

Address by the Minister, the Hon. Dwight G. Sutherland at the 2nd UN Habitat Assembly held in Nairobi, Kenya, from 5th to 9th June 2023 "A sustainable urban future through inclusive and effective multilateralism: achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in times of global crises"

Thank you Mr. President, Dear Excellencies, Ministers, other high-level representatives of Member States, Madame Executive Director, Excellencies; Distinguished Delegates and partners.

It is an immense pleasure to address this second assembly of UN Habitat here in Kenya. Barbados recently established a Permanent Mission in Nairobi with a view to deepening Barbados/Caribbean relations with the African continent and to fully engage in the work of collectively achieving the Sustainable Development Goals with our key partners - UN Habitat and UNEP.

Barbados extends our sincere appreciation to the Government and people of Kenya for their warm hospitality and graciousness.

The Barbados delegation reiterates its support for the work being undertaken by UN Habitat and congratulates the Executive Director and her management team - with the support of the executive board, for the sterling work it has undertaken in turning the fortunes of this organisation in a more positive direction.

Earlier this year, Barbados signed an MOU with UN Habitat and we look forward to bringing that to fruition including the possible establishment of a satellite SIDS office in Barbados.

Chair, as we gather here to discuss a sustainable urban future, Barbados is mindful that we do so at the start of this year's Atlantic Hurricane season, indeed Barbados is still in recovery mode from the impact of Hurricane Elsa in July 2021. The forecast of a "six hurricane" season, three of which are likely to be major hurricanes, causes us alarm, as, Chair, just one powerful hurricane can utterly devastate our highly vulnerable region of SIDS and delay our onward development trajectory by a decade or more.

As we move into the deliberations of this week, with our focus on effective and inclusive multi-lateralism, Barbados is convinced that six key principles of The Bridgetown

Initiative are as relevant to these discussions now, as when they were first announced in 2022 ahead of COP 27. These are:

1. Provide immediate liquidity support. re-channel at least \$100 billion of unused Special Drawing Rights.
2. Restore debt sustainability today and ultimately support countries in restructuring their debt with long-term low interest rates;
3. Dramatically increase official sector development lending to reach \$500 billion annual stimulus for investment in the SDGs;
4. Mobilise more than \$1.5 trillion per year of private sector investment in green transformation;
5. Transform the governance of international financial institutions to make them more representative, equitable and inclusive; and,
6. Create an international trade system that supports global green and just transformations

We must also continue to collaborate and exchange best practices as we strive towards our common goal of achieving the SDGs and successfully implementing the New Urban Agenda. We see Barbados' selection as one of 10 pilot cities for the Integrated Urban Resilience in SIDs and Coastal Cities initiative as an opportunity for integrating commitments under the New Urban Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and we look forward to positive results. Barbados is already underway with the implementation of the national coastal risk information and planning platform NCRRIIP, a programme providing a holistic, integrated national initiative for resilient development.

Chair, we are hurtling towards the dreaded 1.5-degree global temperature increase. It is our hope that we can slow, and ultimately halt this trajectory even as we build resilient and sustainable biodiverse cities it is hoped that the deliberations of this 2nd Assembly of UN Habitat would see the realization of these hopes in the not-too-distant future.

I thank you.