for development. We are also convinced that the United Nations should not discontinue the assistance programmes in the middle-income countries, including Belarus.

Placing democracy on the service of peace and development is an absolute priority for the Belarusian Parliament. By employing legislative powers, dialogue with the civil society, parliamentary diplomacy, Members of Parliament shall contribute effectively and constructively to implementation the new sustainable development agenda.