

**STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. ILHAM ALIYEV,  
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

**MEETING OF HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT**

**“FINANCING THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT  
IN THE ERA OF COVID-19 AND BEYOND”**

**29 September 2020**

**Mr. Secretary-General,**

**Distinguished Heads of State and Government,**

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Our success was reflected in the “Sustainable Development Report 2020”, where Azerbaijan ranks 54<sup>th</sup> among 166 countries in the Sustainable Development Goals Index.

Azerbaijan’s GDP tripled in the last 17 years.

The external public debt of Azerbaijan is one of the lowest in the world. Azerbaijan has the lowest external debt among the oil exporting countries.

Foreign Exchange Reserves of Azerbaijan exceed the external public debt by 6 times.

Azerbaijan places a special emphasis on the equal distribution of energy revenues between current and the future generations. To this end, the

State Oil Fund was established. The assets of the Fund currently exceed the GDP of the country. Azerbaijan has achieved one of the highest income equality levels.

As a result of the Armenian occupation more than 1 million Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced persons. About 8 billion Azerbaijani manats amounting to nearly 5 billion USD has been allocated for addressing needs of this vulnerable group.

Azerbaijan itself became a donor country. Overall, Azerbaijan provided financial and humanitarian assistance to nearly 120 countries during the last 15 years.

Despite the decrease in the state revenues during the pandemic period the government has allocated fund around 3% of GDP to the protection of jobs, economic growth and the public health.

Funding for the fight against the pandemic was provided only from domestic sources, without any external financial support.

In the post-pandemic period, our main priorities are to ensure the economic growth, to maintain economic and financial stability, to further develop healthy and competitive human capital, to create sustainable jobs and to develop new areas of economic activity.

As the chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Azerbaijan requested to convene the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in response to coronavirus. More than 130 UN Member States supported this initiative. I believe the Special Session will serve as a framework for addressing the pandemic's impact on all spheres and contribute to the global efforts of eliminating its consequences.

Thank you.