I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of Australia, New Zealand and my own country Canada.

[Deputy Secretary General,] Mr. President,

Our Common Agenda is generating a much-needed reflection on necessary steps to reinvigorate institutions and strengthen the UN, at a time of critical challenge. As part of our deliberations, we believe it is imperative that we work to support a more efficient, effective, relevant and accountable UN, in order to achieve the 2030 Agenda.

It is an undisputable fact that governments acting alone cannot achieve the SDGs and overcome the complex global challenges we face. As stewards of this institution, we must incorporate into our work the voices, expertise, resources, reach and energy of youth, civil society organizations, the private sector and all other stakeholders and people supporting and impacted by the work of this organization.

The world expects us to come together to find solutions. And as much as COVID-19 has tested us and our global solidarity, it has reinforced the importance of the 2030 Agenda as the framework for addressing emerging challenges and achieving sustainable development.

Important progress has been made in key multilateral forums, including the UN, the G7 and G20, and among international financial institutions on issues such as global liquidity, tax reform, vaccine financing and climate finance. The Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19
and Beyond Initiative, launched by Canada, Jamaica and the Secretary General, also helped to bring the experiences and challenges of all countries to the fore and produced a series of policy options for the multilateral system to better tackle the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

Much has been achieved but more needs to be done. Unsustainable debt burdens are undermining development gains. The COVID-19 pandemic and climate change have also laid bare some of the limits of the frameworks and categories based on GDP. We have seen the devastating economic impacts in middle income countries. Truly supporting countries in special situations, such as SIDS, to achieve the SDGs means continuing to explore ways to better reflect the breadth of vulnerabilities they face.

Mr. President,

Responding to the socio-economic impacts of the pandemic and climate change will require a greater effort from all of us. Indeed, stronger international cooperation on economic and financing issues is necessary as proposed in paragraphs 25 and 75 on tax matters and illicit financial flows and paragraph 38 on GDP. Enhanced cooperation and collaboration must build on the comparative advantage, expertise and reach of organizations and institutions that form the multilateral system. We must take advantage of existing bodies and avoid duplication. This
is how we build trust, remain focused on achieving the SDGs and promote efficiencies in the face unprecedented challenges and limited resources.

It is in this spirit that we stand ready to participate in discussions on proposed Biennial Summit in paragraph 73. If Member States agree to move forward with this proposal, we should ensure it is implemented in a way that promotes inclusive discussions and helps make progress on the most critical financing for development challenges. In my national capacity, allow me to offer the Group of Friends on SDG Financing, which I chair with Ambassador Wallace of Jamaica, as a platform to support discussions on this Summit.

Mr. President,

As Ambassadors of Australia, Canada and New Zealand to the UN, we also consider ourselves Ambassadors of the UN to our home countries. In this role, we must all ensure we look both inwards and outwards. We must tell the story, including the hard truths, of multilateralism and the results we can achieve. To help us in this role, we need a UN that is not over-stretched but rather focused on its comparative advantage and its goal to implement in full the 2030 Agenda.

The scale, diversity and complexity of the crises we face today only reiterate the importance of multilateralism. No country or institution can face these alone. We each have a role to play and must continue to work together to define that role if we want to have any chance of achieving the SDGs.

Thank you.