Joint statement
of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic
and the Development Partners

High-Level Development Forum “Accelerating Reforms for Sustainable Development” of the Kyrgyz Republic

# Preamble

1. We, the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Development Partners organized in the Development Partners Coordination Council (DPCC), as well as other international and national organizations, civil society, and business community, met in Bishkek on 19 November 2019 in the framework of the High-Level Development Forum “Accelerating Reforms for Sustainable Development” in order to discuss current challenges and identify current future action for the sustainable development of the Kyrgyz Republic.

The objectives of the Forum were to review the progress made jointly since the May 2013 High-Level Development Conference, to agree on a set of priority directions for joint action for the next four years until 2022, and to agree on a framework for future joint engagement that will ensure sustainable, broad-based, and inclusive development.

# Joint commitment to principles and approaches

1. We jointly reaffirm our **commitment to a sustained partnership**. This partnership is based on mutual trust and accountability, openness in policy discussions, transparency in management, adherence to commitments, and close cooperation.
2. We recognize the need for a **strong Government leadership**, allowing donor alignment and aid harmonization focused on effective implementation of reforms and on achieving results. Likewise, we recognize the need for a **strong Government commitment** to a comprehensive and coordinated cooperation with the broader development partner community, and to a **proactive Government role** in this cooperation.
3. The Kyrgyz Republic endorsed the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, as a global and universal plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, and peace. We shall jointly strive to make every effort to **achieve the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and 169 targets as adopted in national development strategy and programs and to mainstream the goals into strengthened planning, financing and investment frameworks, including official development aid (ODA) and foreign direct investment (FDI).
4. We believe that all development efforts need to be based around **strengthened dialogue and partnerships** that foster mutual trust and enable development to take place in an atmosphere of transparency and accountability.
5. We shall promote the **participation of civil society and the business community** as equal partners in development efforts and dialogues.
6. We recognize the importance of the **freedom of speech** and reiterate the importance of **free and independent media** for the country's development.
7. We recognize the importance of balance between the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable and inclusive development and the importance of a **whole-of-society approach** involving the Government, Jogorku Kenesh, local self-governments, civil society, local communities, and the business community.
8. We emphasize the importance of **monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of strategies and programs** and the effectiveness of investments.

# Joint commitment to overarching priorities

1. We recognize the fundamental role of the principle and commitment of **“leaving no one behind”**, based on the protection and promotion of human rights, to achieve sustainable and inclusive development, to eradicate poverty in all its forms, end discrimination and reduce the inequalities and vulnerabilities that undermine the potential of individuals.
	1. We are determined to continue designing our development efforts in such a way that they will benefit and enable the inclusion and participation of all segments of society, people of different levels of ability and disability, all generations, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups, enabling them to truly experience equity, security and justice in all spheres of life in all regions of Kyrgyzstan, and thus contributing to reducing inequality.
	2. Recognizing that diversity is a resource, any development effort should respect, build upon, preserve and strengthen the social, cultural and ethnic diversity of the country.
	3. Special attention will be given to gender equality, girls and women empowerment in all spheres and the fight against discrimination and gender-based violence, as well as to the inclusion of the gender dimension into all development strategies and programs, their implementation and monitoring.
	4. Special attention shall also be given to inclusion of persons with disabilities in line with the obligation made by the State by ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Special attention shall be given to persons with disabilities, providing them with the right to access to education at all levels and lifelong learning, to health services, social protection and infrastructure.
	5. Special attention shall be given to remote and border areas. With combined efforts we shall identify activities that shall include economic and social factors in order to support development of these areas.
	6. We will jointly continue to work on the development of mechanisms that will help measuring development progress at a disaggregated level so that our progress in implementing the principle of “leaving no one behind” becomes visible.
2. We recognize the fundamental role of **human capital as a strategic resource** into which it is necessary to invest for the development of the country. We are therefore committed to approach human capital development in a comprehensive and intersectoral way that treats it as a strategic priority and integrates questions of health, education at all levels, starting from early development and social protection for the benefit of the development and well-being of all people with special focus on children and youth.
	1. Cognizant of the need for capacity development at all levels of the state administration, we reaffirm our commitment to strengthening the capacity of state and municipal actors in our engagements.
	2. We will support and encourage the efforts of local governments in the fight against violence against women.
	3. We will contribute to the active development and sustainability of the state social order for health, social protection and education services.
	4. We reaffirm our commitment to the protection and promotion of the rights of all children and the importance of investing in their survival, growth and development.
	5. We recognize the importance of youth empowerment and participation and therefore commit to invest in their skills development.
3. We confirm our decisive intent to build **a competitive economy with an attractive environment for investment**.
	1. We shall continue our efforts to remove barriers to doing business by continuing regulatory reforms and fighting corruption.
	2. We commit to support private sector development with an emphasis on increasing the competitiveness of Kyrgyz companies, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
	3. We shall strengthen the mechanisms for securing rights and guarantees for investors.
	4. We place particular attention on improving access to financial resources, as well as on implementing new financial instruments and institutional mechanisms to accompany and support investors.
	5. We shall strengthen our efforts to support the transition of the “green economy”. We shall jointly create incentives for green investment in all relevant sectors of the economy to foster private sector responses that will contribute in building a sustainable, low-carbon culture.
4. We believe that the realization of the **rule of law for all** is a necessary prerequisite so that development can take place, that social cohesion, equality and peace can be maintained, and that critical prerequisites for inclusive economic development, such as the conditions for investment, can be further improved.
	1. We recognize the central role of a strong and independent judiciary and remain committed to judicial reform bringing access, transparency and accountability.
	2. We will strive to build an independent justice system that shall universally protect people and their rights.
	3. We resolve to emphasize, maintain and strengthen the compliance with international norms and standards through all our development efforts.
	4. We commit to reforms that strengthen the enforcement and adherence to existing agreements, rules and contracts, which we believe to be a critical part of the rule of law and a major driver for improving the investment climate.
	5. We believe in the necessity of continued and intensified joint efforts to fight corruption and to promote good governance and accountability in all sectors.
5. We recognize the need for **ongoing public administration reform** in order to be able to solve the development challenges that the country is facing.
	1. Recognizing the need for interplay and coordination of all levels of government in the development of the country, we underscore the need for ongoing administrative and territorial reform, for ongoing decentralization through strengthening the system of local self-government backed up by adequate financial resources, and for a reform of public finance management that enables bottom-up approaches to local development in accordance with national policies.
	2. We recognize the complexity and cross-cutting nature of development issues and we commit to support reforms to enhance capacities of the administration to coordinate effectively at all levels.
	3. We aim for building a compact system of state administration that corresponds to the needs of a market economy, that is capable of serving the will of the people in an honest and professional fashion, and that can effectively and efficiently realize strategic aims that are significant for society.
	4. We emphasize as a priority for regional policy the reform and transformation of the whole system of the territorial state administration in such a way so as to deliver effective governance under market economy condition, in order to give an accelerated impulse for the development of the regions.
6. We understand that there is both a potential and a need to mobilize **domestic resources for development**.
	1. We commit to support the efforts towards fiscalization of tax procedures.
	2. We agree that the sustainable operation and management of infrastructure, especially on utilities, requires sustainable systems based on self-sufficiency principles that allow for the full recovery of maintenance and investment costs, while remaining socially acceptable through a selective and well-grounded system of subsidies to vulnerable groups of the population.
	3. We recognize that there is further potential for optimizing the efficiency of the allocation and use of public funds in order to ensure the quality of delivery of public services. To this end, we therefore resolve to continue to support reforms that improve the use of public expenditures, reduce waste and corruption, and foster transparency.

# Joint commitment to integrated approaches

1. We recognize the overarching impact of **digitalization** on all aspects of social and economic life.
	1. We are conscious of the potential transformative impact of digitalization on all administrative processes, and of the progress that has been made to make use of this transformative dynamic already. We will strive to broadly incorporate aspects of digitalization into the change management processes that will accompany our joint development projects, in order to make use of the unique opportunity that digitalization presents to effect sweeping transformative change across all sectors, applying a human-centered approach.
	2. We believe that innovation and creative industries can play a key role as engines for the economic development of the Kyrgyz Republic.
	3. We emphasize the importance of creating a legislative base that is conducive to an accelerated digital transformation.
	4. We have decided to reorient the education system towards meeting the long-term requirements of the country in terms of the necessary development of digital skills for the digital transformation, as well as towards identifying the options for business to make use of them.
	5. We underscore the importance of creating digital platforms for interaction between the Government, society and business and for facilitating access to social services and benefits
	6. We recognize the importance of personal data and their protection, as well as the importance of cybersecurity.
2. We agree that social and economic development must encompass the country as a whole. To this end, we recognize the cross-cutting priority of **regional development**.
	1. We believe in the country’s unique opportunity to achieve inclusive development, thanks to decentralization and the integration of the local population into decision-making. We therefore resolve to make the harmonization of republican, regional and local development processes a priority, strengthening their mutual interdependence and maintaining the balance between top-down and bottom-up policy processes in such a way so as to foster accountability, guarantee social inclusion, and maintain a balanced, efficient, fair and transparent use of all available budgetary and financial instruments.
	2. We are resolved to make further efforts to use efficient and effective policy mixes using market-based instruments, regulations and evidence-based policies, to change behavior and foster regional economic development, investment in the regions, income generation and job creation.
	3. We affirm our resolve to support improved access to clean water and sanitation, as well as to develop irrigated agriculture through innovative practices.
3. We acknowledge that in order to adapt to the unique challenges that the country faces due to the impacts of climate change and natural resource depletion, there is an urgent necessity of an integrated approach where **climate change adaptation** and **natural resource management** and protection go hand in hand. We also acknowledge that water is a key factor for economic development and stability.
	1. We believe that the impacts of climate change present a risk and a challenge that demands urgent, joint action. To this end, we recognize and commend the recent ratification of the Paris agreement by the Kyrgyz Republic. Herewith, we are convinced that it can be an opportunity for modernizing reforms of the administration and for positive change and growth of the economy. In order to make the country more resilient and future-proof, we shall intensify our efforts to implement the necessary new, systematic and integrated approaches to planning and management that are based on strengthened intersectoral coordination and cooperation.
	2. We support the ongoing efforts of the Kyrgyz Government to effectively implement an integrated approach for water resources management based on a comprehensive water strategy, and we resolve to further advance and support the adoption of modern, integrated approaches and policies for the protection, management and sustainable use of the country’s natural resources, including water, land and biodiversity.
	3. We are committed to ensure that future public investments are climate resilient to ensure sustainability and to improve the efficient use of water resources in order to reduce losses.
	4. We also acknowledge that vulnerable communities and groups are the most affected by climate change and we are ready to proactively involve communities and local authorities (LSGs) in the prevention and management of natural disasters
	5. We shall strive to strengthen the role of renewable energy sources (energy of water, wind, solar, thermal energy) in the ongoing reforms of the national energy system, with the intent to create incentives and lower barriers for investments into the energy sector.

# Joint commitment to the future

1. We agree that the High-Level Development Forum can have an accelerating effect and lasting impacts only if its results are **monitored and followed up upon** in a structured way that is part of the process of the forum as a whole. We therefore jointly commit to an annual monitoring of the progress in the priority areas outlined in the conference documents, as well as to a joint approach for adjusting and identifying key priorities for the development of the Kyrgyz Republic in the coming four years (until 2022), and beyond.
2. Based on our joint commitment to a sustained partnership between the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic and the Development Partners, we express our firm commitment to **strengthen the existing systems for engagement**. To this end, we commit to conduct an ongoing dialogue on this partnership that will enable us to jointly continue improving the cooperation coordination process as a whole. We agree that the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic shall play a leading role in initiating, facilitating and maintaining this dialogue, and that the platform for this ongoing dialogue shall be the Coordination Council for Cooperation with Development Partners under the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Links to conference background document and presentations:

[http://donors.kg/en/events/development-forum-2019](http://donors.kg/ru/sobytiya/forum-razvitiya-2019) (English)

<http://donors.kg/ru/sobytiya/forum-razvitiya-2019> (Russian)