



MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Welcome speech by

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83rd session of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management

San Marino, 3-6 October 2022

Excellencies,

Distinguished members of the Committee,

Dear guests,

Welcome to San Marino!

It is my pleasure and honour to welcome you to our Country and to address you on the occasion of the 83rd session of the UNECE Committee on Urban Development, Housing and Land Management.

A few months ago we were presented with the possibility of hosting this session of the Committee and we were immediately thrilled with this opportunity.

San Marino celebrated this year its 30th anniversary of membership in the United Nations.

Our anniversary comes at a good time to take stock not just of the role of San Marino in multilateral organizations, but also of the very purpose of the United Nations and multilateralism.

In my view, what makes it a good time is the fact that recently we faced two truly global emergencies: the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

While there continue to be many particularly worrying and dramatic emergencies in the world today, such as armed conflicts, violations of human rights and inequalities, no other emergency was felt as strongly in all corners of the planet, with no exceptions, as the pandemic or the ongoing climate crisis.

I am therefore very pleased to note that a number of panels of this session are dedicated to these two topics.



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Discussing these issues is crucial because not only they are vital issues *per se*, and should be therefore discussed and analysed in depth, but also because by virtue of their universality they give us the opportunity to *re-train* a lost skill, namely the ability to find common ground, to promote dialogue and work together towards shared solutions.

Like in 1945, today we face a common threat and we need to come together as a family of nations if we want to build back better. We need a shared vision and the will to work together towards our goals.

The pandemic and climate change have made it clear that individual responses are useless and that we must find shared solutions, despite our differences.

This takes me to San Marino and what I believe is its main purpose in multilateral organisations.

Countries with limited resources like San Marino never forgot the value of international law and multilateralism.

Even before wars reappeared in our continent, or floods hit our cities, or epidemics hit our health systems, for San Marino and other small countries it never ceased to be clear that we could not address all challenges by ourselves.

This is why, I believe, our experience is so relevant today. We know how to promote cooperation, dialogue and friendship between nations, because we never stopped doing it and because we are aware that this is the only possible way forward.

And if you will look deeper into San Marino and its history you will find that this is precisely the main goal of its foreign policy: promoting international law and dialogue.

Thus, to see you all here today gives me great pride and joy. We are honoured to serve as a platform for the upcoming discussions and we are confident that in San Marino you will find the right atmosphere for open and constructive debates.

In conclusion, let me just say a couple of words on the more specific object of this meeting and on what San Marino has been doing with regards to sustainability.

Last year, we presented our first Voluntary National Review.

You may think that this must have been an easy task for a small country like ours, but let me assure you that it was all but easy.

While it might have been easier for us compared to larger countries to coordinate, or to obtain precise data, for our relatively small administration it was a huge endeavour to analyse all the SDGs (except Goal 14 on life below water) and all indicators.



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Smaller countries need to be able to prioritise in order to succeed. However, the VNR and more in general the United Nations expect us to comply like any other country, regardless of its size. And we did! I am proud of the work we have done. We produced a complete and detailed document that delivers an honest picture of our situation and that serves as “map” for our way ahead, towards sustainability.

In the same way, I am proud of the UN resolution that San Marino together with Andorra negotiated in 2019, establishing the International Day on Food Loss and Waste and showing, once again, that everyone, also small countries, can contribute to common goals.

I believe my colleague, Stefano Canti, Minister for the Territory and Environment, will tell you more in his remarks about our VNR and our work for sustainability. He will also tell you more about what we have done in San Marino with regards specifically to Urban Development, Housing and Land Management.

So I want to give the floor to him. But before I do that, I just want to renew to you my best wishes for fruitful debates in the days ahead.

I hope that in three days from now, when this session will be over, you will leave San Marino knowing that here you have a friend who is looking forward to cooperate with you on a common agenda.

Thank you!