

## **Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Italy strongly believes in the vision and guiding principles set out in the United Nations 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, which call for fostering peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, free from fear and violence.

We reaffirm our conviction that there can be no sustainable development without peace, and no peace without sustainable development.

### **Progress on Agenda 2030 in Africa**

Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015, Africa has made progress in key areas such as clean water, health, and gender equality. However, major challenges remain, particularly in poverty reduction, food security, quality education, infrastructure, and climate action. Only a small percentage of measurable targets are on track, highlighting the need for enhanced efforts, stronger governance, and international support to accelerate progress.

### **Italy's Commitment to Localizing the SDGs**

Italy acknowledges the importance of localizing the SDGs and strengthening multi-level governance as key components of an effective implementation strategy.

Our experience with the preparation of Italy's second Voluntary National Review (VNR) stressed the importance of inclusive processes involving different levels of government and non-state actors. This approach is crucial to ensuring that sustainable development goals are effectively translated into local realities.

Our national framework is built on participatory mechanisms established at both national and local levels. Localizing the SDGs supports bottom-up governance and improve the alignment of national strategies with local needs.

The Voluntary Local Reviews process in Italy has included thematic deep dives into policy coherence for sustainable development, localization of the SDGs and stakeholder engagement.

These elements have proven essential in strengthening governance structures and promoting integrated planning and policy responses.

Italy is keen to share its experiences and methodologies with African Countries to support them in their efforts to integrate the SDGs into local planning processes and to enhance the effectiveness of their sustainable development policies.

Africa is a strategic priority for the Italian Government. Within the European Union and the G7 Italy is promoting a new approach towards Africa based on equal partnership and mutual respect.

As part of a broader strategy to support peace stability and growth on the African Continent, the Italian government launched the initiative called The Mattei Plan for Africa, announced at the Italy Africa Summit held in Rome in January 2024.

It is a concrete plan to strengthen Italy Africa partnership on a peer-to-peer approach, through the identification of areas of collaboration and priorities with focus on six main sectors: energy, water, education/vocational training, health, agriculture and infrastructures, including digital infrastructures.

The Mattei Plan approach starts from an analysis of the needs and priorities in each Country, through a constant dialogue between Governments and relevant stakeholders, that provides indications on sectors where to focus the activities of the Plan.

The financial architecture of the Mattei Plan involves the Italian Revolving Fund for Development Cooperation (about € 2.5 billion) and the Italian Climate Fund (about € 4.4 billion) of which at least 70% is dedicated to African Countries. Other relevant stakeholders are also involved in the financial structure of the Plan. Among them, the African Development Bank and the World Bank play a relevant role.

The Plan is backed by a solid financial foundation, designed to be both sustainable and scalable. Key initiatives include:

**Rome Process Multi-Donor Special Fund** – Focused on high-impact, climate-aligned investments in Africa's strategic sectors, this fund will leverage international contributions. Italy has pledged approximately \$130 million in concessional loans and grants, with additional

support from the UAE. The African Development Bank (AfDB) will match funding for each project.

**Italy-Africa Co-Financing and Trust Fund –**

With Italy committing \$150 million in concessional loans and grants, matched by the AfDB, this initiative aims to strengthen economic and strategic partnerships, scale up investments, and create business opportunities.

**Growth and Resilience Platform for Africa**

**(GRAF)** – Designed to boost private sector investment, this platform will mobilize equity capital to regional funds supporting entrepreneurship and job creation. Italy's Development Finance Institution (DFI) aims to catalyze up to €750 million over five years alongside African and international partners.

**Plafond Africa** – This new financing program allows Italy's DFI to provide up to €500 million in funding to private sector initiatives aligned with the Mattei Plan's priorities.

**Italy-World Bank Declaration of Intent –**

Aimed at enhancing co-financing for sustainable development projects, this agreement focuses on

key sectors such as education, health, water, agriculture, energy, and infrastructure.

Additionally, two major transnational initiatives under the Mattei Plan deserve mention:

**Lobito Corridor** – Italy, alongside the U.S. and the EU, is supporting the expansion of rail infrastructure linking Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Zambia, with future connections to Tanzania and the Indian Ocean. This initiative will reduce transport costs and climate impact while strengthening physical, digital, and energy connectivity.

**Resilient Coffee Value Chain** – This initiative aims to enhance the sustainability of Africa's coffee sector, improving climate resilience and promoting structural transformation along the entire production cycle.

Italy believes in a collaborative approach centered on capacity-building, knowledge transfer, and mutual learning. Our partnerships with African Countries prioritize shared responsibility and long-term sustainability, empowering local institutions to lead their own development.

Strengthening cooperation at all levels will accelerate progress towards the SDGs and build a more sustainable, inclusive, and resilient future.

**Thank you.**