



STATEMENT

by

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President of the Republic of Suriname

on the occasion of the General Debate
of the
77th Session of the
United Nations General Assembly

New York
21 September 2022

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DE PRESIDENT VAN DE REPUBLIEK SURINAME | SPEAKING NOTES
General Debate of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
September 21th 2022

- President of the General Assembly, **Csaba Körösi**;
- Secretary General of the United Nations, **António Guterres**;
- Colleague Heads;
- Heads of Delegations;
- Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good morning,

Mister President,

- I **congratulate** you, on your election, to preside over the 77th session, of this august body, and I assure you, of my country's full support, during your presidency.

Mr. President,

- At last year's General Debate, I called on leaders, to build a better world, a planet for those living today, but more so, for those generations yet to come.
- So today, I would like to take you back to 1992, when Severn Cullis-Suzuki spoke, at the U.N. Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.
- She appealed to everyone, to help stop the destruction of the earth's resources.
- And, now 2022, we are here.
- The current state of the world, does not need, another wake-up call. It is time for real action!

- And, while some progress, has been made, we have not yet been successful, in overcoming the challenges.

- Meanwhile, the **threats** have been adding up:
 - economic recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic slowed,
 - worsening climate crisis, with extreme weather events,
 - biodiversity loss and ecosystems collapse,
 - increasing levels of poverty and hunger, and
 - a humanitarian crisis.

- The global community, is faced with escalating consumer and fuel prices, that have risen substantially, damaging living standards, particularly for the vulnerable.

- Therefore, I want you, **to take a moment** and ask yourselves:
 - Have we treated our earth, in a sustainable way?
 - Are we better prepared for the next pandemic?
 - Has access to climate financing improved?
 - Have we addressed the root causes, for the humanitarian crisis, and unregulated migration?
 - Have we ensured that the most vulnerable in our societies, were lifted out of poverty and hunger, and have we provided for their needs?
 - And, are we taking enough action, together as one?

Mister President,
Secretary General,
Colleague Heads,

- We, all can conclude, that we are **not** ready, and have **not** taken all the necessary measures.
- And as leader of Suriname, a small country, one of only three, carbon-negative countries in the world, **I appeal to you today**, to let us uphold our **firm commitment** to international principles and international law by all, when addressing the global challenges and threats.
- Today I urge the United Nations, to exert its important role and place, in defense of these principles, through meaningful dialogue, and constructive engagements, as tools.
- These developments, will take us further, from our shared objectives, in the 2030 Agenda, for Sustainable Development, and the promise of leaving no one behind.

Mister President,

- No country is immune, to the **climate crisis**.
- Over the past months, Suriname, has been affected by excessive rainfall, resulting in floods in many parts of the country.
- Due to the inflow of salt water, fertile agricultural land, was adversely affected, causing economic loss, and impacting food security, and rural livelihoods.

Secretary-General,

- During your visit to Suriname, in July this year, you witnessed first-hand, the impact climate change has, on low-lying coastal states.
- You lauded our nature-based solutions, such as preserving mangroves, rainforest and other essential ecosystems.
- And stated “the Caribbean is ground zero, for the global climate emergency”.

Mister President,

- That is why it is time, to act NOW!
- We have to deliver, on the 100 billion dollars commitment, in climate finance, for adaptation!
- As we prepare in the short to medium term, we continue to lobby the international community, to recognize the urgent need, to help Caribbean Small Island and Low-lying Coastal Developing States (SIDS), to adapt, to the perils they face, as a result of global climate change.
- As such, we call for:
 - Support for a research agenda, that will help the region understand the cost of climate change, on sectors and economies.
 - Scaling up, of means of implementation, including finance, particularly adaptation finance, capacity building, and technology transfer, not technology dumping;

- Scaling up finance, for adaptation and for responses, to loss and damage, with prioritization for Caribbean/SIDS, to access grant and concessionary finance, including through bilateral channels in particular;
 - The establishment of a Loss and Damage Facility, under the UNFCCC, that would provide SIDS, with resources, to finance loss and damage, resulting from climate change; and
 - Equity and justice, and the need, to protect the most vulnerable.
- In this regard, I express appreciation, to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his efforts, to make the Adaptation Fund, more accessible, to countries, affected by climate change, through his Adaptation Finance Initiative.

Mister President,

- Finance, is the backbone of sustainable development.
- The time has come, and the time is now, for a real reform, of the **global financial architecture**.
- A reform, that must take into consideration, the unique and inherent vulnerabilities, that hamper the ability of small and vulnerable economies, to overcome economic, environmental and social shocks.
- I therefore, welcome the appointment of the High-level Panel, on the **Multidimensional Vulnerability Index**.

- And we look forward, to finding solutions, to address the obstacles, to realizing the index, in particular the availability of reliable data.

Mister President,

- The **political, economic and humanitarian crisis** in Haiti, remains of great concern, to the region, and requires the attention, of the international community.
- In my capacity, as current CARICOM Chair, I am committed, to exerting all efforts, for a dialogue, with all stakeholders in Haiti, aimed at safeguarding peace and security.
- It is of utmost importance, that any support, in resolving the situation in Haiti, should be on the basis, of a Haitian initiated and owned plan.
- Conflicts and violence, are currently, on the rise globally, in all regions, which are leading to hostilities and displacements.
- These hostilities and mass displacements, are causing people, to face paralyzing levels of poverty and food insecurity.
- We as Member States, constituting the United Nations, should take up our role, in maintaining international peace and security.

- The achievement of sustainable development, is inextricably linked, to upholding democratic values, good governance and respect, for human rights.
- We must allow countries, to develop sustainable economies without obstacles.

Mister President,

- In Today's world differences must be resolved through dialogue and cooperation. Therefore, in our view the longstanding embargo against Cuba and the Cuban people must be lifted.

Mister President,

- I believe, that **young people**, are valuable and undeniable partners, in every development aspect, and in shaping the future.
- Let me also congratulate, the General Secretariat, for the establishment of a Youth Office, in the United Nations Secretariat.
- As lead head, within the quasi cabinet of the Caribbean Community, responsible for regional youth development, I was pleased, with the interaction, of the region's youth, during the last CARICOM Leaders Meeting, held in Suriname.
- I commend them, for taking the responsibility and inspiring their peers, to not only demand a seat at the table, but also show up consistently.

- On my part, I have pledged 10 hectares of land, for setting up an innovative campus, where students and start-ups from the Region, will be facilitated, to conduct research and development studies.

Mister President,

- Since I took office, two years ago, my government has been making efforts, to bring the economy back on track and bring the development of the country on the right path from an extremely unsustainable position.
- While a homegrown recovery plan, a 36-month Extended Fund Facility of the IMF and a national multi-year plan development are in implementation, my government continues, to face economic challenges and capacity constraints, due to external and unforeseen shocks.
- Based on the impact of several crises and the measure to reform the economy the population is going through the hardships now!
- Therefore, international support, in this regard, is of utmost importance.
- To avoid further hardships, and to bring some relief, to the population, we have taken a decision, to re-engage with the IMF, to consider where the program can be adjusted, to implement the program based on the current realities in the world, and to minimize the social cost of this program.

- We appreciate bilateral and multilateral partners, who have expressed solidarity, and have provided valuable support, to my country and people, during these challenging times.
- Additionally, our goal is to attract investments, to improve productivity and capital allocation, which are critical, for growth and poverty reduction.

In conclusion,

Mister President,
Secretary General,
Colleague Heads,

- Effective and consensus-based multilateralism, is the only option for solving the interlocking challenges our world faces today.
- National solutions to resolve global problems, have time and again, **proven**, to be, ineffective and at times dangerous.
- Through global solutions, with adapted local or national implementation, we should achieve the future we want.
- Together, we can, together we will, together we have to, and together we are stronger!
- I thank you and God bless you all!
