

Dear Colloquium participants,

On behalf of the Board of Directors of Cifal Flanders, I am honoured to conclude this High-Level Colloquium.

I first would like to thank Mr. Fransaer and VITO, one of the partners of CIFAL Flanders, for the organisation of this conference. Thank you for making the SDG's alive.

I also would like to thank all the **speakers**, the **UN Agencies, Brussels Airport** as well as the **team of Cifal Flanders** who have worked very hard during the past months to make this event possible.

Almost 5 years ago, CIFAL-Flanders was created by 4 founding partners, and with the support of the City of Antwerp and the government of Flanders.

We all felt the need to set up a lean and mean, locally embedded learning platform to promote sustainable and ethical business practises in Antwerp. After 5 years the scope of Cifal has extended from Antwerp to Belgium and now even has an international scope.

It is therefore heart-warming and cause for hope to observe at this G-STIC conference that people are working hard on the development and deployment of integrated technological solutions that are good for the planet, for the people and for the economy. And this across a whole variety of sectors. These technological solutions will certainly contribute to the achievement of the 2030 agenda and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (**SDGs**).

The SDGs are ambitious goals but they are more than that: they are a binding factor for every type of community that strives to enable the achievement of one or more SDGs, at their own level: every individual, every family, every school, every company, every local or regional authority can define a sustainable action plan and work together in order to achieve one or more SDGs.

CIFAL Flanders as an ambassador of the SDGs will realise in 2017 more than 100 trainings and "action learning for sustainability workshops" to mobilize organizations for the SDGs and make them ambassadors as well.

Indeed, the more people become ambassadors of the SDGs and commit to achieving them, the more powerful they become and the greater the likelihood of our being able to realize the SDG's effectively worldwide.

I am confident that we need to **continue** down this path and go for a fundamental change in mind, and the CIFAL Flanders training centre is

always open to welcome new business and non-business partners in the coming months.

Finally I want to take this opportunity to apply on behalf of CIFAL Flanders as a candidate for hosting the CIFAL Global Network Steering Committee in 2018 and to welcome the 16 colleague CIFAL centres around the world in Antwerp.

On behalf of CIFAL Flanders, I'd like to conclude by thanking you all for your participation and support.

And in ending, from me too, happy birthday UN!