

Statement

by

The Honourable Joachim Henry,

Minister for Equity, Social Justice and Empowerment of Saint Lucia

at

the Second World Summit for Social Development

November 5, 2025

Excellencies,

At the outset, my delegation congratulates and thanks the Government and People of the State of Qatar for the excellent arrangements to host this historic Summit.

Today's gathering seeks to recommit and intensify our efforts to ensure that no one is left behind. My delegation therefore underscores that the Commitments which were made 30 years ago are still very relevant today, and we welcome the momentum that the adoption of the Doha Declaration will bring as we seek to improve the lives of our people, to accelerate social progress, eradicate poverty, and build more inclusive, just, and sustainable societies.

The Doha Declaration serves as a framework for national governments, UN agencies, and stakeholders to align their policies and programs with its commitments. It aims to:

- Accelerate progress on the SDGs
- Strengthen implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action
- Foster inclusive and sustainable development

Against this backdrop, Saint Lucia, a Small Island Developing State, continues its effort to build a resilient and inclusive society where all our people can thrive and have access to opportunities. While we are committed to a people-centered approach to development, we acknowledge that our trajectory is confronted by the compounding effects of climate change, among other challenges.

It is essential to strengthen our efforts in the three pillars of sustainable development. This can be achieved through an integrated policy-driven and active participatory approach that also aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals.

To strengthen social development, Saint Lucia aims to build a more resilient and inclusive society where all individuals have access to opportunities for participation, productivity, and dignity by maintaining the three pillars of sustainable development: economic diversification, community empowerment, and effective social policies.

The Government of Saint Lucia believes in a people-centered approach and has espoused the mantra of putting people first. Some initiatives which we have embarked on include:

- The promotion of decent work, where thousands of temporary workers (95% women) were made permanent employees of the statutory organizations and the public service.
- The establishment of a minimum wage.
- The establishment of a Ministry for Persons with Disabilities
- The Establishment of a Youth Economy Agency
- Free access to maternal and child health care
- Senior persons 80 years old and over receive free health care
- Provision of social housing assistance
- Passed legislation for the inheritance of properties at a targeted value, which does not include legal fees.
- The enactment of the Child Justice and Child Care, Protection and Adoption Act of 2018.
- Increased monthly remuneration for pensioners alongside the increase of cash transfer grants for persons with disabilities and other persons below the poverty line. Access to these services ensures compliance and the ability to meet basic needs.
- One university graduate per household
- The current sponsorship of Private Early Childhood centres. Early Childhood Education will soon be free of charge.

Addressing inequality is essential to eradicating poverty, advancing social progress, and achieving sustainable development for all. It is an ongoing battle that we, as Small Island Developing States, continue to confront.

Saint Lucia understands the needs of its people. We recognize that the solutions to reduce inequality cannot be undertaken in isolation. As such, we value the support of agencies and partners that assist in undertaking and advancing social protective initiatives.

We reaffirm our commitment to working with the rest of the international community to leave no one behind.

Thank you.