

English Summary of Speech by Prime Minister Aksel V. Johannesen, at The Nordic House, Faroe Islands 23 February 2018

Good morning

How often haven't we heard, that we need to set clear and tangible goals to achieve something? There is, of course, some truth to this. It is therefore remarkable that almost three years ago, UN member countries agreed on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals for 2030.

It is both sensible and necessary that the world's countries set some shared goals, because some challenges cannot be overcome individually, but only by working together.

So what about the Faroe Islands? Are we obliged to commit to these goals that the 193 members have set? The short answer is "no." However, as a responsible member of the international community, the Faroe Islands need to accept this challenge and to the best of our abilities try to reach these goals. This is what our government has decided to do.

It is not sufficient for politicians to see the relevance and importance of the development goals. We need to get people, communities, companies and others on board – and that should not be difficult, because the goals are both specific and meaningful.

As a country or society we are fortunate and, in many ways, well on our way to reaching many of these goals. We are a modern welfare state with great natural resources. Our infrastructure is well developed, we have excellent health- and welfare systems, education and equality are good, and we value free enterprise. Nevertheless, there is room for improvement in some areas, and in those areas we will continue to work hard and develop towards the goals.

The government is currently working on a follow-up report, which will show where we are in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals. This report will be the foundation for future political priorities as well as a good benchmarking tool for development and comparison with other countries.

I commend the organisers of this event and hope that our insight and knowledge of the development goals will be strengthened as well as our drive to achieve them.

Thank you.

Aksel V. Johannesen

Prime Minister