



**Statement by Hon. John Briceño
Prime Minister of Belize
SDG Summit 2023
Leaders' Dialogue 2: Building resilience and leaving no one behind**

Thank you, Mr Co-Moderator

Excellencies,

Belize is deeply troubled at the slow progress of implementation of the SDGs, a challenge mirrored at national level. While ongoing crises are deterring our efforts, systemic inadequacies at global level have long been undermining our aspirations.

Today, I reaffirm Belize's unwavering commitment to achieving the SDGs. These Goals remain the only ambitious, universally agreed blueprint to achieve an equitable and sustainable future for all. At home, #PlanBelize Medium Term Development strategy is guiding our actions.

Last month, Belize convened a SDG Partnership Dialogue bringing together stakeholders to identify national commitments, guided by science, that will have a transformative impact.

The highest priority for my government is reducing poverty. Belize commits to reducing poverty by 50% by 2030 in alignment with the fundamental principle of Leaving No One Behind. Accordingly, we will increase investments in education, and housing and child care for single mothers as well as expand health insurance.

We are committed to redoubling our actions to build resilience and ensure that everyone wins, by:

- implementing the National **Energy** Policy, the National Land Use Policy, develop a comprehensive Industrial Strategy that integrates green and blue industrial policies, and increase investments in climate resilient infrastructure by 2026;
- fostering a low carbon resilient development pathway and strengthen climate change adaptation and mitigation, achieve protection of 30% of marine space by 2026, including protection of 20% of the coral reef, implement our National Blue Economy Policy, we further commit to reducing land degradation through our Land Restoration Strategy, mitigate **biodiversity** loss via the Revised

National Biodiversity Strategy, implement Integrated Water Resource Management approaches and foster agroforestry systems;

- by 2024, implement a National Risk Management Plan supplemented by disaster-specific strategies for hurricanes, floods and droughts.
- by 2025, finalize a Special **Education** Policy, implement Early Childhood Development Investment, expand adult remedial initiatives, skills training and upskilling;
- approve, by 2024, a costed **Social Protection** Strategy, including the Social Protection Floor and accompanying institutional mechanisms;
- implementing the National Agriculture and Food Policy and our **Food System** Pathway, including a School Feeding program;
- implementing by 2025 our National **Digital** Agenda to modernize governance
- adopting a revised National Strategy for Advancing Statistical Development by 2024 to enhance evidence -based decision-making.

To accelerate achievement of **all** SDGs we will legally establish and resource an empowered Sustainable Development Department to coordinate the implementation of the SDGs across government.

Regrettably, international cooperation and development finance are not at the scale required. I reiterate Belize's urgent call for reform of the international financial architecture, the adoption of the multidimensional vulnerability index and targeted support for SIDS.

The SDGs is a collective commitment. Taiwan and other partners are supporting our pursuit of the SDGs. Let us stand united, guided by the principles of sustainability, inclusivity, equity, and solidarity to build a sustainable future for this and future generations.

Thank you.