



ALLIANCE OF SMALL ISLAND STATES

Final statement to be delivered by Hon Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda & Chair of AOSIS on the occasion of

SDG Moment 2021

scheduled for Monday 20th September 2021

“The plans and pathways to advance and accelerate SDG implementation through recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond.”

Secretary- General,
Colleagues Heads of States and Governments,
Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Antigua and Barbuda continues to grapple with the catastrophic economic fallout instigated by the ongoing COVID 19 pandemic. Our social and health services architecture is currently under siege with no short-term easing in sight.

This disastrous reality is further heightened by our inability to access sufficient supplies of COVID 19 vaccines and properly finance a coordinated response to effectively fight the virus.

Secretary- General, my nation’s debt to GDP ratio has increased exponentially, GDP per capita has severely contracted, and Government revenue has sharply plummeted.

Moreover, the pandemic has exposed significant structural gaps and severely eroded my country’s development gains including progress made on the implementation of UN 2030 Agenda particularly on the goals relating to prosperity.

Notwithstanding the above, during our 2021 VNR assessment we proudly acknowledged the progress attained in relation to the goals dealing with people and peace, however, much remains to be achieved.

Antigua and Barbuda reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the goals as they are the global blueprint for resilience building and recovery post COVID.

They will aid in the achievement of key elements pertinent to a global recovery including:



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- Urgent access to vaccines for everyone which will require IP patent waivers;
- Creating fiscal space for COVID 19 response and recovery;
- The approval of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for SIDS;
- Identifying and addressing inequality;
- Ensuring the transfer of technology; and
- Advancing the climate agenda including climate justice and a mechanism for implementation.

Additionally, as a nation we are committed to participating in several projects related to the implementation and financing of the goals.

Firstly, a MAPS Mission which will facilitate the aligning of the goals to our medium-term development strategy and designing policy interventions to accelerate progress towards the goals.

The second, relates to advancing innovative financing approaches in the Eastern Caribbean to assist in combating our extreme economic volatility, limited borrowing options and inability to service debt payments.

Secretary- General, the implementation of the SDGs will be critical towards the achievement of any global smart recovery. One that fosters sustainable development allowing nations to rebuild better, stronger and avoid replicating the unsustainable practices of the past.

Thank you.

