



Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Peru, Ambassador Gustavo Adolfo Meza-Cuadra Velasquez

General Debate of the Ministerial Segment of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development

July 15, 2020

In these difficult circumstances, I wish to express on behalf of the Peruvian Government and people, our condolences to those who have lost a loved one as a result of COVID-19, as well as our deep appreciation for the dedication of health personnel who, in Peru as well as around the world, save lives even at the risk of their own.

I also congratulate Ambassador Mona Júul, President of ECOSOC, on the leadership of this edition of the Forum, adapting her sessions to the current unprecedented circumstances. This year, the Forum takes place at a particular time: as we celebrate the 75th anniversary of the UN, and begin the decade of action for sustainable development, at the same time we are going through one of the most devastating crises of the contemporary era.

In the face of this multidimensional crisis, the 2030 Agenda is the roadmap that should guide our decisions at the national and global levels. Today, more than ever, Peru is firmly committed to the 2030 Agenda, in order to give everyone the opportunity to realize its human potential. Reflecting this commitment is the presentation of Peru's Second Voluntary National Review, which reflects the progress and difficulties in the implementation of the SDGs, and in which – in the context of the pandemic – special emphasis has been placed on the protection of people's lives.

As the Secretary-General's recent report on progress towards the SDGs indicates, the challenges are multiple. To address this adverse situation, the Government of Peru has unreservedly committed its efforts. Thus, our economic stimulus plan represents a 17% boost in GDP and includes programmes to combat the pandemic in health, social and financial areas, through economic bonds for families in poverty or without fixed incomes; facilities for companies to continue their productive activities; and measures to ensure the supply of essential goods; among others.

But national efforts are insufficient. The very nature of the pandemic imposes a global response, supported by a robust multilateral system. It is urgent to give renewed credibility to the international system, multilateralism and its institutions. More specifically, it is essential to ensure, in a concerted manner, that treatments and a possible vaccine are accessible and available to all, as they constitute global public goods. Maintaining supply chains and removing obstacles to their free flow is critical,

as they violate the rules of international trade and ultimately affect the most vulnerable. Without agreement on these basic objectives, we will be eroding the foundations of the multilateral system. Universal access to treatments, vaccines and other goods is nothing more than fulfilling the commitment to "leave no one behind" and "reach the furthest behind first."

The risk of deepening pre-existing inequalities is real. The pandemic has disproportionately claimed the lives of the elderly; has left children and adolescents in orphanage; has wraged in the world of work, women being the most affected; our indigenous peoples are at greatest risk. In short, the most vulnerable today require more protection than ever before.

That is why it is necessary to remember that our Heads of State and Government committed in 2015 to "Transforming Our World" by adopting the 2030 Agenda. We need to strengthen this transformative will and make this crisis an opportunity to take bold and urgent steps to bring our societies back along the path of sustainability, inclusion and well-being.