



**HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM
ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**



Civil Society Statement and Questions at VNR UAE during HLPF 2018

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The Emirates' VNR explains for us how the Goals align with its national Vision 2021, with ministries assigned to each Goal. An example of 2030 Agenda engagement is the National SDG Committee's participation in external forums, and locally by hosting international forums. Beyond the VNR is the example, crossing many Goals, of Dubai hosting this year's First Arab Land Conference, which reflected two distinct approaches: with guests treating land governance with social aspects, and the hosts stressing land as private property and real estate.

UAE rates high in innovation, public-sector efficiency, and education and health services. Notable is UAE's pursuit of happiness, well-being and positivity as national-policy objectives.

The Emirates' VNR cites all Goals, but does not address any one specifically. Nor does it indicate progress since 2015. As in other VNRs, we are left wondering about the vision and implementation integrally linking and harmonizing policy across the Goals.

We cannot tell clearly from the VNR how national efforts relate to the 2030 Agenda. It does not tell us who is the farthest behind and, hence, the policy priorities. For instance, it barely mentions the majority expatriate population, and migrant workers not at all.

So, we ask:

While, "transforming our world" is doubtless a multilateral challenge, how do the Emirates reconcile their collective duties with their external behavior: through recent military operations,

use of mercenaries and torture in neighboring countries, as well as territorial occupation and blockade?

And how does UAE integrate the Goals in operation, for example, education (4) with labor (8), food (2) and health (3), food and Goal 12? UAE's report makes no mention of food security and sovereignty, either as a challenge or achievement.

Finally, can UAE give examples of how the Goal-specific "Youth Circles" have influenced priorities and implementation?