

Intervention of His Excellency Dr Mohamed Irfaan Ali,  
President of the Cooperative Republic of Guyana  
*to the*  
Meeting of Heads of Government and State  
*on*  
Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development  
in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond  
29 September 2020

1. I join in commending Secretary General, António Guterres and Hon. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada and Hon Andrew Holness, Prime Minister of Jamaica, for this initiative on Financing for Development in the era of COVID- 19 and Beyond.
2. My country, Guyana, is persuaded of the pressing need to pursue, collectively, a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to effectively combat the COVID-19 pandemic and to secure a path towards a sustainable recovery.
3. The COVID-19 pandemic, already a dire health emergency, is upending economic growth, reversing decades of development, derailing progress towards the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, and intensifying poverty and inequality. The pandemic is worsening unemployment and weakening health and education systems.
4. As a consequence, developing countries are expected, in the near-term, to experience widening

and the rollout of and support for mass immunization when a vaccine becomes available.

6. On the socio-economic front, it is imperative that global resources be mobilized to ensure a return to a sustainable development trajectory. Resources must be made available, expeditiously, using a variety of financial mechanisms which include debt relief, debt-service moratoriums, concessional financing capitalization of deferred interest payments, and grants.

Mr. President.

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Mr. President,

10. I am confident that the world will defeat this pandemic. I am confident also that with the political will we can reduce global and societal inequalities. It is important, therefore, that as we recover and rebuild, that we initiate a new era, one characterized by:
  - a world where we anticipate and prevent illnesses instead of scrambling to cure them;
  - a world where every child receives a quality education;
  - a world where our elderly enjoy a dignified life;
  - a world where everyone has access to food, health care, housing and water; and
  - a world in which diversity and human rights are respected.
  
11. Establishing this new era in global relations will require significant development support, more so now in the face of an impending global recession. For many small states, the burden of recovery from the pandemic will be too great to bear on their own.
  
12. It is therefore of paramount importance that today's deliberations pave the way for financial support to help small states rebound from the COVID-19 pandemic. It is equally vital that the Secretary General's calls for a New Global Deal and New Social Contract be pursued with promptness to ensure that recovery is aligned to reducing inequalities.

Mr. President,