Facing a grim reality, we need more than 'declarations' to ensure better world, Albania tells UN

22 September 2017 – Tackling the numerous complex challenges society is confronted with today will require more than just "declaratory undertakings," Edi Rama, Prime Minister of Albania told the United Nations, stressing that real progress demands responsibility and action.

Pointing to the links between the threats of terrorism, climate change, and inequality, and the ways in which they have merge in unprecedented fashion to undercut safe, healthy and enjoyable livelihoods across the globe, Mr. Rama told delegations attending the UN General Assembly's annual debate today that on one hand, "we live in inspiring times […] but on the other, it seems like the world has lost its energy and vision."

He said global terrorism and radicalization have become a peril that continues to strike blindly and persistently. At the same time, some 65 million people, the highest number since World War II, have been forcibly displaced from their homes due to these acts and threats, among others. The ills are being exacerbated by climate change-driven extreme weather events, which are becoming more frequent and more intense.

Citing the universal desire for safety, including freedom from oppression, persecution and violence, Mr. Rama said: "To achieve these goals, we need to go beyond declaratory undertakings. People rightly demand us to show responsibility and ability to act."

As such, he called for concerted action towards the 2030 Agenda and its landmark Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and went on to detail Albania's commitment to human rights, citing his pride in the number of women joining the country's Government leadership.

Turning to international relations, Mr. Rama described his country's mission to join the European Union as a main priority. "It is not just one objective in our foreign policy; it is not a contractual relation of sorts. For us, the European integration lies at the heart of our overall development since it touches every cell of our development architecture," he explained.

Full statement available here