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Speaking Notes

For

The Honourable Ahmed Hussen,
Minister of Families, Children and Social Development

for

the National Statement at the 2020 United Nations High-Level
Political Forum

Virtually at the 2020 United Nations High-Level Political Forum

July 15, 2020

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Minister Hussen:

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, your Excellencies, Honourable Ministers, and distinguished guests.

I want to begin by acknowledging that I am on Indigenous land, namely, the traditional territory of the Algonquin people.

I also want to thank our outgoing ambassador to the United Nations, Marc-André Blanchard, for his hard work and leadership in representing Canada at the United Nations.

I want to extend my congratulations and best wishes to our incoming ambassador to the United Nations, Bob Rae.

We are all facing the unprecedented challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic. Canada continues to take significant and decisive action—at home and abroad—to provide support and help navigate the way to recovery, without putting at risk progress achieved and ensuring that the policies we implement now will advance

the collective, long-term vision we laid out in the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Canada's COVID-19 Economic Response Plan recognizes that vulnerable communities are the most affected by the pandemic, and we have put measures in place to support them in weathering this crisis. We are actively supporting the 2030 Agenda, while also investing in measures to protect the health and safety of Canadians while pivoting towards recovery, including funding for medical research and vaccine development, and increasing public health measures in Indigenous communities.

In these difficult times, Canada has remained a strong advocate for equality, empowerment and the inclusion of underrepresented groups such as women, youth, Indigenous peoples, newcomers, seniors, racialized peoples, persons with disabilities and members of the LGBTQ2 community.

Now more than ever, the 2030 Agenda presents Canada and the global community with a blueprint to guide us to

transform our economic and social systems, to make them more inclusive, and aiming at reducing inequalities and protecting the planet for future generations.

As we mark the upcoming 75th anniversary of the United Nations, we are reinforcing our commitment to multilateralism and to solidarity to solve the global challenges that lie before us and to realize a better and more inclusive tomorrow.

Our Government actively developed initiatives to secure progress, notably on poverty reduction, reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, climate change, advancing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and ensuring access to justice for all Canadians.

Importantly, we are supporting Indigenous peoples and historically marginalized groups in our collective implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

Minister Gould:

The 2030 Agenda remains the global roadmap for transformative action. It is universal, people-centered, and grounded in human rights principles. It is also integral to creating a world that can mitigate and behave resiliently in the face of shocks and crises like the one we are experiencing now. As we respond to the pandemic, the Feminist International Assistance Policy continues to frame Canada's global response, and we remain committed to pursuing progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Internationally, Canada is working with partners to respond to the pandemic and the resulting threat of large-scale food insecurity, the task of getting children back to school, addressing and combating the increase in gender-based violence, and taking action to enable an economic recovery that is inclusive and climate smart. More than ever, the world needs women's experiences, leadership, knowledge, and problem-solving abilities, and Canada is committed to ensuring the voices of the most vulnerable

and marginalized are taken into account in the global response to COVID-19.

This May, Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau, along with the Prime Minister of Jamaica and the UN Secretary-General, co-chaired a high-level event on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond. During these discussions, we committed to ensuring that developing countries have access to the resources they need to respond to and recover from the global crisis, build resilience, and realize their sustainable development objectives.

We recognize that countries in special situations, including African countries, Small Island Developing States, Landlocked Developing States, and Least Developing Countries, and conflict-affected states, are facing the greatest hardships resulting from this crisis.

Minister Hussen:

The pandemic has offered us an opportunity to take a hard look at our societies, recognize our weaknesses, and put

in place the necessary changes to build back better. The choice for our tomorrow is in our hands.

Thank you. Merci beaucoup.