

DRAFT PM VIDEO MESSAGE FOR UN SEC GEN EVENT

I'm grateful to Secretary General Guterres, Prime Minister Trudeau and Prime Minister Holness

for bringing us together at this vital moment.

As we meet today, we face the greatest health crisis of our lifetimes.

Every government is striving to protect our respective peoples and that is exactly as it should be.

Yet no single country holds the keys to victory against our invisible enemy.

If we are to defeat COVID-19, achieve a global recovery and avoid a future pandemic,

then we must work together across borders.

Our national efforts will count for little unless they are fortified by international cooperation.

Today, the most urgent tasks are to stabilise the world economy and develop a vaccine.

Britain has contributed over £700 million – almost \$1 billion - to the international response.

We are the largest single donor to the efforts of the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness

There is no need to reinvent the international system or renegotiate existing agreements;

but there is every need for us to work together to get our shared goals back on track,

including the expansion of girls' education,

the Paris climate change targets,

the Sustainable Development Goals,

and our financing of development.

And though we are witnessing a tragedy that has touched every one of us,

I believe that we can look to the future with buoyancy and hope.

In the year I was born, the World Health Organisation created a Smallpox Eradication Unit,

designed to rid humanity of a scourge that claimed about 300 million lives in the 20th century alone.

Just 13 years later, this international campaign achieved complete success and the world defeated smallpox.

Only a few months ago, before the pandemic struck,

we stood on the brink of a similar victory against polio.

None of these advances would have been possible without this great organisation, the United Nations,

which strives to represent the combined genius and resolve of humanity.

Our predecessors overcame terrible evils and they were at their best in moments of adversity.

As we face our own time of adversity, I believe that we can come through this crisis

and achieve a strong, green and fair recovery,

if we show the same generosity and breadth of spirit that should always animate the United Nations.

Thank you.

ENDS

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