



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

4 November 2022

Excellency,

Time is running out. As the United Nations Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance (GCRG) has warned, a cost-of-living crisis, fuelled by the war in Ukraine, risks pushing many millions more into poverty and hunger. Global temperatures are on track to rise by 2.8°C by the end of the century. Unsustainable debt burdens, soaring inflation and shrinking fiscal space are suppressing investments in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) when they are needed most. The Sustainable Development and 1.5°C goals are in extreme peril.

We have a duty to act. The alternative is teetering economies, the destruction of livelihoods and destabilized societies. I urge you to double down on individual and collective commitments at the G20 Bali Summit before it is too late.

**First, safeguard food security and protect the most vulnerable**

Global hunger has been on the rise since 2017. Up to 828 million people were affected by chronic hunger in 2021. This year, the threat of starvation is a daily reality for the almost one million people facing catastrophic levels of hunger.

This cannot continue. There is enough food for everyone in our world in 2022 but we face a problem of accessibility, affordability, and distribution. We must reverse these trends by acting together. The GCRG and the two Istanbul Agreements, including the Black Sea Grain Initiative and the agreement to facilitate unimpeded access to Russian food and fertilizer exports, are evidence that we can find the space for collaboration, even in the midst of war.

His/Her Excellency  
Mr./Ms. [Full Name]  
[Title]  
[City]

The extension and full implementation of the Istanbul Agreements will enable grains and fertilizers from Ukraine and the Russian Federation to reach global markets at the speed needed to avert a global food crisis and ensure food security. But the current crisis of food affordability will turn into a crisis of availability if fertilizers do not reach farmers right now during the current planting season, endangering critical staple crops, including rice, in 2023 and 2024, with dramatic effect on food production and food prices worldwide. Removing the remaining obstacles to the exports of Russian fertilizers, including ammonia, and countries refraining from imposing export prohibitions or restrictions on foodstuffs and fertilizers, will significantly contribute to the lowering of prices.

But developing and least developed countries need to be able to buy the food. Recent efforts by International Financial Institutions (IFIs), including the Food Shock Window of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), are steps in the right direction, but there's still a long way to go. I encourage the G20 to extend support to food-importing countries that do not qualify for this financing instrument, including by enabling countries to deploy shock-responsive social protection systems and long-term investments in sustainable agrifood systems.

### **Second, inject liquidity and tackle debt overhang to prevent a systemic crisis**

Developing economies are facing a liquidity crisis. Fifty-four economies are going through debt distress and are increasingly being shut out of capital markets. Central Banks of the G20 can open currency swap lines. The IMF can expand its emergency credit lines, accelerate the re-channelling of Special Drawing Rights (SDRs), consider a new issuance of SDRs, and swiftly capitalize and expand the Resilience and Sustainability Trust (RST) and the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT).

We are at a point where debt reprogramming needs to move to debt restructuring. The Common Framework for Debt Treatment is not working. I urge the G20 to consider pragmatic and swift solutions, including by reinstating and enhancing the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) to cover all vulnerable and highly indebted middle-income countries, as well as debt-for-climate and debt-for-Sustainable Development Goals investment swaps. Private creditors also need greater incentives to participate in official debt restructurings.

### **Third, reverse the self-destructive course towards climate calamities**

The world is heading off a climate cliff. Climate impacts are upending the lives of the most vulnerable among us. Half of humanity is now in the danger zone – 15 times more likely to die from climate impacts. I saw it with my own eyes in Pakistan. A country that is responsible for less than one per cent of global greenhouse gas emissions is enduring a level of climate emergency beyond imagination.

The current commitments of G20 Governments are not enough. Emissions must fall by 45 per cent in the next eight years to keep the 1.5°C goal within reach, yet emissions are set to increase by 10 per cent on average through 2030, based on current commitments. It is time for an historic pact between developed and emerging economies, where developed countries deliver on the commitment made in Paris and make an additional effort to reduce emissions in line with the 1.5-degree goal. And where wealthier countries provide financial and technical assistance, along with support from MDBs and technology companies, to help emerging economies speed their renewable energy transition. We will only be able to have a successful reduction in emissions if G20 countries are able to put together all their capacities and resources.

In full recognition of the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, I call on the G20 not only to establish themselves as net-zero and renewable energy-based societies, but also to support such transformations in developing countries. It also requires developed countries to fully deliver the \$100 billion-per-year pledge to support climate action in other developing countries; at the bare minimum, provide a clear road map on how they plan to deliver on the doubling of adaptation finance to \$40 billion, as agreed in Glasgow; and overhaul their business models to achieve a just energy transition. I call on developed economies to tax the record fossil fuel profits and redirect part of them to countries that have suffered irreversible loss and damage from the climate crisis.

The Just Energy Transition Partnerships (JET-P) have the potential to support an accelerated shift to renewables in heavily coal-dependent emerging and developing economies. But we need more countries to join this movement, to drive and to support a renewable energy transformation. Urgent focus is needed on reducing the cost of capital in developing countries, to dramatically scale up investments by public and private actors in renewable energy, while supporting a just energy transition.

In order for the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) to succeed, it is necessary to raise the ambition of the Nationally Determined Contributions of your country, phase out fossil fuels and establish targets for 100 per cent renewable-based power generation.

#### **Fourth, rescue the SDGs and implement an SDG Stimulus**

The SDGs are issuing an SOS. The cascading crises have wiped out years of poverty eradication progress and could push an additional 95 million people into extreme poverty in 2022. The Human Development Index has fallen globally for two years in a row, for the first time in over three decades.

An SDG financing boost is sorely needed. I urge the G20 to support the SDG Stimulus that I called for at the seventy-seventh session of the United Nations General Assembly, which requires less than two per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP), includes debt relief measures, increased multilateral and Public

Development Bank concessional financing for developing countries consistent with their vulnerability, an expansion of liquidity, and the alignment of financial flows with the SDGs and the 1.5°C goal of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Looking ahead, I count on your personal engagement and support, and your participation at the Biennial Summit involving the members of the G20, the members of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, and the heads of international financial institutions, proposed in my report on “Our Common Agenda”, as well as at the 2023 SDGs Summit, and the action-oriented High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development set to take place during the high-level week of the seventy-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly next year. I propose to convene the first Biennial Summit in September, before the 2023 SDG Summit, to discuss these issues.

### **Fifth, reform the international financial architecture**

Lastly, we need to work together to systemically reform our current deficient global financial system to provide relief to countries suffering under the weight of today’s multiple crises, while bolstering their resilience to future shocks.

I call on you to advance policies for a new global debt architecture, a stronger global financial safety net, updated international tax norms, and global economic governance reforms. This should include integrating state-contingent clauses into all debt instruments and the creation of a fully operational and effective debt restructuring mechanism. I also call on the G20 to develop a strategy to strengthen the multilateral development bank system, to go beyond GDP as a metric for determining eligibility, and to prioritize investments in the SDGs above short-term profit, the latter of which is financially costly in the long term. This calls for increased investments in resilience, in universal social protection, decent job creation, robust health-care services, and quality education to provide immediate relief when the next crisis strikes.

Excellency,

It is incumbent on us all to overcome our differences and deliver effective multilateral responses. I am fully committed to working with the G20 membership to achieve this goal and wish the G20 Bali Summit great success.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'António Guterres', written over a long, thin horizontal line that tapers to a point on the right side.

António Guterres