



THE CO-OPERATIVE REPUBLIC OF GUYANA

SECOND VOLUNTARY NATIONAL REVIEW OF THE 2030 AGENDA AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: KEY MESSAGES

ECOSOC HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM – 2023

ONE GUYANA, ACHIEVING LOW-CARBON, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

Guyana's national development plan – the Low Carbon Development Strategy 2030 - sets out a vision of a fair, inclusive, sustainable, and prosperous Guyana, that simultaneously creates a model for avoiding deforestation and maintaining forest coverage while growing the economy five-fold over 10 years and keeping energy emissions flat. These carbon services represent a flagship initiative in domestic resource mobilisation, which is critical to financing the realisation of the SDGs. Key to achieving the SDGs have been (i) localising the SDG targets through their integration into the national budget process and (ii) incorporating key drivers of accelerated development such as increased technological solutions across major sectors.

Guyana's Second Voluntary National Review focuses on an in-depth examination of the thematic Goals for this HLPF and signals our continued commitment to the implementation of Agenda 2030. Our VNR process included multi-stakeholder engagements which led to sharing of experiences and lessons learned and underscored the need to strengthen inter-agency collaboration and data systems. Further, urgent and decisive actions are needed at the global level to make the 2030 Agenda attainable.

Goal 6: Targeted and progressive actions to improve the supply, reliability, and quality of water include expanding water and sanitation infrastructure for coverage, treatment, reduction of non-revenue water, and strengthening partnerships at both national and international levels. Increased focus on aquifer studies and integrated water resource management will remain critical to achieving sustainable management of water sources.

Goal 7: By using natural gas as a bridge from heavy fuel oil and expanding solar, wind, biomass and hydropower, Guyana will transition the grid towards clean and renewable energy at over 80 per cent by 2030. In addition, we will have the installed capacity to cater for a five-fold increase in energy consumption with greenhouse gas emissions remaining approximately flat – resulting in one of the highest levels of decoupling of economic growth from fossil fuel use.

Goal 9: Substantially expanded investments in infrastructure are underway across all major sectors including transport –road, water and air connectivity resulting in cost and time savings for both citizens and businesses.

Historically hindered by the high cost of energy, the manufacturing sector is slated to expand following recent investments to harness natural gas, which is expected to substantially reduce

energy-related operational costs, thereby increasing competitiveness. Further, as Guyana seeks to enhance its national research capability and mobile connectivity, it will continue to place a high value on technology transfers and partnerships with countries with longstanding expertise in these areas.

In 2021, Guyana introduced the “Made in Guyana” stamp to complement other interventions to support small-scale industries such as business incubators.

Goal 11: Heightened emphasis is placed on implementing sustainable urban practices and land use planning, the provision of affordable housing, regularising informal settlements and strengthening interagency collaboration. Interventions have focused on low- and middle-income earners - many of whom are female applicants - who have benefitted from subsidy programmes aimed at promoting affordable housing and home-financing options and removal of taxes from several construction materials. Acceleration of the housing programme has resulted in the allocation of over 24,000 lots at a subsidized cost of land. Expanding population centres and businesses have increased solid waste pressures by almost 50 per cent, requiring the upgrade and expansion of the capacity of landfills and other facilities.

Moreover, Guyana is vulnerable to the effects of climate change made worse by its geography. Resiliency mandates robust disaster preparedness and management consistent with the Sendai Framework.

Goal 17: At the core of the means of implementation and global partnerships for sustainable development, lies the longstanding unfulfilled commitment of 0.7 percent GNI. Limitations on the national capacity to raise public resources persist and have worsened post-COVID-19. The existential crisis of climate change and related shocks to the economy further constrain the pace of development. Unless the commitments of ODA are fulfilled swiftly and consistently, the means of implementation of the SDGs and the concept of global partnership are both in jeopardy.

Further, Guyana’s graduation to upper-middle income status has made concessional lending from traditional partners scarcer and substantially increased the cost of borrowing. The use of a single statistical artifact – per capita GDP - in a multidimensional development context severely undermines considerations around sustainable development. The need for the global community to recognise a multidimensional vulnerability index in assessing countries is both urgent and overdue.

Guyana’s President H.E. Dr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali has consistently championed the concept of “One Guyana”. In his 2020 inauguration address, he stated: “From this day forward, we must, each of us, become our brother’s and sister’s keeper, ensuring that in our journey to progress and prosperity, no one is left behind.” A message that is equally applicable to us as a community of nations.