



General Assembly  
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General Debate

Statement by H.E. Tore Hattrem  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

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President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The world has experienced unprecedented progress during the last decades. Extreme poverty has been more than halved. People live longer, child mortality rates are falling, and more girls attend school than ever before. Global political cooperation, trade, and common 'rules of the road' have brought us to where we are today.

That said, the progress we have made cannot be taken for granted. We must defend what we have achieved while working together to ensure sustainability in all we do.

I would like to highlight four crucial building blocks for a sustainable future:

- 1) Our core interests are common, and we can achieve more when we act together.
- 2) There can be no security without development, and no development without security. The first universal roadmap for development, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, is premised on this holistic perspective

(Check against delivery)

3) Our security and welfare depend on our ability to uphold international law. Good global and national governance and the rule of law are decisive for sustainable development.

4) Protectionism and isolationism will reverse our common development. We need more trade and cooperation – not less. We cannot afford to shake the very foundations that our open, global economic order is based on. It is imperative that we demonstrate our shared commitment to a rules-based multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core. The WTO remains our best chance to create a level playing field. We will all benefit from open, predictable and enforceable rules and commitments for all. It is crucial that we achieve a substantial outcome at the ministerial meeting in Buenos Aires in December. That will be the litmus test.

Mr President,

As nations, our core interests are common – we all want peace, security and welfare for our citizens. We only have one planet – every nation's and every citizen's security and welfare depend on our ability to protect our natural environment and climate. We cannot allow inaction and unsustainable practices to prevail.

The good news is that the Sustainable Development Goals have given us a universal development agenda. The SDG summit that took place here in this hall two years ago was the pinnacle of global governance – and it was a defining moment for our common future.

At that summit, world leaders decided to put sustainability first.

Mr President,

Preventing and addressing war, conflict and humanitarian crises is crucial for sustainability. Norway strongly supports UN Secretary-General Guterres' vision for the UN. Every tool and institution within the UN system must be realigned to improve our ability to prevent conflict and to make and sustain peace.

Respect for fundamental human rights is critical in order to build resilient, prosperous and peaceful societies. Investments in human rights today will prevent what would have been tomorrow's conflicts.

Let me draw your attention to the peace agreement between the Colombian Government and FARC. It came about as a result of the courage and hard work of the parties, supported by international partners and a united Security Council. Norway is proud to have contributed as a guarantor to the process.

The point I want to make is that the Colombian success story is propelling sustainable development both within and outside the nation's borders. The agreement struck by the parties also addresses issues of common interest globally – such as fighting illicit drug trafficking and deforestation in former conflict areas.

The Colombian process was the most inclusive peace process in history. Ensuring inclusivity in conflict resolution is both the right and the smart thing to do. Experience shows that women's participation in peace processes tends to increase the chances of sustainable peace.

Stability in the Middle East and North Africa is another issue of common interest to the international community. It is crucial to achieve regional stability, strengthened capacity to govern and increased cooperation between states in the region.

The Norwegian leadership of the donor group to Palestine – the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee – is an example of how institutional and economic development can underpin efforts to resolve a conflict politically.

Mr President,

Development assistance should play a more catalytic role in our common, global campaign for sustainable development:

- by building capacity for generating domestic revenue,
- by strengthening public service delivery,
- by stimulating trade and job-creating investments,
- and by enabling individuals to take responsibility for their own future into their own hands.

This is why investing in education, particularly for girls, is the most effective way of promoting sustainable development. And that is why we are working hard to promote education globally, and why Norway has doubled its aid to global education over the past four years (from 1.7 billion NOK in 2013 to 3.4 billion NOK in 2017).

Education creates stability and hope for children and young people in conflict areas. Preventing children from having gaps in their education is also important for post-conflict reconstruction and development.

That is why Norway has significantly increased its contribution to education in emergencies. 8 % of our humanitarian budget is now dedicated to education.

Norway has helped initiate the Education Cannot Wait fund. The purpose is to facilitate global funding to keep children in school during conflicts and crises. Schools must be protected from attack. That is why Norway has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, and encourages others to do the same.

Further increases in both domestic and external financing are required in order to reach SDG 4 on quality education for all.

Last year the Education Commission, initiated and supported by Norway, delivered a report with recommendations for increasing financing for education, including funding for the Global Program for Education, Education Cannot Wait, and a new initiative – the International Finance Facility for Education (IFFEd).

Norway has doubled its support for global education through the Global Program for Education over the last four years. We are committed to working with partners to make the replenishment of the Global Program for Education a success.

Mr President,

The fight against terrorism is a core interest that is common to us all. Groups like ISIL cannot be allowed to challenge our free and open societies. Together, we are making decisive progress against ISIL in Syria and Iraq. We can now look forward to the time when ISIL is defeated territorially.

Norway is contributing significantly to the international coalition, along all lines of effort. And we are providing humanitarian relief to those affected. Norway has disbursed half a billion US dollars to the Syria crisis since 2016. This means that we are on track to fulfil the pledge we made at the London conference.

Now we must strengthen our efforts to secure sustainable peace. The Security Council must step up and take responsibility. We also need to increase our efforts in the other large-scale humanitarian crises, like Yemen, South Sudan, and Lake Chad. And we need a unified and strong Security Council in dealing with the North Korean nuclear weapons programme and the test firing of ballistic missiles. It is crucial for our common security that a political solution is found.

Mr President,

Our common commitment to sustainable development includes the commitment to leave no one behind. Norway's humanitarian assistance this year, amounting to approximately 650 million US dollars, supports this cause. Today, 142 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance and protection. This is the highest number since the end of World War II.

Many of the humanitarian crises are conflict-related. It is more important than ever to ensure the protection of civilians in these conflicts. We are very concerned about the lack of respect being shown for international humanitarian law. We underline the obligation of all parties to a conflict to protect civilians and ensure safe, unimpeded humanitarian access to all people in need. Norway is working actively to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law among parties to armed conflicts.

Mr President,

Putting sustainability first means acting together to save the oceans. We applaud the UN Secretary-General for appointing the first ever Special Envoy for the Oceans. We congratulate former President of the General Assembly Mr Peter Thomson on his appointment to this important job. And we wish him every success in galvanising global efforts to protect the world's oceans.

In order to be able to harvest resources from the oceans in the future, we must ensure that the oceans are clean and healthy. And it is important that Small Island Developing States – also known as 'Big Ocean States' – join forces to find good solutions that promote the health and sustainability of our oceans.

It against this backdrop that Norway hosted a meeting at the UN this week to explore the enormous scope of opportunities that sustainable oceans will provide.

In conclusion Mr President,

The United Nations is the backbone of our global order. A strong and healthy back is needed to address and resolve the challenges the world is facing today. But we know that we can do it together.

The UN provided the leadership to unite the countries of the world in the Paris agreement. This agreement is an important step towards ensuring the sustainability of our planet.

We were also able to come together in Addis Ababa in 2015 and agree on a framework for financing sustainable development. This will be crucial for our efforts to reach the Sustainable Development Goals.

Many common challenges still have to be solved. And at the same time, we must safeguard all that we have already accomplished together. These are the tasks that we have to deal with together – in this General Assembly.

Norway has actively supported the UN since it was founded. Through seven decades, and changing Norwegian governments, we have worked relentlessly in and with the UN for our common interests.

Norway is a candidate for membership in the UN Security Council for 2021 to 2022. We count on the support of the UN member states for our candidature.

Thank you