

Madam President, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

St. Kitts & Nevis has been deeply inspired by the proceedings of this HLPF. The deliberations have been sobering in reminding us that at this midpoint mark the promise of Leaving No One behind is gravely in peril if a fundamental shift does not take place urgently. We thank His Excellency, Antonio Guterres, Secretary General UN, for sounding the alarm in his latest Report and providing a concrete Rescue Plan.

Madam President

St. Kitts & Nevis, the smallest Independent Nation in the western hemisphere, with a tiny population of 50,000, miniscule land mass of 104 sq miles, surrounded by rising sea-levels, suffering from significant diminishing rainfall, and being extremely vulnerable to natural disasters, delivered our very first VNR Report at this year's HLPF. It has truly been an illuminating experience, highlighting our successes, but also exposing present deficits and gaps that our administration intends to systematically address thereby placing St. Kitts and Nevis at the vanguard of regional success.

Madam President,

Our Administration, since entering office less than one year ago, has embarked on a Sustainable Island State mission by 2037. The SDGs are fully integrated into our national development plans including the following people-centric approaches:

(I) Food Security through rural empowerment driven by our 25 by 2025 agenda to reduce food imports by 25% by 2025.

(II) A strong commitment to gender equity as a platform for sustainability with special focus now on aging and elderly care and introducing support programs for women and young girls in rural areas to transform rural societies post-COVID 19.

(III) Intentional in supporting and investing in, the blue, orange, and green economy, the knowledge economy to continue to build a highly educated and skilled workforce, advancing workers' rights and benefits, and giving our young people more opportunities for self-actualization and social and economic mobility.

(IV) Providing resources to encourage more young people to pursue STEAM based career pathways including in ICT and Robotics.

(V) Created new ministries focusing on climate action, trade and economic investment, and small enterprise development.

(VI) Establishment of a Digital Transformation Unit to realize e-governance.

(VII) De-carbonize our generation by 61% by incentivizing vehicle electrification and increasing renewable energy supply to 30% by 2025, 60% by 2027 and 100% by 2030 with a green energy mix of Wind, Solar and Geothermal, dramatically reducing the cost of energy to encourage industrial and socio-economic growth.

(VIII) Water is life and we are valuing EVERY SINGLE DROP as we are amongst the most water scarce globally with a further debilitating reduction in rainfall of 20% over the last ten years and 40% reduction so far this year alone over last year. Therefore, we are moving full steam ahead with the full exploration of our remaining groundwater wells plus the introduction of large-scale desalination to supply 30% of our water supply within 8 months from just 2% presently. Important for us is the water- energy-food nexus as we firmly believe that if we solve energy, then with energy, we solve water, and with water, we solve food!

The Multi crises of the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and the confounding invasions of sovereign countries have driven price increases in food, energy, and access to finance, creating a global cost of living crisis affecting billions of people. These catastrophic events wreak havoc on our small open economy and livelihoods.

Like other small states, St. Kitts and Nevis has negligible contribution to global emissions, yet, we bear the brunt of the Climate Change impacts with threats to deplete our treasuries just to recover and survive after shock events. Increased international support, with decisive actions to bring about climate justice to close the climate finance gap, is IMPERATIVE! We join with CARICOM in calling for innovative financial instruments, increased and predictable climate finance, debt relief, and improved access to concessional financing.

Madam President, as we usher in 40 years of independence we thank the Government and People of the Republic of China on Taiwan for its indispensable support in advancing our national development agenda over those entire 40 years.

We also ask for greater justice as relates to the imposition of unilateral coercive measures that inhibit countries within Latin America, the Caribbean and the Middle East, like Cuba and Venezuela, in implementing their SDGs.

We anxiously await the finalization of the MVI formulation and the report of the High Level Panel. We encourage broad support by the UN membership for this universal indicator and hope that an agreement can be reached expeditiously.

Madam President,

This halfway mark is a time for unabashed increased action to meet our SDGs. St. Kitts & Nevis is acting, many others are acting, however, we the Small Island States require the corporation of our international partners to ensure that No One Is Left Behind.