

Speaking notes

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P20 in Tokyo - Third Session: Efforts towards Resolution of Global Challenges and Achievement of the SDGs [Financing for Development, Need for Transparent and Effective Government]

Tokyo, 4 November 2019

Dear Ms. Santo,

Dear Ms. Cuevas Barron,

Dear colleagues,

It's a privilege to be here, on behalf of the Parliament of the Netherlands at this 6th P20 Summit. We highly appreciate the kind gesture of our Japanese hosts to include us in this forum. As we are not a member of the G20, we certainly do not take invitations such as this for granted.

A special word of appreciation to the host – to Ms. Akiko Santo – for organising this Summit during this special and busy year in Japan. I also would like to mention how much we appreciate the hard work that Ms Cuevas Barron has put in this parliamentary forum on behalf of the IPU.

Ladies and gentlemen,

During this session we are talking a lot about how we can reach the Sustainable Development Goals. A topic that demands concrete action. We have all made a commitment to these goals, which is why it is important that we talk about them today. How can we get closer to achieving them?

Firstly, when it comes to achieving the SDGs in an international perspective, we have a responsibility to also assist those countries who lack the resources themselves to achieve these goals. The Netherlands is investing in developing countries, in mobilising knowledge and capital from the private sector to promote financing for the SDGs, using Official Development Aid as a lever for private investments.

At the same time, developing countries have also a responsibility: they must increase the amount of tax they collect in their own country, to finance their share of the goals.

And what can we, parliamentarians do to achieve results? We have a role in controlling our government. Our parliament uses the yearly Monitor of the SDGs with the dashboard with red and green colours, showing where we stand: a useful instrument for parliamentarians to control government. It shows us that the Netherlands is performing well in the rule of law and institutions. But, we are lagging behind with our proportion of renewable energy and a low number of women in managerial positions. So extra effort is needed here!

This last remark, about the position of women in our society, brings me to Goal 5 which I would like to highlight: gender equality and women empowerment. For me it is difficult to comprehend that in 2019, in many countries still inequality between men and women exists. And worse, still many women face huge discrimination, are confronted with gender based violence and do not have access to health care services to make well-informed decisions about their reproductive health. Our global action on women equality and empowerment is needed. And this is a call on all of us, present here today. We are content that it is included in the Joint Statement.

Dear colleagues,

It is up to parliament to keep challenging the government on achieving these goals. In the Dutch House of Representatives 26 of my colleagues, out of 150, have committed themselves in a very personal way to the SDGs. They have each adopted one SDG, to create more visibility of the SDGs both inside our parliament as well as outside. These MPs are closely being supported and followed by NGOs. I think this is a great example of ensuring parliamentary commitment to the implementation of the SDGs.

It is essential that everyone can see that we are doing this, and how. A vital aspect of parliamentary democracy is transparency. Disclosure of information contributing to an effective democratic government is needed. Our parliament claims its position as a disseminator of information from the government. We ensure that all debates and documentation are made public and can be scrutinized, and as a parliament we are constantly seeking new ways to increase public involvement. Let's face it – that is also the reason why we gather here today: to increase public involvement in the G20 through parliamentary involvement.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Addressing these topics during this Summit shows our commitment, from parliament's perspective and our task to call on our government to show results. Let us do this together, let us address the needs of all people and make sure 'no-one is left behind'. That is the core of the 2030 Agenda.

Thank you for your attention.