

Joint Statement on behalf of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies at the SDG Summit, September 2023

Statement as delivered

Presented by H.E. Mr. Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic, on September 18, 2023, during the plenary of the second SDG Summit (<u>Watch Video</u>). This statement was prepared by the Permanent Missions of Czechia and Timor Leste to the United Nations.

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of <u>46 Member States - members of the Pathfinders</u> for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies.

In 2015, this body made a promise- that we would adopt and act on a transformative agenda for people, planet and prosperity through 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Eight years later, we have much to live up to. Yet, there is still no better blueprint for a more peaceful and prosperous world than the 2030 Agenda, and no greater catalyst for the change needed than SDG16+.

We know that we are living in the midst of cascading and intersecting crises. Halfway through the 2030 Agenda, advancing peace, justice, equality and inclusion, is critical to mitigating the impact of these crises and to delivering the requisite policy solutions to fulfil our promises. Amidst global polarization and distrust, we need to rebuild the social contract between people and national and international institutions.

In supporting the Secretary-General's call to fast-track SDG implementation, allow me to highlight some of Pathfinders' work across peace, justice, equality and inclusion.

While conflict-related violence has increased, we know that approximately 80% of violent deaths occur outside conflict zones, and that governments and civil society have made real progress in reducing violence in such contexts. In this connection, the Pathfinders' Halving Global Violence Task Force will launch its Flagship Report in 2024, amplifying proven solutions to advancing peace at all levels, while highlighting the social and economic costs of violence. We must act on SDG16's pledge to reduce violence in all its forms, on the battlefield, and in our homes and streets.

Equal access to justice for all is a critical enabler for sustainable development. We need to put people at the centre, with justice systems designed to address what people really need when they seek justice solutions, and services that help them achieve fair outcomes. To support this, a number of member states

and partners have come together to form the Justice Action Coalition, a high-ambition, multistakeholder coalition that promotes people-centered justice and calls on all justice actors, including Young Justice Leaders, to join in our quest to close the global justice gap.

Finally, the promise to leave no one behind lies at the very heart of the SDG agenda. Yet, since the adoption of the Agenda, inequality within and among countries has risen dramatically. The Pathfinders provide evidenced-based solutions in areas such as social protection, housing, taxation, inclusive green transitions, and the avoidance of divisive political narratives, demonstrating that change is possible. We also advocate for more accurate measurement of inequalities, central to SDGs 10 and 16.

The 2023 SDG Summit represents a critical moment to change the trajectory of the SDGs, and SDG16+. We cannot fail in this effort. Trust in our domestic institutions, and in multilateralism, depends on it.

.....