

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen

It is a privilege to present you our second voluntary national review on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. The Review highlights the positive results in sustainable development as well as challenges where increased efforts are needed. It describes the main measures and activities for each of the Sustainable Development Goals, including actions of government and civil society.

In addition to the 17 Global Goals, Estonia is also focusing on maintaining the viability of Estonian cultural space according to the “Sustainable Estonia 21” strategy, which was approved by the Estonian Parliament already in 2005.

The Sustainable Development Goals are the basis for the new long term strategy “Estonia 2035” that lays down Estonia’s long-term strategic goals and relevant policy measures. The strategy and Sustainable Development Goals are implemented by integrating them into governments’ development plans.

Dear colleagues,

Implementation of such a comprehensive agenda needs efforts from all members of the society. Governments’ actions are essential but we put also a great effort to the **stakeholder participation** in the implementation and monitoring process.

The Estonian Sustainable Development Commission is an advisory body consisting of NGO organizations from different fields of sustainable development. In addition to that, **informal cooperation mechanisms** such as, the coalition for sustainable development brings together businesses, NGO-s and government organizations to find practical ways to enhance the implementation of Global Goals and rise awareness in Estonia.

Dear audience,

Keeping track of progress in a systematic and transparent way is essential for delivering the 2030 Agenda. Estonian sustainable development indicators were renewed in 2017 to harmonise it with Global Goals. These indicators are available in the online data-driven “**Tree of Statistics**” application. It is a great example how data and statistics can be made exciting and easily understandable for everyone. The leaves of the tree are indicators and the colour of the leaf shows how we are doing.

For example, the green leaves indicate the **positive results** in education. Estonian students are among top of the world according to the OECD PISA tests. We are also doing well in meeting renewable energy targets. We are proud that our e-solutions make government services quick and easily accessible for everyone. And it helps us to save every month a pile of papers of 300 meters high - almost equal in height to the Eiffel Tower.

Despite the fact that Estonia was ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in Global Sustainable Index, we still have many **challenges when it comes to** sustainable development. For example, our economy is too energy and resource intensive. We need to establish effective waste management and recycling systems, decrease greenhouse gases and maintain biodiversity. We also need to focus on gender equality issues and decrease the risk of poverty for women and disabled people, including families with disabled children.

Dear colleagues,

We are convinced that the benefits from science, technology innovation and ICT solutions help us to accelerate implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and work together even in unexpected situations like the COVID-19 crisis has brought us. In March this year, we organized a hackathon in Estonia to find solutions for technological problems that have showed up during the COVID-19 crisis. More than 1300 people

participated, 30 solutions were invented and 10 of them developed into viable crisis mitigation companies. Hackaton contributed to the development of worldwide movement called ***Hack the Crisis***, which has reached more than 60 countries all over the world and ended up with more than 100 working solutions and crisis mitigation companies.

**Development cooperation** is of great importance for Estonia. We are a small country and our possibilities for any kind of help are therefore limited. In every possible field of development aid, we try to apply our knowledge of e-government and digital solutions

Ladies and gentlemen

Estonia is fully committed to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals as we consider them an effective set of tools for paving the way towards better lives for everyone, sustainable and responsible economic growth and keeping our living environment and the planet healthy at the same time. Alone we cannot do much. We can only achieve these Global Goals when working together.