К выступлению Ректора МГИМО
Академика А.В.Торкунова на семинаре
Астанинской платформы
Towards the Post-2030 SDG Agenda
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Excellencies, colleagues and friends,

It is a pleasure to welcome you to this meeting of the Astana Platform in Geneva. I would like to express our gratitude to His Excellency Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, for his support, and to Kazakhstan's Ministry of Science and Higher Education and Minister Sayasat Nurbek for bringing it to life. I thank the United Nations Office at Geneva and Deputy Secretary General Tatyana Valovaya, the Permanent Missions of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Kazakhstan here in Geneva, and, certainly, Dr Frederik Paulsen, Chairman Emeritus of Ferring Pharmaceuticals, for their support in bringing us together.

You may ask, why we call this initiative the Astana Platform? Two years ago, in 2024, we held a Russian-Kazakh conference on sustainable development in Eurasia. In 2025, we repeated this experience, but on a broader scale. We invited participants from Europe, Africa, both of the Americas, Southeast Asia, and Central Asia. By the end of the conference, we had agreed to establish the Astana Platform as a venue for expert dialogue to develop the post-2030 Sustainable Development Goals agenda.

Certainly, there will grow many similar initiatives, but I sincerely hope that our efforts will bear fruit and contribute to our shared success in advancing international cooperation towards a more sustainable world.

Last week I, and my friend Boris Titov, had a meeting with the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, during which we discussed today's gathering and the Astana Platform initiative. The

President has informed the UN Secretary-General about the Astana Platform.

The debate on sustainable development has long since moved beyond conventional environmental policy and become a subject of intense macroeconomic and political rivalry. The debate also bears on the long-term shape of the global financial and economic architecture, the distribution of global economic rents, access to critical technologies, and the right of sovereign states to choose their own paths to modernisation.

We are fast approaching 2030, a major milestone in the history of sustainable development. The empirical evidence compels us to acknowledge that the institutional framework established in 2015 to support the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is failing to meet today's challenges. The international community is currently on track to meet targets for fewer than 20% of global climate and socioeconomic indicators by the agreed deadline.

The primary causes of this systemic failure lie in a profound crisis of multilateral diplomacy and growing political fragmentation. Looking beyond 2030, the political landscape reveals a clear pattern of polarisation and fragmentation in the approaches of major international actors.

In considering how to plan through to 2050, the academic community faces a major obstacle in the form of institutional inertia, or *path dependence*. A single technological and regulatory model for decarbonisation can not be imposed on societies with fundamentally different informal institutions, historical experiences, social values and levels of accumulated social capital.

A society's cultural norms and values directly shape its economic behaviour. Where the institutions designed to govern the green transition come into sharp conflict with a country's economic identity and the basic needs of its population, societies will reject them.

Finance will determine how much of that ambition is within reach. The UN's 2026 financing report puts the annual SDG investment gap in developing countries at around 4 trillion US dollars. The terms on which money arrives matter as much as the volume.

At the same time, leading economic powers are pursuing pragmatic national strategies that align environmental policy with their own strategic interests.

Just to remind, China is pursuing economic objectives of its own. Beijing has adopted a comprehensive strategy for building an 'ecological civilisation', closely aligned with its dual carbon goals of peaking emissions by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2060. The economic logic of this approach is clear. China keeps conventional power generation in place while it develops reliable alternatives and systematically uses its environmental commitments to consolidate its industrial dominance.

The countries of the Global South are choosing an increasingly assertive position. They are the most vulnerable to climate change and stand to bear the greatest costs of forced decarbonisation. Macroeconomic analysis shows that an abrupt, mandated phase-out of fossil fuels would deepen global inequality and stifle their economic growth.

Russia's approach is guided by moderate pragmatism and technological neutrality. Our approach involves gradually diversifying the energy mix, making extensive use of natural gas as a transitional fuel and the least carbon-intensive fossil fuel, expanding nuclear power and deploying carbon capture, utilisation and storage technologies on a large scale. Russia's task is to establish a nationally controlled system for environmental monitoring and independent auditing that can verify how much carbon our forests and wetlands actually absorb. Effective climate policy requires a transparent domestic carbon regulatory framework that can be integrated with the markets of partner countries through Shanghai Cooperation Organization, BRICS and the Eurasian Economic Union.

Later today, we will hold a special spotlight session dedicated to the polar regions — the Arctic and Antarctic. I am tremendously grateful to Mr. Paulsen, who will share with us his personal experience as a genuine polar explorer. Over the past twenty years, I have personally witnessed his activities in these regions. He will join us in the second half of today's programme, arriving directly from his recently completed expedition to Antarctica.

The Astana Platform can bring practical proposals to the discussions ahead of the 2027 Summit. We can start that work while the current Goals

are still in force. It would give Member States something concrete to build on as they consider what comes after 2030.

Thank you for your attention!