



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

24 May 2017

To Leaders of Universities and other Higher Education Institutions around the World

Everything I have learned as President of the United Nations General Assembly has convinced me that, taken together with the Paris Climate Agreement, the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda provides humanity with the best chance we have to shape a sustainable way of life for our species upon this planet.

Agreed to by all 193 Member States of the United Nations in September 2015, at the heart of the Agenda are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Given the unsustainable path that humanity is currently upon, the goals are required to be transformative. They seek to end global poverty, ensure a basic standard of living for all, transition to more sustainable economies, protect our natural environment, and create the conditions required to sustain universal peace.

I have already written to the Heads of Government of all 193 UN Member States, asking them to ensure the Sustainable Development Goals are being taught in the schools of their nations. I am now writing this letter to you and the leaders of many other centres of higher learning around the world to emphasize the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals - their universality, their integrated nature and most importantly the logic behind them.

It goes without saying that young people are the most capable of the transformation required, having the most to gain or lose from the success or failure of the Agenda. I therefore make this sincere request to you to make these Goals an integral part of research, teaching and study at your institutions. If they already are, I salute you; if not, my request has an element of urgency. We have only fourteen more years to implement the Sustainable Development Goals for the good of generations to come.

There are multiple resources of information on the Sustainable Development Goals available online and through the presence of United Nations Offices in your country. I encourage you to make full use of them in pursuit of a universal push to transform the world for the better through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Thomson'.

Peter Thomson