

Statement by Mr. Christian Friis Bach

Executive Secretary, ECE

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Mr. President of ECOSOC

Mr. Moderator

Fellow Executive Secretaries.

Distinguished delegates

The questions we have been asked is - what it takes at the regional level to manage the transition to the SDGs.

It takes an **intergovernmental structure**, just like Alicia said it, that can help turn global goals and targets into policies, norms, standards and conventions. A few examples from our region:

- Our Committee on Environmental Policy and our convention on air pollution which is the key regional mechanism to improve air quality which has helped our member states to reduce the level of a number of key air pollutants with 40-70 percent in line with the proposed SDGs targets 3.9, 11.6 and the goal 13 on climate action.
- Our Inland Transport Committee and its 58 UN transport conventions and global vehicle regulations are critical to target 3.6 on halving the number of global deaths from road accidents and goal 11.2 on sustainable and safe transport systems..

This work must be aligned to the future SDGs. We can help to turn global goals and targets into norms, standards, regulations, conventions.

It takes an ability to work **cross sectoral and promote political integration** – this is what the UN regional commissions can do. Three examples

- THE PEP. Together with WHO Europe and UNEP, our Transport, Health and Environment Pan-European Programme makes this link and provides a platform for policy-makers to develop and share approaches for healthy and sustainable transport systems in support of several SDG goals and Targets..
- The European Health and Environment programme bringing together health and Environment Ministers – 25% of non-communicable diseases are due to the water we drink, the food we eat, the air we breathe or the way we move and live.
- Energy efficiency standards in Buildings – across our housing and energy subprogrammes

- We work on the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus in transboundary basins under the UNECE Water Convention.

It takes **better data, new data, new data sources** – here we have with our Statistical Commissions – ours still having the name the Conference of European Statisticians although we have participants from all over our region and also global.

- Developing new statistical standards, climate, gender and already in 2007 the recommendations on sustainable development statistics
- Capacity building
- Modernisations of official statistics

It takes **mechanisms for review and monitoring** – a role we have played for many years already:

- Environmental Performance Reviews, Innovation Performance Reviews, Country Profiles on Housing. we are now discussion with our member states and with the UNDG whether these experiences can be used in a regional layer of review in the post-2015 sustainable Development Agenda perhaps
- We are exploring whether a regional synthesis of national reports on SDG achievement could be prepared to identify common trends and challenges at the regional and subregional level – just like we have done for Beijing-20 and other Review processes.
- And we are exploring how to further develop the Regional Fora on Sustainable Development in preparation for the HLPF.

It will take all this at the regional level. And it must be a universal agenda which is also what we can really offer in the Regional Commissions – not least in our region which goes from US and Canada to Russia and Tajikistan.

And if you wish to see this layed out in less than two pages I will refer you to the High-level statement on post-2015 development agenda and expected sustainable development goals in the ECE region endorsed by a Member States at our Commission Session in April.

We are ready to work with our member states to turn the Sustainable Development Goals into regional, national and local action and progress.