



STATEMENT

BY

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AT THE

INTERACTIVE DIALOGUE 1 – ENDING POVERTY AND
HUNGER

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TO THE UNITED NATIONS

1

Co- Chairs,

A new approach to eradication of poverty and hunger

Up until now, the international community has seen poverty through the prism of *the \$1.25 benchmark*. We readily applaud the halving of the number of people worldwide living on less than US\$1.25 per day. But we are also chastened by the stark unevenness of results and the even more sluggish progress in the reduction of hunger.

The 2030 Agenda marks a breakaway from a one dimensional view of poverty towards a multi-dimensional and integrated approach that addresses the social, economic and environmental drivers of poverty and hunger.

As a first step, we likewise at the national level should incorporate this new approach in our national development plans and policies. For Belize, our recently approved *Growth and Sustainable Development Strategy* recognizes that achieving a higher quality of life for all Belizeans requires more than economic growth: it requires a whole-system approach to development. We see increasing prosperity, eradicating poverty and hunger, improving social cohesion, caring for our natural resources, and securing peace and justice for all Belizeans as clearly inter-connected goals. Our national development strategy therefore will strive to bring economic, social, and environmental policies into a balance that is also synergistic, so that policies work well together to create optimal outcomes. It will also support the country in coping with resource constraints, and help it increase its resilience in the face of a volatile global economy and a changing global climate. All key factors together and advancing them in an integrated and coordinated manner will in our view contribute to the eradication of poverty and hunger in a way that is irreversible and sustainable.

Highest/Key Priorities for Ending Poverty and Hunger

On the question regarding kinds of support and investment that will likely represent “highest or key priorities” for ending poverty, we counsel, firstly, that this will depend on national circumstances and secondly, must be room for flexibility in identifying priorities -- whether at the domestic or the international levels. Belize has devised a multi-criteria assessment, informed by our current development realities, to support our prioritized decisions.

We consider in turn that the international enabling environments would further support these priorities through appropriate policies and measures including addressing the unique challenges of small island and low lying coastal developing states, the question of enhanced support for middle income countries and on the need to support long-term debt sustainability for developing countries.

Revitalizing partnerships at the local, national, regional and global levels

While we have mobilized domestic resources to finance our national development strategy, we have also counted on the support of traditional and non-traditional development partners. Partnerships work best when they are country-owned and country-driven and when they provide for a balanced relationship between donor and recipient based on mutual respect and accountability. This applies to public – private partnerships where new corporate citizenship and corporate responsibility must imbue the new consciousness for a greater society. The sustainable development goals similarly will be an overarching framework for aligning private sector and public sector interests at the local, national, regional and global levels.

Science technology and innovation in the fight against poverty and hunger

Economic and social indicators have been promoted as key factors to ensure policies are targeted and programmes produce desired outcomes. We need a robust means of monitoring the programmes and policies to ensure that their impacts are optimized and sustained. As highlighted in

the 2030 Agenda, for this to happen, small island and low lying developing states as my own will need support to strengthen statistical institutions and build our capacity to collect and analyse data relevant to our context.

In addressing our technological needs, cultural and local context must be taken into consideration. The newly launched Technology Facilitation Mechanism should help to address issues of scale, appropriateness and transfer of technology for small island and low lying coastal developing states.

Co-Chairs,

With the 2030 Agenda together with the Financing for Development outcome, we are entering a new phase in our development agenda, however we depend on an international enabling environment that can support us and help us build resilience to exogenous shocks. That environment must be sensitive to our national circumstances and respectful of our national priorities. Nevertheless, my government is confident that we are moving forward in the right direction. If we do so earnestly and in solidarity, we very well could be the generation that ends poverty and hunger and secures our planet for future generations.

Thank you.