



OFFICIAL STATEMENT
2ND WORLD SUMMIT ON SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
DOHA, QATAR
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Presented by:

HON. DR. GEOFFREY HANLEY
DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Minister with responsibility for Education, Social Development
and Gender Affairs, Youth Empowerment, Ageing and Disability,
Housing and Human Settlement and Ecclesiastic and Faith Based
Affairs

SAINT CHRISTOPHER (ST. KITTS) AND NEVIS

Madam President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of the Prime Minister, the Hon Dr. Terrance Drew and people of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis and on my own behalf and that of the delegation, I wish to extend gratitude to the Government and people of Qatar for the exceptional hospitality and care provided to us during the hosting of the 2nd World Summit on Social Development.

The Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis welcomes the adoption of the political declaration which calls for us to join in deliberate action to build a more just, inclusive, equitable, and sustainable world. We are reminded that the three core themes of social development – namely poverty eradication; the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all and social integration cannot be

attained in the absence of peace and security and respect for all human and fundamental rights.

We are committed to this vision and have already taken steps to build for our population such a world. As the eighth smallest country in the world and the smallest in the western hemisphere that has enjoyed independence for the past forty – two (42) years, our record of people centred leadership is worthy of note and sharing as we review the progress since the hosting of the first Summit 30 years ago.

Our people have enjoyed Universal Access to primary and secondary education since the 1970's. Further expansions occurred in September 2022, when tuition cost was removed on local tertiary education. These actions ensure an educated populace to support the vision of the Sustainable Island State Agenda.

In the area of employment and decent work, the Federation has the distinction of having the highest minimum wage amongst Eastern Caribbean States. The new minimum wage ensures equitable distribution of income and exemplifies the people centred ethos of the Government by supporting families, women, men, youth and the disabled to earn, to grow and to prosper.

In the area of social protection, the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis maintains a robust social protection system that is expansive across sectors such as education, health, and social services. Through technical support from UNICEF, these systems are being made shock responsive to the ever-present threats of natural disasters.

Recently, the government of St. Kitts and Nevis introduced our flagship Program – ASPIRE where each child age 5- 18 years received \$1,000 - \$500 goes towards saving and \$500 invested in local companies as shares and teaching 5,000 youth financial literacy.

I pause here to place on record our prayers for the people of Haiti, Cuba, the Dominican Republic, The Bahamas, and Jamaica who suffered catastrophic damages following the passage of Hurricane Melissa. Climate change is no longer a threat, it is instead a lived reality for Small Island Developing states. We stand in solidarity with all of you at this time.

As the world moves towards 2030 and the attainment of the Sustainable Development goals, the Federation has positioned its Sustainable Island State Agenda (SISA) to be the engine that will drive

transformational change towards sustainability and climate resilience for St. Kitts and Nevis by 2040. What does sustainability look like for St. Kitts and Nevis in the context of social development?

- A nation where health care is universal, hospitals are climate smart and where we are the medical hub for our region.
- A nation where Communities are safe, inclusive, and diverse and the protection of the most vulnerable is priority.
- A nation where Economic growth is based on zero waste and circularity.
- A nation where Homes are smart and designed to withstand climate change; and where
- A nation where We grow a significant portion of the food we consume.

Our vision is bold and necessary for we have no more time for talk, only action. I thank all international and

regional partners who have assisted us thus far and invite many more to join us on this transformational journey.

I close by reaffirming the commitment of the Federation of St. Kitts and Nevis to the United Nations, especially as you celebrate 80 years of peacekeeping, humanitarian aid, global health, and sustainable development. Your work is to be applauded and protected to serve the future generations.

I thank you.