



# Is the 2030 Agenda at the Center of Global Discourse?

A Review of Statements delivered during the  
United Nations 72nd General Assembly General  
Debate

*(September 18 - 23 2017, New York)*

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# IS THE 2030 AGENDA AT THE CENTER OF GLOBAL DISCOURSE?

*A Review of Statements delivered during the United Nations 72nd General Assembly General Debate (September 18 - 23 2017, New York)*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Two years after the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, Heads of State and Government gathered again at the [United Nations for the 72nd General Assembly](#) (UNGA) General Debate. The main theme of this UNGA, proposed by the [President of the UNGA](#) (PGA), Miroslav Lajčák, is: **“Focusing on People: Striving for peace and decent life for all on a sustainable planet”** and the connection with the [2030 Agenda](#) is clear.

On its second consecutive year, [Together 2030](#)<sup>1</sup> takes a critical look at the official statements delivered during the UNGA General Debate and analyzes how the 2030 Agenda is captured in them.

The main question guiding the analysis was: *How are global leaders referring to the 2030 Agenda in their official statements at the main multilateral global gathering?*

The research presented in this report analyzes references to the 2030 Agenda and to the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), as well as to national implementation plans, the importance of partnerships and of adequate financing in delivering the SDGs on statements delivered by Heads of State and government or their representatives at the UNGA General Debate in September 2017.

An [Annex](#) to this report includes the list of all countries researched, the full text related to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs as well as the links to the complete statement.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This report is based on the review of **191 statements** ([Annex](#)) delivered by Heads of State and Government and other representatives during the UN 72nd General Assembly General Debate, from September 18 - 23 2017. Of the 191 researched statements, **13 were not available** at the UN official website (*List 1*) and

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<sup>1</sup> [Together 2030](#) is a global, action-oriented initiative aiming to generate and share knowledge on the implementation and accountability of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, and project the voices of different civil society and stakeholders around the world on the challenges and opportunities of implementing this Agenda.

**another 12 statements** were not analyzed due to language barriers (List 2). Due to capacity issues, this review only considered statements delivered and/or translated into English, Spanish and French.

**List 1. *Statements not available online:*** Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bolivia, France, Lao PDR, Lebanon, New Zealand, Palau, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Uruguay.

This research reviewed **166 statements** and analyzed references to: (1) the 2030 Agenda and the [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#); (2) national implementation plans, (3) partnerships for the implementation of the SDGs and (4) adequate financing to deliver the SDGs. The review and analysis, as well as demonstrative quotations, follow below.

**List 2. *Statements available but not revised due to language barriers:*** Bahrain, China, Iraq, Kyrgyzstan, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Turkmenistan, Yemen.

## 3. DATA AND ANALYSIS

### 3.1 Reference to the 2030 Agenda

From the 166 statements reviewed, **144 (87%) referred to the 2030 Agenda or the SDGs at least once.**

The 22 countries that did not mention the 2030 Agenda are listed below.

**List 3. *Countries that did not mention the 2030 Agenda or the SDGs:*** Afghanistan, Austria, Belarus, Congo, DPRK, Greece, Grenada, Hungary, Iran, Jordan, Lithuania, Maldives, Myanmar, Serbia, Senegal, Slovakia, South Sudan, Somalia, Syria, Turkey, Uganda, UAE.

The analysis of the 144 statements that mentioned the 2030 Agenda or the SDGs has shown that countries refer to this universal multilateral commitment in **several ways** (*Table 1*) and, despite the two years into its implementation, the **aspirational and ambitious** character of the Agenda is still the main reference by Heads of State and Government or their representatives.



**Image 1:** Word cloud highlighting the words used in the statements to refer to the 2030 Agenda. The size of the word correlates to the number of repetitions.

From the statements that refer to the 2030 Agenda or to the SDGs, **37 countries (25%)** describe them as a **‘roadmap, blueprint or framework’** (Table 1) *“to bring happiness to the people and leave no one behind in the path to sustainable development”* (**Cabo Verde**), achieve the personal development of every person in the planet (Nepal), to create sustainable and resilient futures (**Samoa**), or to merely ensure the survival of the human species, in a world that is constantly deteriorating due to business as usual (**Zimbabwe**). Moreover, **Croatia** and **Nauru** pointed out the **universality** of the Agenda, expressing that problems such as climate change, forced migration and refugee crises, need global solutions.

Country	Reference to the 2030 Agenda as...
Bhutan, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Nepal, Norway, Poland, Slovenia	A roadmap
Australia, Iceland, Kenya, Tonga	A blueprint
Mozambique, Samoa, Nicaragua, Solomon Islands	A framework
Nauru, Croatia	A universal agreement, a global effort
Portugal	A powerful statement
Singapore	A vision
Argentina	An action plan
El Salvador	A tool for dialogue

Country	Reference to the 2030 Agenda as...
Bahamas, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brunei Darussalam, Costa Rica, Denmark, Ireland, Latvia, Malta, Paraguay, Pakistan, Romania, San Marino, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Zimbabwe	Ambitious

**Table 1:** Words used by countries to refer to the 2030 Agenda in the official statements delivered during the 72nd UNGA General Debate

**Other countries** flagged the high **ambition of the 2030 Agenda**. The representative of **Ghana** shared that “On 25th September, 2015, when the SDGs were adopted, there were sceptics who feared that the goals were too many and too complex to be successfully tackled, even with concerted effort”. **Ireland** recognized the complexity of the agenda “because it is the first of its kind that has won the battle against siloes, the one that is forcing the UN system to be rethought and reformed, the one that forces us to acknowledge interlinkages and intersectionality of the problems we face today”.

## 3.2 Implementation of the 2030 Agenda

Even though it is encouraging to see that 87% of statements reviewed referred to the 2030 Agenda or to the SDGs, this is not necessarily translated into clear **references to its implementation**. The Government of **India**, for instance, pointed out that two years have passed since the adoption of this transformative agenda, but such transformation was still to be seen in many areas: “In 2015, we set ourselves a target of 2030 to find solutions to many challenges on this Agenda. Two of these years have already passed. Surely it is already time to ask how much has happened. If complacency defines the next 13 years, then we are in danger of losing control. We need a sense of urgency as well as unshakable fortitude to take decisions that can avert catastrophe.” (**India**)

We looked at three main areas to try to understand how governments are addressing the implementation of the SDGs and taking concrete steps towards the delivery of the promises on sustainable development. We searched for mentions to **national plans and institutional arrangements, financing sustainable development and partnerships** as indicators of potential implementation.

“[...] today it is no longer the time to celebrate these achievements but to reflect where we are in terms of their implementation. Though the SDGs were endorsed by all with so much optimism, the current state of affairs is far from reassuring. The global situation since has not been conducive to ensure a reasonably effective implementation of the SDGs. That is a major disappointment for all those who have been hoping to see renewed global partnership in the spirit of the 2030 agenda.” (**Ethiopia**)

### 3.2.1 National Plans and Institutional Arrangements

**43 countries (almost 30% of those mentioning the 2030 Agenda)** alluded to the **alignment** of their National Plans to the 2030 Agenda (*List 4*). Among them, we found different degrees of specifications, which could also indicate different stages of implementation. Countries like **Gambia, Uzbekistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Poland, The Bahamas, Mongolia, Cabo Verde, Belize and Mali**, among others, referred to the alignment between their national plans and policies with the 2030 Agenda. Even though these countries were among the few that mentioned national policies, they provided no specifications on which kind of policies or plans have been implemented.

**List 4. Countries that mentioned National Plans and the 2030 Agenda:** Angola, Andorra, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Gambia, Guatemala, Jamaica, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mali, Mexico, Mongolia, Mozambique, Paraguay, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Portugal, San Marino, Sao Tome and Principe, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, Spain, Swaziland, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad y Tobago, Tuvalu, Uzbekistan, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Other countries described and exemplified how their National Plans were aligned with the 2030 Agenda. **Trinidad and Tobago** and **Zambia** broadly described their respective “Vision 2030” and “Seventh National Development Plan” and how these long-term blueprints have been mapped in accordance with the 2030 Agenda.

*“Trinidad and Tobago has therefore framed its national development plan for the period 2016 to 2030, titled ‘Vision 2030’ with its thematic focus ‘Many hearts. Many Voices, One Vision’ in keeping with Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development. In this context, we have mapped our national development goals in accordance with global priorities and the SDGs. Trinidad and Tobago and the United Nations have signed the Multi-Country Strategic Development Framework (MSDF) in April 2017. We acknowledge and thank the UNDP for their assistance with these activities.” (Trinidad & Tobago)*

*“Over the past year, Zambia has registered important developmental gains and we are determined to foster an all-inclusive development paradigm based on the African Union Agenda 2063 and the UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable development [...] Only a few months ago on 21st June 2017, I had the honour to launch the Seventh National Development Plan (7ndp), Zambia’s developmental blueprint for the five year period from 2017 up to 2021, under the theme ‘accelerating development efforts towards the attainment of the national vision 2030 without leaving anyone behind.’ (Zambia)*

Other countries (**3,5%**) provided more clarity on national plans through mentions to **new institutional architectures or responsibilities** related to the 2030 Agenda (*List 5*). **El Salvador** created new institutional structure for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, while **Mexico** established a new National Committee, chaired by the President, to discuss budget allocation for the SDGs. In **Paraguay**, three branches of government recently endorsed the Agenda, and in **Barbados**, the Prime Minister has appointed a Permanent Secretary who will lead the implementation.

**List 5. Countries that mentioned new institutional architectures or responsibilities:** Angola, Barbados, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico, Mozambique, Paraguay.

All these efforts express commitment and strong buy-in from the highest level of Government to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

*“El Salvador cuenta con una Agenda Nacional para el Desarrollo Sostenible, materializada, a través de la creación de una arquitectura institucional para su implementación [...] Nuestro deber como sociedad es seguir trabajando para profundizar estos resultados positivos y continuar en la consecución de la Agenda 2030.” (El Salvador)*

*“I am proud to mention that I have signed in a public ceremony, together with the President of Congress and the President of the Supreme Court of Justice an Inter-Branch Joint Declaration, that recognized the commitment of the Paraguayan Government, in its entirety, with the terms proposed in the Agenda 2030, as well as with every one of its Goals and Targets. The Paraguayan Government has endorsed the Agenda 2030 by its three branches of Government, in what it is considered an unprecedented initiative in the region.” (Paraguay)*

*“Para México la Agenda 2030 es un compromiso de Estado. Per ello, establecimos un Consejo Nacional, que encabeza el propio Presidente de la República, y el Gobierno Federal elaborará su presupuesto con base en los criterios contenidos en la Agenda.” (México)*

*“[The Prime Minister of Barbados] has appointed a Permanent Secretary in his office with the mandate and special responsibility to lead the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at the national level.” (Barbados)*

A few countries shared more **specific ideas** of what the foundation of their national plans looked like (Table 2):

<u>Angola</u>	<u>Mozambique</u>
The new National Development Plan aims at:	Five pillars of their Five-Year Program included:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) <i>Rehabilitating and modernizing economic and social infrastructures;</i></li> <li>2) <i>Promoting public and private investment</i></li> <li>3) <i>Enhancing training, qualification, and adequate management of human resources.</i></li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Consolidating national unity, peace and sovereignty;</i></li> <li>2. <i>Developing human and social capital;</i></li> <li>3. <i>Promoting employment, productivity and competitiveness;</i></li> <li>4. <i>Developing economic and social infrastructures;</i></li> <li>5. <i>Ensuring sustainable and transparent management of natural resources and the environment.</i></li> </ol>

**Table 2:** Specific references to national plans aligned to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs

*“In September 2016, Costa Rica became the first country to establish a national agreement to meet SDG Objectives. We included a special provision to include, along the process, the Heads of the Supreme*



*Powers of the Republic, local government representatives, the business sector, religious groups, social organizations, and academia. They have actively engaged their agendas in the implementation of the SDG Objectives... This initiative aligned the Plan Nacional de Desarrollo (National Development Plan) 2015-2018 with both the SDGs and targets for national and local programs and projects. Through consensus building, dialogue, and accountability, the PND established the functional strategy for SDG planning, implementation and follow-up” (Costa Rica)*

### 3.2.2 Financing the Sustainable Development Goals

Many statements included sections dedicated to **resource mobilization and financing for the attainment of the SDGs**. Some countries highlighted the interconnection between climate change and investment. Others directly denounced the need to redirect resources going to armament to the implementation of the SDGs. A large portion of this statements also made reference to the [Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development](#) as set of policies for sustainable financing. Finally, topics such as ODA and partnerships (mostly with the private sector and UN agencies) were common threads between the statements.

#### 3.2.2.a Climate Change and Disasters<sup>2</sup>

Some countries affected by recent natural disasters used the current environmental and humanitarian crises to frame the discussion and made explicit the need for a change in financing. **Dominica** claimed *“The World Bank facility must be re-capitalized for greater coverage by using already committed funds from the Green Climate Fund. This would allow our countries to focus on improving the lives of our people and support the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals... It would allow us to rebuild our nation, not as it was, but in a manner that is far more capable to meet the realities of rising sea levels and warmer oceans.”*

The statements also showed how countries most affected by climate change (*List 6*) are pushing for the implementation of the [Paris Agreement](#) in synergy with the 2030 Agenda. In **Kiribati**, as part of the government’s 20-year vision (KV20) the country has *“decided to take charge of our fate and put in place innovative financing modalities. This will allow us to fast-track financing support for our sustainable development agenda, especially in relation to climate change and disaster risk reduction”*. On the other hand, **Antigua and Barbuda** representative shared that highly indebted countries are facing problems in borrowing money for rebuilding damaged infrastructure.

**List 6. Countries linking climate change with the 2030 Agenda:** Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Cambodia, Chile, Costa Rica, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kiribati, Mongolia, Montenegro, Nepal, Seychelles

*“Poor and vulnerable countries disproportionately suffer from climate change despite their negligible role in greenhouse gas emissions. The implementation of Paris Agreement should be done in synergy with the 2030 Agenda. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, equity and respective capabilities should be at the center of its implementation.” (Nepal)*

<sup>2</sup> For an analysis of the main issues addressed by countries from Latin America and Caribbean check the report [“America Latina y el Caribe ante la 72 Asamblea general de las Naciones Unidas”](#), from Cepei and Together 2030.

### 3.2.2.b Financing Development, not War

In line with the theme of the 72nd session of the UNGA *“Focusing on People: Striving for peace and decent life for all on a sustainable planet”*, **Germany, Ecuador, Nepal** and **Saint Kitts and Nevis** stressed the opportunity to redirect resources going to **war** into sustainable development. The representative from **Nepal** reflected *“As we embark upon a path of implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, such challenges are the litmus tests for our leadership. Path to peace and decent life for all will remain elusive without resources and commitment for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals. A very small fraction of trillions of dollars spent in armament can help the countries in need to attain these goals.”*

*“We currently spend just under 1.7 trillion US dollars each year on arms around the world. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations, i.e. to eradicate extreme poverty in the world by 2030, we would need only 10 percent of that.” (Germany)*

Not only countries denounced war expenditures, but **32 of statements (22%)** reviewed explicitly referred to the **interdependence between peace and sustainable development** (List 7). For the Prime Minister of **Tuvalu**, the theme chosen by the PGA *“captures the undeniable linkage between peace, security and sustainable development. It underscores that, without peace and security, our 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will not deliver a fair globalization for all. In short, without sustainable development, there will be no peace and security.”*

**List 7. Countries who indicated the interdependence between peace and sustainable development:**

Andorra, Botswana, Cameroon, Cyprus, Ethiopia, Georgia, Ireland, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lesotho, Montenegro, Moldova, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Saint Vincent & The Grenadines, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, Tuvalu, Vietnam, Zimbabwe.

*“We are serious and committed to the achievement of all of the SDGs by the year 2030. Nonetheless, as you and the Secretary-General have recognised, achievement of the SDGs requires international cooperation and the commitment of new and additional funding. Ours is the only body that can generate and sustain the necessary political will and resources to give life to the ambition of the SDGs. The link between development and peace is well-established; and the link between peace and the United Nations is immutable.” (Saint Vincent & The Grenadines)*

### 3.2.2.c Global Partnerships

Another dominant theme in the delivered statements was **Official Development Assistance (ODA)**. Both donor and recipient countries highlighted the importance of pulling through the commitments made to support developing countries. **Denmark** re-stated its commitment of providing resources and called other countries to follow through *“We have provided at least 0.7 per cent of our GNI in ODA for the last 40 years and will continue to do so in the future. We call on all developed countries to realize the 0.7 per cent target.”* The Norwegian representative also shared that in 2017 **Norway's** humanitarian assistance amounted to *“approximately 650 million US dollars.”*

**Cuba** and **Venezuela** used the space to denounce the “egoism” and “lack of political will” of industrialized countries in providing resources for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. They called upon the United Nations to “guarantee the noble financing for integral and sustainable development for all its Member States.”

Countries who are recipient of ODA to different degrees shared their experiences, concerns and prospects in financing the 2030 Agenda. **Jamaica** urged “that policy makers embed the SDGs into their design of international regulatory framework” and shared some concrete initiatives the country have undertaken to make this happen. “In recognition of this fact, Jamaica has partnered with Canada to identify new and innovative means of financing development. Through the Group of Friends on Financing the SDGs, which our countries co-chair, we have been promoting the establishment of partnerships with the private sector, philanthropic organisations and academic institutions. We are exploring innovative financial mechanisms that can spur the investments needed to accelerate implementation of the SDGs [...] Issues related to global economic governance, debt sustainability and SDG financing take on even more significance for highly indebted middle-income countries like Jamaica, which have large public investment needs, but limited fiscal space. Our reduced access to concessionary finance and Official Development Assistance is a direct consequence of our middle-income designation.”

**El Salvador** and **Chile** pushed back on the current practice of using the income per capita as a measure to dictate access to ODA. They called for a “multidimensional calculation”.

*“Valoramos por eso la visión multidimensional del desarrollo, contenida en la Agenda 2030 y los 17 ODS, pues se reconoce la heterogeneidad entre los países y las brechas en el desarrollo, las que quedan ocultas cuando la única medición del desarrollo es el ingreso per cápita [...] Los países de ingreso medio, incluyendo muchos pequeños estados insulares en desarrollo del Caribe, están siendo “graduados” por el Comité de Ayuda al Desarrollo de la OCDE, únicamente por sobrepasar el criterio de ingreso per cápita. ¿Dónde está, entonces, el criterio multidimensional de la Agenda 2030? Cuando aún existen vastos sectores de nuestros países sin acceso a los bienes públicos más básicos, cuando todavía hay hambre y segregación, trabajo precario y una enorme desigualdad, la conclusión es una sola: tenemos un largo camino que recorrer para que la agenda de la solidaridad prime por sobre la agenda del egoísmo y la indolencia.” (Chile)*

### 3.2.2.d Economic Potential

A number of countries are looking beyond ODA to obtain the resources to implement the 2030 Agenda. Some, like **Seychelles**, are considering State-led “blue economies”, while others have their eyes on partnering with the private sector.

*“We aim to launch the world’s first blue bonds by the end of this year to raise another US\$15 million for sustainable fishing practices in our waters [...] these measures seek to establish innovative sources of financing to implement sustainable development goal 14 on oceans and seas and other interlinked SDGs as part of developing the Seychelles blue economy.” (Seychelles)*

In the case of **Sierra Leone**, **Denmark**, and **Sao Tome and Principe** the involvement of the private sector in financing the 2030 Agenda through investments seems to be a very appealing idea.

*“Economic potentials remain enormous in these resourceful sectors for public-private partnerships, south-south, north-south and triangular cooperation.” (Sierra Leone)*

*“As you know, our economy is extremely vulnerable, depending on almost 90% of Official Development Assistance. In a context of international financial containment, it becomes necessary to think and design alternative ways of addressing such complexity. It was with this in mind that the current government decided to implement an ambitious transforming agenda for the 2030 horizon, fundamentally aimed at changing the paradigm of growth and economic and social development policies in São Tomé and Príncipe, with a strategic focus on the private sector of our economy.” (Sao Tome and Principe)*

### 3.2.3 Partnerships

**45 countries (31%)** referred to the importance of establishing partnerships to ensure the necessary financing, capacity building and monitoring and evaluation systems for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda (List 8). Many highlighted that “universal challenges” demand a “joint response” (**Croatia**). The **Danish** statement underlined that “the UN Development System needs to be built on the basic premise that neither the United Nations nor governments have the capacity or resources to realize the 2030 Agenda. Partnering with the private sector, civil society, academia and innovators will be crucial.”

**List 8. Countries that mentioned the importance of partnerships to ensure implementation of the 2030 Agenda:** Algeria, Australia, Barbados, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Ethiopia, India, Ireland, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Latvia, Lesotho, Macedonia, Malta, Montenegro, Mongolia, Mozambique, Nauru, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway, Romania, San Marino, Saint Vincent & The Grenadines, Seychelles, Singapore, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Swaziland, Sweden, Tanzania, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad y Tobago, Tuvalu, Vietnam, Zimbabwe.

Whilst many countries agreed on the importance of partnerships, **Kenya** raised an important issue regarding the quality of those partnerships; “We recognize, however, that achieving the SDGs will be as much as the effectiveness of development co-operation as it will be about the scale and form such cooperation takes. There is a lot of talk about partnerships today, but not enough practical, on-the-ground support to make partnerships effective in practice.”

Countries shared their experiences in **establishing partnerships** for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda or a SDG, in particular (Table 3):

Country	Description	Partners
Denmark	Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 - P4G	Chile, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mexico, Republic of Korea, and Vietnam
Tanzania	Sensitisation workshops on SDGs in English and Kiswahili for local administrators and local government authorities	
Mozambique	National Reference Group: Management of the SDGs, and is promoting capacity building for its implementation, monitoring and evaluation.	Government, Civil Society, Private Sector and International Cooperation Partners
Seychelles	Vision 2032: Integration of the 2030 Agenda into the country's budget and development plans	Private sector, civil society, NGOs, parliamentarians and government
Tonga	Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE): Achieving sustainable energy and contributing to SDGs 7, 9 and 13.	Pacific Community, the Government of Austria, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization and SIDS-DOCK
India	India-UN Development Partnership Fund	
Thailand	Partnership for Sustainable Sufficiency Economy Philosophy for SDGs Partnership	

**Table 3:** Specific references to partnerships established for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda

The President of the Republic of **Seychelles**, shared the vision and experience of the country indicating that the 2030 Agenda and similar global efforts *“should be democratically governed, underpinned by transparency and accountability along the way, and in harmony with, and with respect for the natural environment in which we live [...] In Seychelles, the private sector, civil society, NGOs and parliamentarians have joined with the public sector in a national effort to integrate the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals into our country's budget and development plans. Together we are drafting a new national development strategy.*

## 4. DISCUSSION

The review of the statements delivered during the General Debate of the 72<sup>nd</sup> United Nations General Assembly brings a series of reflections regarding how the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs are being considered by the highest level of government as well as by how its implementation is becoming a reality (or not). Some points are flagged below:

- The high number of statements referring to the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs (144 countries, 87% of the reviewed statements) is a signal of the **political support** at the highest level to this global and universal sustainable development framework.
- However, countries tend to still refer to the 2030 Agenda as an '**aspiration**' - a roadmap, blueprint or framework - and very few provided details on how those aspirations are being translated into implementation.
- Of the few countries that provided further information on how the 2030 Agenda is being implemented, the majority seems to pursue the internalization of the SDGs through **alignment of national plans** and **setting up of national structures**. Within these groups, the majority are developing countries.
- **Financial resources** and **means of implementation** are still **far from being materialized**.
- Many countries seem to be confident in the **potential impact of partnerships**, in capacity-building, and primarily, in financing the implementation of the Agenda. However, the expectations on a positive role of the private sector may be over emphasized and there is still a lack of concrete outcomes in this regard.
- **Follow-up and review plans** were not clearly referred to at the statements delivered.

## 5. ANNEX

[List of countries reviewed, including references to the 2030 Agenda and link to full statements.](#)



#### About Together 2030

*Together 2030 ([www.together2030.org](http://www.together2030.org)) is a civil society initiative that promotes national implementation and tracks progress of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Initiative, set up in December 2015, seeks to generate knowledge and project voices from civil society and stakeholders around the world on the challenges and opportunities for the 2030 Agenda.*

*Together 2030 brings together civil society and non-governmental actors to discuss the way to formulate and implement roadmaps at national level and hold governments to account at all levels.*

*As of November 2017, 570 organizations have joined Together 2030 from more than 100 countries. 72% of which are based in the Global South.*