

39th Session of ECLAC
Dialogue of Foreign Ministers and High-Level Authorities
(26 October 2022, Buenos Aires)

Mr. President,

Esteemed Foreign Ministers,

Mr. Executive Secretary,

Dear Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

- On behalf of the Government of Türkiye, I would like to start by thanking Argentina and **H.E. Minister Santiago Cafiero** for hosting the 39th Session of ECLAC and the Dialogue of Foreign Ministers and High-Level Authorities.

- Allow me to congratulate **Mr. Jose Manuel Salazar** and wish him success as our new Executive Secretary.

- We have left behind two turbulent years under the effect of the pandemic, which added more challenges to the existing ones shaking our economies and costing millions of lives.

- In the post-pandemic era, the international geopolitical system is still undergoing an unprecedented set of challenges unleashing the necessity of multilateralism and international cooperation even more.

-Today, unfortunately we face:

- higher poverty levels,
- rising inflation,
- food and energy insecurity,
- refugee flows,
- health crises,
- increased violence and wars
- and extreme weather events starting from the climate change,

- However, there is not a joint response to overcome these challenges. Unfortunately,

- **Multilateralism** is under serious stress.
- **Protectionism** is back.
- Respect for **international law** is eroding.
- **Global governance** is not as effective as it should be

- ECLAC constitutes a well-preserved and sustained mechanism to come up with solutions to these pressing challenges at the regional level.
- Yet, before we even **begin to solve these problems**, we need to diagnose their **root causes**.
- At the international stage, we see a recently emerged discourse that blames globalization for all these problems.
- It is true that globalization has taken resources from poorer states to richer states at the expense of the former.
- It has produced as many losers as winners.
- So, we need to see how we can reform the remains of an outdated system benefiting a few, rather than all.
- Our first step must be to ensure genuine international cooperation and effective multilateralism.
- For this, we first need to re-organize ourselves both institutionally and intellectually.
- As **the co-chair of Friends of Mediation group** at both the UN, OSCE and OIC, Türkiye is working hard towards this.
- Secondly, in this greater interdependence, maintaining free and fair international trade is key.
- Unilateral sanctions and protectionist tendencies are not helpful.
- Lastly, geography is no longer a shield. What happens in one part of the world affects everyone, everywhere.
- The war in Ukraine is a case in point.
- From **Africa to Latin America**, there is a growing **concern about rising food prices**.
- The İstanbul Grain Deal** that we facilitated with the UN was a significant step towards ensuring global food security.
- With the signing of the agreement, there was **global relief**.
- According to the **FAO (Ef-Ey-O)**, **the Food Price Index fell by 9 percent**. (Its biggest decline since 2008.)
- So far more than 8 million tons of Ukrainian grain were exported through Turkish Straits.
- Now our efforts focus on extending this deal **beyond its initial 3-month period**.
- We are also working to put in place a similar plan to **export Russian fertilizer**, which is especially important for Latin America and the Caribbean.
- At the same time, we are trying to bring the parties to the negotiating table.
- These principles of **free trade, effective multilateralism** and **awareness of our interdependence** define our approach to the Latin American and the Caribbean region.
- Türkiye has developed a strategic “outreach” policy towards the region since the beginning of 2000s.

- In this context, our diplomatic network in the region has reached up to 18 missions.

-Such policy had a direct impact on our commercial relations.

-Through our newly announced “**Far Countries Strategy**” we will expand our trade even further.

-We have **FTAs with Chile and Venezuela** and working on negotiations with **Mexico, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and MERCOSUR**.

-Our development agency TİKA has undertaken **more than 500 projects** in Latin America and the Caribbean region in the fields of development assistance, education, health, technology and so on.

Distinguished Participants,

-**Thousands of kilometers** separate **Türkiye from the Latin America and the Caribbean region**.

-But thanks to our deepening cooperation, we feel **closer than ever** to our Latin American and Caribbean partners.

-The current global system is far from ideal in responding to the challenges we are up against.

-Transforming our approach to global development and governance is no longer a choice, but a necessity.

Thank you.