

Mr. President, colleague heads, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

I salute the Presidency of the G77 plus China group under the leadership of H.E. Miguel Diaz-Canel President of the Republic of Cuba. Thanks for convening us so soon after the successful deliberations in Havana. I believe that this is an important initiative of the Chair to convene for the first time in the context of the COP such a meeting here in Dubai. This so that the global south can align itself consistently address critical issues and set out the agenda of the south.

Mr. Chairman, colleague heads, the global stock take we have initiated at this COP28, is a positive and a necessary step to understand where we are since the Paris Accord. It will identify the gaps so we can take the much-needed actions to protect our planet. We must then be practical in finding ways to expedite the implementation process. Based on our observations and experience however we can accurately predict what the outcome will be: **we all need to do more work harder and take more action**. We all must step up our game, individually, but most importantly, collectively and in unity. We must insist that Western economies deliver more on their National Determined Commitments. Otherwise, the set goals will not be achieved, and we will all bear the severe consequences.

Chairman, my country, Suriname, experiences loss and damages even though we do not contribute to the adverse effects of a changing climate. At the same time, we must allocate scarce fiscal resources to repair and rebuild. I am pleased with the speedy operationalization of the loss and damage fund one year after the decision to establish it thus making loss and damage one of the pillars for climate financial management. We must be alert and insist that pledges made are kept and that these funds become available very soon.

Chairman and colleagues, while the developed countries have the basic needs for their peoples in place before climate action was high on the world agenda, we as developing nations have yet to achieve that status. We now face the needed developments while consciously taking into consideration the need to do so in a sustainable and environmentally responsible manner. In our particular case we must be granted the same opportunity to benefit from new-found natural resources and develop our economy through what now is coined "just transition". For my country Suriname that means:

- that we are committed to establishing a low carbon-based economy by 2050;
- that we are prepared to continue investing in renewable energy;
- that we will give priority to limiting deforestation;
- that we will develop our oil and gas reserves through environmental-friendly methods and in compliance with global standards.

We must also remember that Suriname has remained a carbon negative country only one of the three in the world despite our extractive industries in bauxite gold and other minerals and onshore oil operations. For us the message and our commitment are clear: we are not the primary polluters, and we will remain carbon negative. But we will not take away the economic opportunities for our people as we move ahead with the sustainable development of our economy. Every year since the noble goals and concrete financial pledges were made by many countries. We have expressed the need for countries to keep up with their promises. Making use of the scarce available funds is frustrated by: limited access and allocation to the global south due to complex application procedures; and appraisal and disbursement periods which are too long to be impactful.

Mr. Chairman, over the past decades many of our countries have experienced the gravity and severe impact of the climate crisis on our society's ecosystems, economy and livelihoods. Yet we have been able to effectively address some of these challenges with success. I believe that through these meetings at both technical and policy level we have an opportunity to benefit from these best practices or from the experience what not to do. We can learn from each other and strengthen our national capabilities and expertise through this sharing of knowledge. This goes to the heart of one of the purposes of this organization which is to strengthen solidarity between the member states.

Mr. Chairman, we are all convinced that there is an urgency to act. This urgency applies to us all. We should set an example and commit to act in unity and solidarity. For the greater good of the global south, we must be willing to put our individual differences and interests aside if we want to be successful in ensuring a livable planet.

I thank you, muchas gracias and may God bless you all!

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