## IMF chief warns global economy 'not out of the woods' yet

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内容：Despite signs of recovery, the global economy faces continued challenges, including the possibility of a second wave of COVID19, and governments should maintain support Despite some signs of recovery, the global economy faces continued challenges, including the possibility of a second wave of COVID19, and governments should keep their support programmes in place, IMF chief Kristalina Georgieva said yesterday. Activity "has started to gradually strengthen... But we are not out of the woods yet", Georgieva said in a message to G20 finance ministers ahead of their weekend meeting in Saudi Arabia. The Washingtonbased crisis lender late last month downgraded its growth forecasts, and now expects global GDP to fall by 4.9 per cent this year due to the deeper contraction during lockdowns than previously anticipated, and only a "tepid recovery is expected for next year". The US$11 trillion in stimulus provided by the G20 nations helped to prevent a worse outcome, but "these safety nets must be maintained as needed and, in some cases, expanded", Georgieva urged in a blog post. She highlighted measures including paid sick leave for lowincome families and access to health care and unemployment insurance. But the recovery faces risks, she said, including the possibility of "a second major global wave of the disease could lead to further disruptions". While she acknowledged that the "substantial and rising debt levels are a serious concern", Georgieva said, "At this stage in the crisis, however, the costs of premature withdrawal are greater than continued support where it is needed." Many countries have moved to reopen, so, "Clearly, we have entered a new phase of the crisis," she said in a blog post, adding it will require "further policy agility and action to secure a durable and shared recovery". Many jobs that have been lost amid the pandemic may never come back, so workers will need support and training to move into new sectors. "The bottom line is that the pandemic is likely to increase poverty and inequality," she said but noted that policymakers have "a onceinacentury shot" at building a better, greener and more equitable world. Coronavirus infections were surging across the globe on Wednesday, forcing several countries to put the brakes on reopening or impose new restrictions on their weary populations. The number of COVID19 cases worldwide topped 13.4 million and more than 581,000 deaths have been reported since the virus emerged late last year in China. With the situation predicted to worsen in the United States, Walmart, the world's largest retailer, said it would require customers to wear masks at all its stores to help stop the virus spreading. Venezuela, four days after announcing a loosening of restrictions, became the latest country to reimpose localised lockdown measures, including a "radical quarantine" in the capital Caracas; while Bolivia's La Paz department said it would undergo a fourday total quarantine. Latin America topped 150,000 deaths on Wednesday, becoming the world's second hardesthit region after Europe, where a total of 203,793 people have died. Brazil accounted for roughly half of Latin America's deaths, with more than 1,200 new fatalities recorded on Wednesday bringing the total toll since the outbreak began there to 75,366. In Ireland, Prime Minister Micheal Martin delayed the end of the lockdown because of a surge in new cases, with restrictions to remain in place until August 10 and the government also mandating the wearing of masks in shops. The United States meanwhile set a new record on Wednesday with more than 67,000 cases registered in the previous 24 hours.