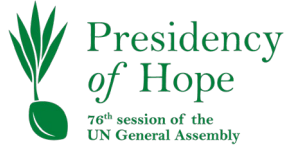


**World Leaders Summit - Dialogue I**  
**Global vulnerabilities - Call from a  
vulnerable place**

**4 October 2021**

**Statement by**  
**Abdulla Shahid, President, 76th Session of the General Assembly of**  
**the United Nations, and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Maldives**



## **UNCTAD15: From Inequality and Vulnerability to Prosperity for All**

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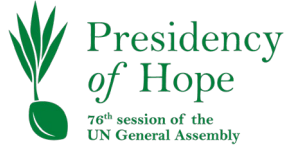
Excellencies

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak at the UNCTAD15 virtual conference.

My sincere appreciation to the Government of Barbados for the successful coordination of this virtual meeting.

Excellencies,

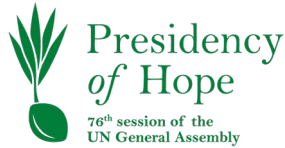


The UNCTAD15 conference is a valuable platform for member states to deliberate on trade and development challenges that have been amplified by COVID19.

Twenty months into the pandemic and we can clearly see the devastating impacts the global pandemic has had on development goals.

While all have felt the pandemic, not all have felt it the same. For countries in special situations, particularly LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS, the impacts have been particularly severe.

Decades of progress on SDGs and national and local development plans have been lost or setback. For the already vulnerable nations, this is a shattering and frustrating reality.

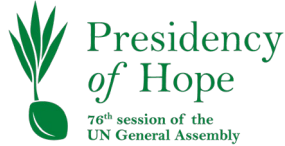


It is in this context that the ‘Decade of Recovery’ will be critical. It will determine how we build back in a way that is bluer, greener, more resilient, and more equitable.

Colleagues, the path to recovery will need to be sustainable – inclusive and above all encompassing of all human rights and the needs of the planet. These are the very tenets of my presidency of hope.

Trade, and the work of UNCTAD, must play a critical role in this regard.

Trade remains the cornerstone of our global economy. We saw how global supply chains were disrupted during the pandemic. And how countries, especially developing countries, and small States that have import dependent economies, suffered with uncertainty.

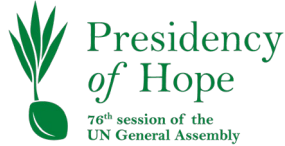


With vaccines unevenly and unfairly accessible, and with issues related to supply, storage and distribution, trade can play a pivotal role in closing these gaps, moving critical supplies more efficiently.

The same holds true for jobs and economic growth. A post-COVID trade system can boost green investments, bring to market new technologies, and enhance sustainable tourism, amongst many other sectors.

UNCTAD can and must play a role in each of these efforts. In particular, support to developing countries on technical capacities will help move vaccines and other medical equipment, and offer support to long-term recovery.

Excellencies,

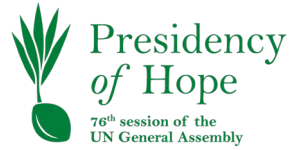


It goes without saying that all of this will need to be complemented with accessible financial, technical and technological commitments by development partners.

Throughout the 76<sup>th</sup> session I will call on Member States to support measures that help alleviate the burden on LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS, ensuring they have the bandwidth to respond effectively.

Excellencies, our collective responsibility, for both the people we serve and for our planet, starts with our commitment to act. The General Assembly is willing to play a part with the support of UNCTAD and member states.

Let us commit to do more; let us commit to deliver actions for a greener, bluer, and sustainable tomorrow.



I thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to the outcomes of this deliberation.

Thank you.