

**SPEECH OF H. E. LUIS ABINADER, PRESIDENT OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE 76TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

Wednesday September 22nd. Turn 12. Afternoon session,

Ladies and Gentlemen:

*President of the Seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly,
Secretary General of the United Nations,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Distinguished delegates,*

As we approach the second anniversary of the start of the worst catastrophe in nearly a century, humankind has not yet been able to definitively close this terrible episode of the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, we come to this forum with the hope of renewing and strengthening the bonds of cooperation and solidarity as fraternal nations.

This global community of states faces enormous challenges that can only be effectively addressed through a renewed multilateralism.

Indeed, in the face of the pandemic, the climate emergency, the technological revolution and the need to articulate a new paradigm for the welfare state, it is necessary to strengthen unity and cooperation among all nations.

We have a historical responsibility to leave a better world than the one we find, but this is only possible if we take seriously the global transition towards a new ecological, sustainable, inclusive and equitable production model, in line with the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda.

This change is only possible from a global and multilateral effort that guarantees the rule of law, human rights and the well-being of all people, leaving no one behind.

Despite this unfortunate scenario created by the pandemic, our government has promoted a free vaccination plan that has been successful, with visible results and impressive figures: 57% of the eligible population is fully vaccinated, approximately 70% has at least one dose and more than 10% of the population received a third dose, with a lethality rate of 1.14%, one of the lowest in the world.

In line with our vision of co-responsibility to get out of this pandemic, and having an inventory of vaccines that has allowed it, we have donated in solidarity some 820 thousand doses to countries in our region that need them, convinced that we will only be safe, when we are all vaccinated.

However, although we have begun to overcome the pandemic, this will not be enough to overcome the economic and financial crisis.

In the interest of maintaining social peace, we are urged to find a solution to the enormous indebtedness that middle-income countries have been forced into to deal with the economic and social ravages generated by the pandemic.

There is currently no mechanism for access to concessional financing that allows these countries to solve this liquidity crisis. To overcome this challenge, we are forced to look for new and urgent solutions.

Recently, the Board of Governors of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) had an allocation of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) for an amount equivalent to US \$ 650,000 million with the objective of strengthening global liquidity. IMF member states received these funds according to the corresponding quotas per country. This means that a large proportion of these resources was taken by the developed countries, precisely those that need them the least.

To remedy this unfair situation, industrialized countries should use these resources to create a mechanism to channel the quotas they have received to middle- and low-income countries, giving them access to concessional funds. In such a mechanism, multilateral financial organizations would play a key role, thus ensuring that these resources reach the countries that really need them. This initiative would have a very positive impact on international financial markets, as it would make debt more sustainable and strengthen confidence in our economies, thus improving the cost of financing.

Mr. president,

The government that I am honored to chair has the firm belief that democracy is the political system that best guarantees the dignity, well-being and happiness of the people, and that it can only be sustained if it is deepened and expanded.

For this reason, I am proud that we had convened all sectors of national life to initiate an open and plural dialogue to achieve reforms that contribute to strengthening the social and democratic rule of law in the Dominican Republic.

Therefore, for this reason the Dominican Republic is a strong advocate of democracy and human rights, which implies strengthening checks and balances to the executive branch, such as an independent judiciary, whose decisions will be widely respected by everyone. This government is committed to ensuring the independence of the Public Prosecutor's Office and other control

agencies, as well as the reform of the National Police to guarantee the rule of law and citizen security.

In the same sense, our fundamental purpose is to defend the public interest, the common patrimony of Dominicans, which implies an absolutely transparent management, one of the achievements that gives us the greatest satisfaction. We are convinced that, in the midst of the current circumstances laden with obstacles, the public continues to demand that we act with courage against corruption and we have been showing this with clear, precise and forceful actions.

In another vein, and with regard to the economy, I am pleased to point out that even in the midst of these difficulties, our country is optimistic and we are sure that this year we will achieve economic and social balance. We plan to end 2021 with an economic growth of 10% and maintain a growth rate of 5% for the following years.

Mr. president,

I would like to suggest three actions that we consider urgent and necessary for our region and our country

1. The Dominican Republic, as a Small Island Developing State, is one of the countries that emits the least greenhouse gases but is most affected by climate change. Now is the time to promote a global transformation of the economy in line with the levels of development so that the required standards do not impose excessive burdens that result in additional costs detrimental to competitiveness and the production of our goods and services.

It is also fair and necessary that the investment to restore our natural resources affected by global warming created by the countries that have generated the most CO₂, be the ones to pay for the huge investments to be made.

2. The current financial crisis and higher indebtedness caused by the pandemic cannot only be left to be solved by increasing taxes in our respective countries with its consequent social pressures and possible disruption of peace. We must be creative; we are convinced that, at no cost to their governments, multilateral and bilateral financial institutions can grant credit facilities through transparent and accessible, concerted and non-discriminatory mechanisms that help countries in difficulty to quickly regain financial sustainability and access to international financial markets, with preferential rates that are not affected by the country risk index.

Mr. president,

3. Our third and final recommendation for action is on Haiti. Since this government assumed power, we have been making the possibility that the announced Haitian situation could go beyond the borders of that country, influencing as a factor of insecurity in the region. Hence the need for this community of nations to assume with urgency and once and for all, the Haitian crisis as one of the highest priority and permanent monitoring.

We have noted that recently some governments have taken steps to address the consequences of the Haitian crisis. For years, every day, our country has faced, practically alone, these consequences. We are convinced that no unilateral action will be sufficient to overcome this dramatic situation.

It is imperative to state in the strongest and most blunt way possible that the international community should not and cannot abandon the Haitian people at a time when the levels of insecurity are driving them to self-destruction.

And I want to say it today in the sincerest way and outside of diplomatic language.

With the current division among the Haitian leadership, and the dangerous presence of criminal gangs that control a large part of their territory, Haitians alone will not be able to pacify their country, much less guarantee the conditions to establish a minimum of order.

Therefore, the most important and immediate issue is security in Haiti.

Only after this has been achieved could free, fair and reliable elections be held. Then, with a new government as a legitimate interlocutor, it will be possible to draft a truly comprehensive economic and social development plan, with all the necessary resources and supported in solidarity by the international community, since it is no longer possible to think only of humanitarian measures.

To this solemn conclave, I declare that the Dominican Republic has shown and will continue to show its due solidarity and collaboration with the Haitian people, but I also reiterate that **THERE IS NOT, NOR WILL THERE EVER BE, A DOMINICAN SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS IN HAITI.**

Mr. president,

The number of challenges that our states face is significant for the construction of a world under the banner of equality. However, we must not face them alone; integration and multilateralism are the ideal ways to advance towards the goal without leaving anyone behind.

It is my firm conviction that the leadership of the United Nations will continue to be renewed and strengthened every day. The Dominican State reaffirms its commitment to the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations: peace, human dignity, justice, social progress and freedom.

Firm progress towards a renewed and more equitable welfare state.

Let us not fail our peoples. Let's not fail history.

Thank you.