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**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Ana Silvia Rodríguez Abascal, Chargé d'Affaires,  
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We would like to express our deepest satisfaction for the holding of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development under the auspices of ECOSOC, which undoubtedly has a great significance this year in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. We are convinced that the Forum will make a significant contribution to the search for more just, equitable and inclusive global solutions, for the sustainable development of our peoples and in the fight against the current pandemic. We also would like to thank the presidency of ECOSOC for all the efforts made to prepare this important forum, under these difficult conditions.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Cooperative Republic of Guyana on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, and the statement of Belize on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island Developing States.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was a turning point for our planet and all our nations, in order to promote and achieve more harmonious, inclusive and prosperous societies. Along with other important framework agreements, such as the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing Development and the Paris Agreement, it outlined a promising prospect for the achievement of a more just, inclusive and equitable development for all developing countries, including those in special situations and those facing special challenges and needs.

The necessary resources at global level for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development have been and are available, but there has been a lack of political will to mobilize and use them for this purpose. This will only be possible with a true political will, solidarity, multilateral cooperation and equality at global level. We can

only achieve this if the root causes that create and perpetuate underdevelopment are eliminated.

The progress made at global level, five years after the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is very insufficient and unequal. The gap between North and South and the polarization of wealth are increasing. Unsustainable production and consumption patterns proliferate, as well as the waste of large sums of financial resources for arms and speculation purposes.

The current COVID-19 pandemic has worsened the existing vulnerabilities of many countries, aggravated by the persistence of an unjust and unsustainable international economic order. The proliferation of unilateralism; protectionism; the increasing use of unilateral coercive economic measures, the growing inequalities at global level and the weakening of multilateral agreements and the undermining of multilateralism, together create a global environment that hinders the ability of developing countries to eliminate the causes of underdevelopment at the national level and achieve the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the achievement of its goals.

In 2000, Cuba committed itself to the fulfillment of the Millennium Development Goals, which it complied in full, many of them even before 2000. In 2015, we renew that commitment by undertaking the full achievement of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

The implementation of the 2030 Agenda in Cuba is coordinated with the updating process of the economic and social model we are carrying out. This is evident by its consistency with our National Plan of Economic and Social Development until 2030. In 2019, we proclaimed our new Constitution, in which we also stated the elements that provide a legal support to the achievement of the SDGs.

Without doubt, the greatest challenge Cuba is facing on the implementation of 2030 Agenda and the achievement of its 17 Sustainable Development Goals is the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the government of the United States for more than 60 years. The blockade is in violation of the United Nations

Charter and international law and is an impediment for the international cooperation of Cuba and the rest of the world. This illegal and unilateral policy steadily causes serious damage to the Cuban people and is the main obstacle for the development of my country. Despite the rejection by the majority of the international community and broad sections of the US society, the blockade not only remains, but has also been tightened, as evidenced by the increase of financial persecution, the recent activation of Title III of the Helms-Burton Act and the growing number of sanctions imposed against Cuban entities. In the current context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has implied great hardship for the Cuban society and economy, the continuation of the US blockade, tightened by new sanctions during the last months, has hampered in an extreme way the efforts and actions of our government to guarantee an effective response in the fight against the pandemic and move forward to the full recovery of the country, all of which has been overcome thanks to the unwavering will of our people and government and the support of international cooperation and the United Nations.

In spite of the blockade, Cuba resolutely advances in the implementation of the 17 SDGs of the 2030 Agenda and its 169 targets, which has allowed us to be the second country in the world with the lowest value in the Multidimensional Poverty Index; that we have a State Plan for Tackling Climate Change, entitled “Tarea Vida” (Task Life); and that we are closer to the fulfillment of the targets related to SDG 2; being the only country of Latin America and the Caribbean that has eliminated severe child malnutrition according to the 2018 UNICEF Report and the fifth country among the first 14 that have managed to steadily reduce the index of hunger and malnutrition for several years, according to the 2018 Global Food Policy Report.

Our country considers its commitment to the 2030 Agenda as a commitment towards sustainable development in all nations. For this reason we actively cooperate with other States, with the vision of offering our solidarity aid to the most vulnerable. Cuba has always been willing to share its scarce resources with those who need it and request it. In this sense, through the South-South and triangular cooperation, we have developed several cooperation projects in all continents, in numerous fields and modalities. In the current context of the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, we have sent to

date 38 medical brigades to 31 countries, composed of over 2500 medical-healthcare personnel. We understand that only through multilateralism, international cooperation, solidarity and the search for coordinated solutions to the challenges facing us, we will be able to make progress in the global agenda for sustainable development and meet the sustainable development goals proposed.

We regret that, however, at the current pace and level of implementation of the 2030 Agenda at global level, we will not be able to achieve its implementation by 2030, including the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions and extreme poverty, which are the greatest challenges facing humankind, being their elimination a prerequisite to achieve sustainable development. Therefore, it is necessary to fulfill all the commitments made, including those related to financing for development and against climate change. The developed countries must fulfill their commitments regarding ODA and adapt them to the specific national priorities and strategies of developing countries, in order to better meet their development needs. On the other hand, it is necessary to accelerate the transfer of technologies to developing countries, even in favorable and preferential conditions. Without additional and predictable financial resources, without a true political will of all actors in which the spirit of cooperation prevails, it will not be possible to achieve the goals we have proposed, nor to leave a healthy and prosperous planet to future generations.

To conclude, I ratify Cuba's commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs, and the determination to continue to share our experiences and achievements for the benefit of other peoples of the world, on the basis of solidarity and cooperation, in order to ensure the wellbeing and sustainable development in its three dimensions for the present and future generations, as well as the promotion of a more just, equitable and inclusive world.

Thank you.