



Government of
BELIZE

National Statement

**Delivered by H.E. Orlando Habet
Minister of Sustainable Development and
Climate Change of Belize,
at the
General Debate of the Ministerial Segment of the
ECOSOC
High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable
Development (HLPF)**

15 - 17 July 2024

Madam President, Excellencies and Distinguished Delegates,

Belize aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the G77 and China, AOSIS, and CARICOM.

We gather at a pivotal point in time where the world has become more interconnected than ever, demanding reinvigorated and innovative ways of addressing our global challenges. This year's HLPF has particularly focused on progress made on critical goals 1, 2, 13, 16, and 17, stressing the need for urgent attention, if we are to achieve the SDGs in the remaining six years.

Belize is therefore particularly proud to have conducted its second VNR this year, reflecting comprehensively on our national progress, challenges and opportunities in implementing the SDGs. The VNR highlights significant successes in areas such as poverty alleviation, unemployment reduction, increased climate resiliency and environmental conservation efforts, and improved access to quality health and education services. I encourage everyone to review our report.

Further guided by its Medium-Term Development Strategy 2022- 2026 (MTDS), #PlanBelize, the Government continues to make strategic investments in key areas including social protection benefits, improving energy and food security, and enhancing access to essential services and facilities. It has also prioritized enhancing gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and ensuring youth remain engaged and adequately equipped as the future leaders and doers.

However, this process has also brought to light several challenges that require coordinated action and support at all levels to sustain our progress.

1. Enhancing economic resilience is paramount to ensure we remain on the right course to development. Diversifying our economy, promoting investments in sustainable industries, and enhancing workforce skills to adapt to digital and technological transitions are crucial steps forward.
2. Enhancing climate resilience and environmental sustainability is imperative, given the impacts of climate change and unsustainable production methods on

the environment, health and economy. Hurricane Beryl is an unfortunate example of how one extreme weather event can set us back years in development. Substantial technical and financial support is required to support investments in enhancing our climate resilience, adaptation, and disaster response and management capacities.

3. Finally, lack of adequate data and capacity to accurately track and report on the SDGs also reinforces the need for increased cooperation and technical assistance to build robust data collection, sharing, and management systems. This is key to inform the development of targeted policies and programmes and to increase awareness and ownership of the SDGs.

Excellencies,

Presenting our second VNR is not just a report of our progress but a reaffirmation of Belize's dedication to building a sustainable and prosperous future for all Belizeans. As we look ahead, Belize remains committed to implementing the SDGs through integrated and inclusive policies that "leave no one behind."

I thank you.