



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MAYOR'S OFFICE FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, July 11, 2018

Contact: Megan MacInnes, MMacInnes@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 319-9437

**ON GLOBAL GOALS DAY, MAYOR DE BLASIO AND INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS
COMMISSIONER ABEYWARDENA ANNOUNCE HISTORIC STEP TO REPORT
LOCAL PROGRESS ON GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

First-ever Voluntary Local Review to UN highlights critical role of city governments and communities in advancing global agenda to uplift people, prosperity and planet

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio and Commissioner of the Mayor’s Office for International Affairs Penny Abeywardena today announced that New York City has submitted an innovative review of its local progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to the United Nations, becoming the first city in the world to report directly to the international community on the status of its efforts to reach the global benchmarks to address poverty, inequality and climate change by the year 2030.

The Voluntary Local Review (VLR) showcases NYC’s achievements in sustainability since 2015 for a global audience. The VLR will be presented as thousands of officials from around the world gather at United Nations Headquarters in New York City from July 9 through July 18 for the annual High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) focused on sustainable development. Mayor de Blasio declared Wednesday, July 11, 2018, as Global Goals Day in New York City to welcome HLPF participants and express local solidarity with efforts worldwide to achieve the goals.

“New York City is on track to become one of the more equitable, healthier and safer cities in the world due to our latest achievements in sustainability and our increased commitment to fight for social and economic progress,” said **Mayor de Blasio**. “We look forward to continue working with the international community to end inequality, poverty and the harmful effects of climate change as envisioned by the Global Goals.”

In April 2015, the de Blasio administration launched OneNYC, a groundbreaking strategic plan for sustainable and inclusive growth. OneNYC charts a path toward achieving goals such as lifting 800,000 New Yorkers out of poverty, expanding access to nutritious and affordable food, and ensuring that those on the front lines of climate change—often the most vulnerable New Yorkers—are protected.

Months later, in September 2015, world leaders gathered at the United Nations in New York City and committed to 17 goals to end extreme poverty, fight inequality and injustice, and prevent the harmful effects of climate change by 2030. These Sustainable Development Goals, also known as the SDGs or Global Goals, are voluntary targets that provide a framework for all countries, including the United States, to work toward a common future of social and economic progress.

Three years after the launch of OneNYC, Mayor de Blasio announced record progress in creating the fairest big city in America. The 2018 OneNYC Progress Report showed significant achievements in cleaner air and water, record job and wage growth, and tripling the number of children in free Pre-K, among other accomplishments.

“Cities and local communities play a crucial role in ensuring that we achieve the sustainable and equitable future envisioned by the Global Goals, and the accomplishments of the de Blasio administration for 8.6 million New Yorkers show the world how progress is possible,” said **Commissioner for International Affairs Penny Abeywardena**. “As host city to the United Nations, New York City is proud to present the first-ever Voluntary Local Review linking our local actions to the broader global conversation. By providing this blueprint, we encourage cities and communities to join the urgent discussion about what is working on the local level, and how we can address the shared challenges that remain on the way to reaching the Global Goals.”

Commissioner Abeywardena will present the VLR on behalf of New York City during the HLPF session dedicated to local government engagement on Wednesday, July 11, from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at UN Headquarters in Manhattan. The session will be livestreamed at <http://webtv.un.org/>, and the conversation can be followed on social media with the hashtag, #GlobalGoalsNYC.

The Mayor’s Office for International Affairs developed the VLR in close partnership with the Office of Operations, and Climate Policy and Programs, and in consultation with relevant NYC agencies working on the implementation of OneNYC. The VLR uses the SDG framework to translate NYC’s local actions into the common language adopted by the UN community and partners, making it accessible to practitioners and policymakers around the world. With the VLR, New York City provides a resource for cities seeking to track and demonstrate progress made toward the Global Goals.

"In 2015, New York City released OneNYC, the world’s first resilience strategy and a model for sustainable development at the local level,” said **Daniel Zarrilli, New York City's Senior Director of Climate Policy and Programs and Chief Resilience Officer**. “Today, we’re thrilled to release the world’s first Voluntary Local Review to demonstrate our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. By stepping up to provide global leadership, New York City is building a stronger and more just city for all New Yorkers.”

The VLR is modeled after the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) that all countries may choose to present every July at the HLPF. This year, 47 countries will participate, focusing on their implementation of five SDGs related to clean water and sanitation, affordable and clean energy, sustainable cities and communities, responsible consumption and production, and life on land.

Using data in the 2018 OneNYC Progress Report as a basis, the VLR provides a qualitative analysis of how each of the five priority SDGs is being implemented locally by the relevant City agencies, with practical examples. The VLR maps each SDG to corresponding OneNYC indicators, which are among more than 1,000 indicators tracked by New York City in a robust monitoring system it has been developing since the 1970s. An appendix to the VLR provides examples of the data tracked by New York City, which is maintained by the Mayor's Office of Operations, including more detailed information about how the City monitors operational performance and progress toward its goals.

“As this administration works to make New York City the fairest big city in America, we remain committed to the Sustainable Development Goals established by the United Nations, which provide an important framework for how we measure our progress toward creating a more equitable and sustainable world,” said **Emily W. Newman, Acting Director of the Mayor's Office of Operations**. “By releasing the first Voluntary Local Review, New York City is showing the global community how we are doing our part to address both economic and environmental sustainability, which we know are intertwined.”

While the Global Goals represent the commitments of national governments, the VLR underscores the crucial role for cities and local governments in a world marked by growing urbanization. More than half the world's population of 7.6 billion people today lives in urban centers, and that proportion is expected to reach two-thirds by the year 2030. Cities are where the challenges of climate, inequality and other issues are felt most acutely, and are also where innovative solutions are being developed, including through partnerships and collaboration with the private sector and civil society.

The VLR is produced by the Global Vision | Urban Action program of the Mayor's Office for International Affairs. Created in 2015 to highlight the connections between NYC's local strategy and the Global Goals, Global Vision | Urban Action uses the SDGs as a lens to share best practices with partners in NYC and around the world. Through Global Vision | Urban Action, the Office hosts a series of events and site visits that bring together experts and thought-leaders working to advance the SDGs at the local level.

“While the United Nations sustainable development forum takes place once a year, the work to make the Global Goals a reality is happening every day,” said **Global Vision | Urban Action program director Alexandra Hiniker**. “The Voluntary Local Review was a collaborative effort, and we hope to continue to build on these partnerships in NYC and across the globe to identify and explore additional links between our local resilience efforts and the Global Goals.”

The Voluntary Local Review on New York City's implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is available for download at nyc.gov/international.

[About the Mayor's Office for International Affairs](#)

The New York City Mayor's Office for International Affairs works to foster positive relations and encourage collaboration between the international community and New York City's agencies and local neighborhoods. The Office is focused on sharing New York City's policies and best practices globally, as well as responding to requests from foreign governments, the United Nations, and the U.S. Department of State. For more information, follow us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and on our website.

###