

**Excellency Prime Minister Justin Trudeau,
Excellency Prime Minister Andrew Holness,
Excellency, Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It has been more than a year since the COVID19 pandemic struck the world.

The past one year has been marked by a tragic loss of millions of lives and extraordinary social and economic hardships for many throughout the world. These unfortunate human sorrows are still ongoing as the global community is confronted with new strains of the virus.

Developing countries such as mine are, in particular, affected disproportionately by the impacts of the pandemic.

Our economies are vulnerable to shocks. And our fiscal spaces are too limited to respond to such long drawn out crisis.

The pandemic is unfortunately reversing the hard-earned gains made in poverty reduction over the past two decades.

Hence, without stepping up global cooperation to support developing countries, millions are at risk of falling back to extreme poverty and making the SDG targets unattainable.

History has taught us that humanity prevails in the face of adversity when we stand together united. It is for this reason that we have been calling for wealthier countries to stand in solidarity with developing countries in addressing the health and socio-economic consequences of the pandemic.

In this regard, I would like to acknowledge and appreciate the support of the IMF through its emergency financing facility and the G-20 debt service suspension initiative. Both have provided the highly needed breathing space for many developing countries.

However, this alone is not enough, given the extraordinary challenges we are facing.

We now know that the pandemic will have a long-lasting impact on our societies. Therefore, the support provided to developing countries needs to match the magnitude and duration of the impact of the pandemic. **The recently announced G-20 common framework initiative which aims to provide a long-term debt relief is a step in the right direction and commendable.**

In 2019, my administration launched a transformative homegrown economic reform program with the objective of correcting macroeconomic imbalances and addressing structural bottlenecks. This reform program has been supported by the IMF under its Extended Credit and Extended Fund Facilities. It is in the middle of such a reform program that Ethiopia faced the COVID19 shock. And especially at a critical juncture of political and economic transition.

Despite being confronted with many challenges, Ethiopia is forging ahead with implementation of the reforms. The support of the international development community has been important in not only helping us to deal with the impact of the pandemic, but also to stay on course with implementation of our reforms.

Such support will ultimately help build the resilience of our economy against future shocks. It is with this spirit that we are proactively participating in the G20 Common Framework.

In addition to debt relief initiatives, developing countries need support to sufficiently and equitably access COVID19 vaccines. Beyond a moral obligation, making COVID19 vaccines accessible to developing countries is in the interest of wealthier countries. Vaccinating only their own populations will not guarantee safety as the global community deals with a virus that is capable of mutating and has no respect for national borders.

In closing, I appeal to international partners to support and facilitate vaccine access to developing countries like Ethiopia with large populations. It is with such solidarity across borders that we can stabilize the global economy.

Thank you for your attention!