

16 January 2017

71st session of the General Assembly

Statement by H.E. Peter Thomson, Launch of the Green Digital Finance Alliance

Her Excellency, Ms. Doris Leuthard, President of Switzerland,
Mr. Erik Solheim, Executive-Director of UNEP,
Mr. Eric Jing, CEO of ANT Financial,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to be here this evening for the launch of the Green Digital Finance Alliance. I congratulate both UN Environment and ANT Financial for their ground-break work.

Given the trillions of dollars that will be needed to finance the Sustainable Development Goals, initiatives like this are essential to ensuring technological developments contribute to the greening of the global financial system, and to achieving a sustainable future for humanity.

Innovative partnerships like this – which align UNEP’s cutting-edge research with ANT Financial’s expertise in providing inclusive financial services – are central to global efforts to scale up implementation of the SDGs.

Thankfully, the transformation towards a sustainable financial system is already underway, with many governments, regulators, central banks, institutional investors and private companies starting to align their operations with the principles of sustainability.

Such efforts need to be scaled up.

Digital technologies have the potential to accelerate this transformation – particularly for low-income countries, and small and medium enterprises.

Indeed, across our world we are already seeing fintech disrupt traditional practices in the banking, insurance and microcredit sectors, open new markets in energy, agriculture, and health, and contribute to enhancing transparency and accountability.

The United Nations has critical role to play in supporting these efforts, and this is why I have made the central priority of my Presidency of the 71st Session of the General Assembly to drive a universal push for meaningful progress in implementing all 17 SDGs.

As part of this effort, my office is organizing a series of events aimed at bringing international discussion of sustainable finance to the United Nations.

To this end, in April I will be convening an SDG Financing Lab in New York which will examine existing financing mechanisms for the SDGs, and how they can be best applied to each goal.

In closing, I once again congratulate UNEP and ANT Financial for their global leadership and commitment to green finance and sustainable development.

I look forward to continuing our close collaboration.

Thank you.