

At UN, Central American leaders urge 'rethink' of system used to classify development status

19 September 2017 – In his address to the United Nations General Assembly, Costa Rican President Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera called for the UN to rethink the concept of per capita income as a reference for determining a country's development, stressing that only a multidimensional vision of development and poverty will allow an understanding of the needs of populations and families.

This would include issues such as access to healthcare, social equality, gender equality, and address social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities and is especially relevant to the needs of middle-income countries.

He also highlighted the crucial importance of gender equality. "Every day, women strive for a world where the full recognition and exercise of their rights is more tangible," he said. "Their fights are inherent to the building of truly democratic societies and the inclusive coexistence in all our countries."

Turning to climate change he said there is enough evidence to support the idea that a transformative solution to climate change is within human capabilities.



President Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado of Honduras addresses the General Assembly's annual general debate. UN Photo/Cia Pak

In his remarks, Juan Orlando Hernandez Alvarado, President of Honduras, said his administration is building a "new Honduras" by tackling violent crime and restoring its economy. Together with Guatemala, Honduras is creating a zone dedicated to the free circulation of goods, services and people. He said negotiations are under way with El Salvador and Nicaragua to join the agreement.

Honduras, along with El Salvador and Nicaragua, and with the support of the Central American Bank for Economic Integration, set up the Gulf of Fonseca Development Plan, which will create a pole of economic development. In addition, the implementation of the economic development program "Honduras 2020" provides for the creation of 600,000 jobs over the next five years.

The President also welcomed the progress made by his country in terms of transparency and the fight against corruption. "We have purged the national police, created anti-corruption tribunals and strengthened the Ministry of Public Security," he said, in addition to signing an agreement with the

Organization of American States (OAS) corruption and impunity.

However, he continued, the fight against poverty is the “priority” in the programme of governments of developing countries. “We must overcome the structural conditions that exclude entire sections of our societies,” he said, adding that poverty is the cause of migration, insecurity and violence. He also denounced the classification system used by developed countries to measure the level of development aid, explaining that Honduras, considered as a middle-tier country, is penalized.

Concluding his speech, the President said that migrants are the “new martyrs and new heroes” of our time who have to face all the challenges before they can bring their talents and dedication to their host countries. Honduras, he said, was “making every effort” to improve the living conditions of its citizens so that they did not have to leave their country in search of opportunities.