

WGM Remarks: Ministerial Meeting of Least Developed Countries September 17, 9:00am

- Excellencies, Friends, and Colleagues,
- Thank you for the opportunity to participate in this meeting.
- We are virtually gathered here today at an extraordinary time.
- Since January, the pandemic has turned our lives and our vision for the future upside down.
- It is now abundantly clear that COVID-19 poses an unprecedented threat to our collective achievement of the 2030 Agenda and undermines decades of hard-won development gains.
- Canada recognizes the complexity and added vulnerabilities facing Least Developed Countries as you respond to the crisis, but also acknowledges that the pandemic has in many instances exacerbated long-standing challenges around poverty, inequality, instability and climate resilience.
- I am looking forward to this forum, to hear more about your perspectives on the immediate impact of the crisis, the longer term recovery, and about how you have been coping with challenges of the past year.
- I would be particularly interested in understanding how the crisis has affected vulnerable populations and gender equality.
- This input will be critical to informing the development of a new Programme of Action for LDCs, and the next steps to take towards the Sustainable Development Goals and the objectives of the Paris Climate Agreement.
- Canada is proud to be a member of the bureau in preparation for LDC-5 in Doha. We look forward to working with you closely over the next year to forge a new, innovative path that reflects our new reality, and supports a more inclusive and sustainable future.
- Canada is also pleased to partner with you at the UN's Group of Friends of LDCs, and as part of the Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond initiative, which have been co-convened by Canada's Prime Minister Trudeau, Jamaica's Prime Minister Holness and the UN Secretary General.
- In this ongoing process, we are grateful for your engagement as co-leads of working groups, for your creativity and efforts as participants, and for your leadership when Heads of State and Government come together later this month to move our proposals from ideas to action.
- We are at a pivotal moment requiring us to align our efforts and collaborate to implement the best solutions for the threats we face today, and to build resilience to face the future. We have an opportunity to reimagine the path forward, and to do things differently in ways that are more inclusive and sustainable.
- You can count on Canada to be an engaged partner as we navigate this new reality.

Words: 367 @120/minute= 3 minutes