



## **Country Statement**

### **Nepal**

**Statement by Hon. Dr. Biswo Nath Poudel, Vice-Chairman of National  
Planning Commission and Head of Nepali Delegation at**

**High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development  
5-18 July 2022**

Theme: Building back better from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) while  
advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable  
Development

**Mr. President,  
Excellences,  
Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere congratulation to you, Mr. President, for convening this High-Level Political Forum amidst the challenges posed by multiple global crises.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and geopolitical crisis—each of them are a grave threat to the people, prosperity, peace, and the planet. When humanity confronts them all at once, as we do now, their combined scale, scope, and intensity simply becomes overwhelming.
3. As a result, the 2030 Agenda with SDGs at its heart is greatly imperiled, threatening to derail the objectives of leaving no one behind and reaching the furthest behind first. The impact of COVID-19 has pushed back development efforts by years if not decades, battering the livelihoods and economies, especially in the Least Developed Countries, which are on the bottom rung of development.
4. Mr. President, more than ten thousand lives were lost in Nepal due to the pandemic. Our economy came to a standstill, as did the world economy. Crucial sectors and services like tourism, education, health, and transportation were hit the hardest by the pandemic.
5. Amidst these enormous challenges, the Government of Nepal is putting all its efforts to implement recovery policies, strategies, and programs to mitigate these negative impacts and to build back better. Some of our major initiatives include vaccination, economic support packages such as the extension of loan repayment deadlines, refinance facilities and targeted lending in productive sectors at low-interest rates.
6. Accordingly, the government has prioritized providing affordable health care to the public, managing debt, making public service delivery more efficient and effective, boosting private sector investment for job creation, and helping the private sector for productive capacity development. Our constitution has enshrined a number of social and welfare measures as fundamental rights to create an inclusive, equitable, and prosperous society.
7. We are determined to create more jobs, revive the tourism sector, and enhance health and education accessible to all by bringing the process of SDG implementation on the right track.

**Mr. President,**

8. The pre-pandemic scenario of SDG implementation was encouraging in Nepal. We were doing fairly well in the areas of alleviating poverty, increasing institutional capacity in education, health, energy, environment protection; public service delivery and increasing people's access to social safety schemes and basic services.

9. In the post-COVID scenario, we need to do more to regain our tempo towards sustainable development and good governance. We will intensify our efforts to mobilize domestic resources while we call for development partners to enhance their support.

10. We are also striving to institutionalize evidence-based policymaking by generating disaggregated data and building capacity across the three layers of government as a recently federated nation. However, maintaining macroeconomic stability is emerging as a serious problem for us, in the wake of dwindling foreign currency reserves resulting from the soaring energy and food prices, widening trade deficit, and deteriorating balance of payments.

11. Even amidst these colossal challenges, Nepal spelled out its firm commitment at the COP26 to make the country a net zero carbon emitter by 2050. In this context, we need adequate international support to complement our national efforts to accelerate the sustainable development pathway while creating prosperity for people.

**Mr. President,**

12. Nepal is set to graduate from the LDC status in 2026. Graduation is a milestone for a country moving towards sustainable development, though, it will affect access to concessional development finance and trade preferences. Therefore, we are preparing a graduation strategy in such a way that it will minimize the negative consequences and ensure smooth and irreversible graduation.

13. For smooth and irreversible graduation, we need scaled-up international support to enhance the institutional capacities of our public sectors and productive capacities of our nascent private sectors so that structural transformation of our economy would be possible for sustainable development.

**Mr. President,**

14. The present global situation demands a genuine commitment from all to save lives and achieve global peace and prosperity.

15. The pandemic is a stark reminder of the importance of digitization of services. Investing in digitization of education, health, and other sectors can support a robust response to and recovery from the crisis.

16. Similarly, investing in social protection of the vulnerable and marginalized groups of society across the world is also crucial. Women, children, senior citizens, the disabled and economically backward communities need extra support.

**Mr. President,**

17. Obviously, the national governments should take the lead in implementing appropriate policies for sustainable development by reforming public expenditure and taxation, developing capital markets, and utilizing innovative financing instruments, including green bonds or sustainability bonds.

18. However, countries in special situations, especially the LDCs face structural constraints to generate resources domestically. In this context, we call on our development partners including development banks to arrange debt swaps for development, to operationalize climate finance, to provide debt relief and cancellation to the LDCs as well as to work together to combat illicit cross-border financial flows and tax evasion.

19. The international support measures, particularly the transfer of financial resources and technologies, need to target digital innovation, climate readiness, and epidemic resilience.

20. At this juncture, I urge the international community to focus on the facilitation of e-commerce, transit and transport, investment promotion and protection as well as strengthening our public health systems. In addition, climate finance to support adaptation and mitigation and to compensate for the loss and damage caused by disasters is equally necessary. There has never been before more urgent and necessary the need for collective sustainability-driven action.

21. As the world is struggling to recover from COVID-19 amidst multiple crises, the HLPF2022 has provided us an opportunity to deliberate on these pressing issues and forge a common path ahead. Nothing else, but only our true commitments and actions can salvage the endangered SDGs for the planet, people, prosperity, and peace. There is no alternative to meaningful global partnership while keeping the most vulnerable countries at the center of our global efforts to build back better and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

I wish you the grand success of this valued session.

I thank you all.