

**XXII FORUM OF MINISTERS OF ENVIRONMENT OF LATIN
AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Barbados (virtual), 01/02/2021

Dear Prime Minister of Barbados, H. E. Mia Mottley;

Executive Director of UNEP, Inger Andersen;

Commissioner for Environment, Oceans and Fisheries of European
Commission, Virginijus Sinkevičius;

Executive Secretary of Economic Commission for Latin America and the
Caribbean, Alicia Bárcena;

Regional Director for Sustainable Development for Latin America and the
Caribbean of World Bank, Anna Wellenstein.

Distinguished ministers and authorities;

Ladies and gentlemen;

On behalf of the Brazilian Minister of the Environment, Ricardo Salles, I
will deliver our speech today and I would like to start by conveying our
special gratitude to the Government of Barbados for hosting the XXII Forum
of Ministers of Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean.

First, I would like to extend my condolences for the loss of so many lives.
Considering the intensity of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has severely
impacted Latin America and the Caribbean, claiming many lives in the

region and affecting negatively our economies and environment, the governments gathered here today have the opportunity to define the means to make the region's recovery sustainable and resilient.

We must take into account that innovative policies are needed to support a sustainable recovery in our region as well as strengthening international cooperation, a fundamental tool for exchanging best practices, promoting training, building capacity, and finding sources to finance our region's development needs.

From this perspective, the decisions that we have approved in areas such as Gender; Integrated Data Systems; Environmental Dimension of Emergencies and Crises; Sustainable Consumption and Production; Pollution; Climate Change; Biodiversity; and Ecosystems together with the political Declaration and the Covid Communiqué will serve as a beacon for our region lighting the path to a sustainable recovery in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

In order to complement these initiatives, the Brazilian government has already enacted policies to promote our sustainable development and I would like to present a few of them today.

In the environmental urban agenda, for instance, we have launched the "Lixão Zero", or Zero Landfill Program, which aims to eliminate existing open dump sites in the country. As a result, the number of cities that use open dump sites in Brazil has decreased by 17% in 2020. Additionally, the

National Plan to Combat Marine Litter was also adopted and will contribute to the world's effort in tackling this critical problem that impacts not only our quality of life but also biodiversity.

I would like to draw your attention right now to the Amazon region. Although it is one of the richest regions in natural resources in the world, it is also home to more than 20 million Brazilians, who live with the lowest Human Development Index in the country.

Brazil is strategically building public policies that place people front and center in our priorities, considering they are the most important factor in conserving forests. In order to cope with the challenges of nature conservation and wealth creation, the need of those citizens and their jobs is paramount and must be respected.

In this regard, I take this opportunity to present two initiatives. First, the “Floresta Mais” (or Forest Plus Program), whereby landowners are paid to conserve forests, is the largest ecosystems services payment program for native vegetation conservation in the world.

The second Program is the “Adote um Parque” (Adopt a Park), in which companies and individuals, national or foreign, can adopt one of the 134 federal parks in the Amazon region, with impacting areas exceeding that of France and Spain.

Regarding our international commitments, we are also engaged in the debates to conclude a Post-2020 Global Framework for Biodiversity that is both ambitious and balanced in order to generate benefits, specifically to developing countries. Moreover, Brazil updated its NDC in 2020, reaffirming its commitment to reduce total net emissions of greenhouse gases by 37% by 2025, and officially undertakes the commitment to reduce emissions by 43% by 2030. Brazil's NDC also sets out the indicative objective of achieving climate neutrality – which means zero net emissions - by 2060. This long-term objective may be anticipated in the future, as it depends on the effectiveness of the market mechanisms of the Paris Agreement and taking into consideration the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capacities. We do not rule out the possibility of adopting even more ambitious long-term strategies, provided that developed countries meet their financial obligations as well.

I conclude now by calling upon the region to strengthen our cooperation in order to implement recovery plans that take into consideration sustainability in all its aspects - economic, social and environmental.

Thank you.