



General Assembly

Seventieth session

24th plenary meeting
Thursday, 1 October 2015, 6 p.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Lykketoft (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 6 p.m.

Agenda item 8 (continued)

General debate

Address by Mr. Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia.

Mr. Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia, was escorted to the rostrum.

The President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Sharmarke (Somalia): I would first like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election to preside over the General Assembly at its seventieth session. I would also like to express our appreciation to Mr. Sam Kutesa, President of the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, for his stewardship during the past year.

It is an honour and a privilege to address this gathering today. On behalf of the people and Government of the Federal Republic of Somalia, I would like to offer our warm congratulations to the Organization on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of its foundation.

Over the past seven decades, the principled goals of the United Nations — furthering peace, protecting security and ensuring the advancement of human rights — have become unifying pillars for our global community. Somalia was one of the earliest African members of the United Nations and has remained one for more than 55 years. We have watched it grow, we have matured under its tutelage, and we have now climbed back from a difficult phase in our recent history, thankful for the support and backing of the Members of the Organization.

Twenty-five years ago, Somalia experienced its own Arab Spring, ahead of the current phenomenon that has swept through much of the Arab world in the past few years. We have seen what can happen if a society's political demands are not adequately addressed, and we have had to learn some all too difficult lessons throughout two challenging decades. That is why it pains us greatly to see our fellow Arab and Muslim countries going down a very similar difficult road.

But it must be said that, thanks to perseverance and togetherness, Somalia has become an example of what can be accomplished in such times. We are a nation that intimately understands those famous words of American President John F. Kennedy, who said: "Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind" (*A/PV.1013, para. 40*). The theme of this year's session — peace, security and human rights — is in line with my Government's vision. Indeed, a new Somalia is taking shape, and we intend to continue our climb out of the dark.

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I want to talk about Somalia, but a Somalia different from the one many here may have heard of. I am not here to deny our notoriety, the result of a conflict that has spanned two and half decades, but I would like to introduce another reality. Somalia is home to a proud and industrious people. Despite adversity, we have become athletes, economists, authors, poets, musicians, entrepreneurs and innovators who lead the world. Even without a Government, our businesses kept functioning. We remain a major player in the regional livestock trade and have one of the most innovative telecommunications sectors in Africa. My people are ambitious and generous. During the famine, we gave more than all the aid agencies combined.

We have built banking systems based on social capital and trust, invaluable networks that have attracted a range of investors. We are survivors, and, given the chance, we can move the socioeconomic landscape of East Africa forward. Imagine the potential in the fact that we have one of the longest shorelines in the world, hosting untapped oil and gas reserves. We are actively rebuilding our country in order to realize that potential. We must be humble. Progress is slow, but we must remember where we have come from. The civil war destroyed our infrastructure and institutions, and took away some of our brightest minds. Now, however, they are coming back, and together, we are moving forward. We have defeated piracy, we are embracing decentralization and, most importantly, we are learning lessons from our past.

The United Nations has been there with us during that remarkable journey, and we are grateful. My Government has a vision, which is to rebuild State institutions. Considerable progress has been made towards our Vision 2016 strategy. Three new interim regional States have been formed. We are consulting our people on how best to hold free, democratic elections, and we have established constitutionally mandated commissions to ensure accountability.

Allow me to elaborate on a few critical issues. First, we must ensure free and fair elections. For that to succeed, we and our constituents must agree on a fair and transparent voting system and how that system can be extended to each region. Only through inclusion will we draw public support. I should recall here that Somalia was the first country in Africa in which a democratically elected president lost an election and gracefully transferred power. That history must define our future.

We must also prioritize our national security forces. There is still an active insurgency that we are risking our lives to dismantle, for our own safety and for the security of our region. Last year, together with African Union forces, we liberated all our major regions from Al-Shabaab. But our soldiers are underpaid, underfed and underequipped and yet are expected to put their lives on the line for their country. That is unacceptable. We must invest in professionalizing our security and police forces. Peacekeeping missions work best when they have clear objectives and timelines, both for restoring stability and for building the capacity of national security forces.

I would like to ask everyone here to join me in paying tribute to all those who have helped liberate us from violence, many of whom have made the ultimate sacrifice. Our women — mothers, daughters and sisters — also deserve limitless praise for enduring the worst of our brutal conflict. The survival instincts of the Somali people are most evident in its women. They raise families while their homes are being bombed, walk miles without water in search of safety, and bury their children while continuing to work to feed the rest of their families. We know what war can do. And that is why I, as a father and a husband, will ensure that we will defeat terrorism. It is our duty as a Government.

Another issue of great importance is the problem of Somali refugees and undocumented migrants still living in temporary camps, some for more than two and a half decades. We are grateful to the countries in the region that have helped and hosted our people, but we recognize that many of the refugees continue to live in perpetual crisis, without any hope of resettlement, residency or citizenship. That is unacceptable. We urge our friends here in the Assembly to work with us to find a durable solution. The transition will not be easy, but millions of lives depend on it.

Ultimately, we must enable the rebuilding of State institutions and infrastructure. Effective and transparent institutions are a prerequisite for providing services. Somalia lacks completely, or has in very short supply, the public services that many people around the world take for granted. For the past two and half decades, public services, including schools, water and power, have been run by private companies. It is critical that all Somalis feel they have a stake and a role in the Government. The country's residents have the right to demand services of us. If we fail to provide them, we risk falling short of their expectations.

As I stand here today, I am proposing a grand development plan for Somalia. It will focus on rebuilding our social and physical infrastructure — roads, schools, hospitals, community centres, ports, airports and markets, all of which are essential if we are to revive the State and the economy. The plan, which is aligned to the new Sustainable Development Goals, will help to minimize duplication of effort and empower Somalis to keep building their own future.

The bulk of our population is under the age of 30. They are the future of our nation. It is from them that we are borrowing today's resources and to them that peace will pay its ultimate dividend. We must find a place for them in leadership, and we must create jobs and opportunities for them. They need the kind of opportunities and challenges that drive all young people around the world to try to succeed. We need to provide incentives for them, so that they have a choice and can leave extremism behind. That grand development plan for Somalia, akin to a Somali Marshall Plan, can create countless opportunities for our young people to invest in their own future.

Billions in taxpayers' money has been pumped into Somalia, and we have had some successes, but not enough. Non-governmental organizations have become a local business; some are effective, others are not. We need a different approach now. We do not want charity; we want direct investment. We need to build quality schools and fill them with quality educators. We need to pave roads, build markets and rejuvenate agricultural production so as to make us East Africa's largest exporter of quality produce once again. Our New Deal is a useful aid framework, but we must translate it into results. And it is about time. Somalia's development plan will ensure accountability and transparency for every investment made. Every United Nations Member State will have the opportunity to help Somalia evolve into an economic powerhouse and a future trading partner, and we will share the plan with all in due course.

We are grateful to the Members of the United Nations for supporting us over the past two and half decades, for welcoming our people as their own, for turning a relatively small nomadic tribe from the Horn of Africa into a global workforce and for the time and resources that have been invested. We are humbled by their generosity. We will make their efforts work for our people, but we also need their continued support.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Only four years ago, radical insurgents controlled our country, oppressing our people and threatening their lives. But today, children are returning to the beaches of Mogadishu and other cities along the Indian Ocean; women sit on dunes selling home-baked bananas, and the sound of bullets has been replaced by the noise of construction. Look how far we have come, and imagine what we can do in another four years. We are looking forward not only to bouncing back for our own benefit, but also to becoming a shining example to nations that are in the throes of hardship, that are working hard to move from the third world to first, and that are finding it hard to navigate the difficult but worthwhile road to recovery. We are ready to play our part so that we can give back, contribute to their success and their fulfilment of their rightful destiny, and take our place among the contributing nations of our global village.

Somalia has failed my generation, but I will dedicate my life to ensuring that it does not fail the next. Yet I cannot do it alone. Only together can we become the Somalia that the world is waiting for.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Omar Abdirashid Ali Sharmarke, Prime Minister of the Federal Republic of Somalia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Hor Namhong, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Mr. Hor (Cambodia): At the outset, I would like to warmly congratulate Mr. Mogens Lykketoft of Denmark on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. I am fully confident that under his able leadership our Assembly will produce results.

This year's gathering is taking place at a critical juncture, as we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. It is an opportunity to reflect on how our world body can deal with today's global challenges. Cambodia warmly welcomes the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in the form of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), an ambitious vision for building an inclusive society through sustainable development and putting the world on a path to more equitable prosperity for

all by 2030. But we believe that the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals will be key to ensuring success with the new Agenda. We sincerely hope that over the next 15 years, all stakeholders from developed and developing countries alike will join hands in pursuit of our vital new Agenda.

Poverty, food insecurity and similar problems still remain as stumbling blocks along the way ahead. Today, more than 800 million people are undernourished and living below the poverty line. The world's population will reach 9 billion by 2050, and the pressure on food security will be further exacerbated. I believe that the answers to that challenge include good governance, policy reform and more investment in food production.

Such challenges, aggravated by armed conflicts, have forced increasing numbers of people to flee their home countries. The refugee phenomenon, exploited by human traffickers, has now reached an alarming scale in Europe, though perhaps to a lesser degree in Asia. Cambodia would like to express its deep sympathy for the recent tragedies that have afflicted maritime migrants in Europe.

Climate change constitutes another serious global challenge. While it is the industrialized countries that have been the major emitters of greenhouse gases, it is the developing countries, which are largely dependent on agriculture, that have become the prime victims of climate change, with storms, typhoons and more frequent floods and droughts, which have a major impact on their food security, poverty and social welfare. Cambodia very much hopes, therefore, that the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December, can produce a binding agreement, in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, that will enable us to deal effectively with the global threat of climate change and its impact on people's welfare.

For its part, Cambodia officially launched the Cambodia Climate Change Strategic Plan 2014-2023 in November 2013 as the first-ever comprehensive national strategic plan to respond to climate change through adaptation, mitigation and low-carbon development. We also adopted the National Strategic Plan on Green Development for 2013-2030. Additionally, Cambodia has launched its National Council of Green Growth aimed at promoting a green economy.

On international issues, Cambodia notes that criminal acts committed by the violent extremist group the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham and many other groups under different names in Africa and Asia continue to intensify and spread, in spite of allied bombing and national-level military operations. Cambodia believes that all nations should forge concerted efforts to fight those criminal and inhuman groups in a comprehensive and effective manner.

Cambodia welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States after 52 years of an unjust embargo against the Cuban people. It also demands that all blockades be lifted unconditionally, following the resumption of diplomatic relations.

Cambodia also welcomes the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the nuclear programme between Iran and the P5 plus Germany. It shares the view that this agreement will not only become a turning point in Iran-United States relations, but that it will also create an atmosphere conducive to regional peace, security and political stability.

In the light of current realities, Cambodia supports the United Nations reform aimed at making the Organization more democratic and more effective in coping with the crucial challenges the world is facing. To that end, in Cambodia's view, the General Assembly should be more empowered to enhance global governance in the United Nations system. At the same time, the Economic and Social Council has to follow up on the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted unanimously by our leaders a few days ago. The Security Council should also become more democratic and representative in both its permanent and its non-permanent membership so as to be able to assure universal peace and security in the face of the evolving dangerous situation that prevails in the world today.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Prakash Man Singh, Deputy Prime Minister of Nepal.

Mr. Singh (Nepal): I bring with me the warm greetings of the people and Government of Nepal and their best wishes for the success of the seventieth anniversary of the world body.

I congratulate His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft of Denmark on his unanimous election to the

presidency of the General Assembly at the seventieth session. With his proven experience and skill, we are confident that he will guide our deliberations to a fruitful conclusion. My delegation wishes to place on record its sincere gratitude to the President of the Assembly at the sixty-ninth session, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa of Uganda, for successfully guiding the business of the preceding session, particularly in the run-up to the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, which adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) last week. Our tribute is also due to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his outstanding service to the Organization in these challenging times.

The theme of the session, “The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights”, appropriately reflects our innate and collective desire for peace, security and human rights. These are the issues that continue to constitute the focus of our national priorities, regional initiatives and international engagement.

I am pleased to share with the Assembly that, after about eight years of rigorous democratic exercise conducted in an inclusive, transparent and participatory manner, Nepal promulgated an inclusive democratic Constitution 10 days ago, on 20 September. The promulgation of the Constitution endorsed by over 90 per cent of the 601 members of the Constituent Assembly marks the logical conclusion of the peace process, as well as the end of the protracted political transition in the country. It has institutionalized the federal democratic republican system of governance in Nepal.

The Constitution exemplifies the victory of peace and non-violence, as inspired by the teachings of Lord Buddha. It reflects the best of democratic principles, norms and values, as befits a country of vast diversity that has known centuries of social harmony and tolerance. The Constitution opens up new avenues of empowerment, progress and well-being for all disadvantaged groups, including women, Tharus, Madhesis, indigenous people, Muslims and dalits, with a resolve to create an egalitarian society by ending all discrimination. It guarantees 33-per-cent representation by women in the national Parliament. I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank our neighbours, friends and well-wishers in the international community

for their continued support and good wishes during the course of our historic political transformation.

Nepal is fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We firmly believe that the United Nations at 70 remains a strong pillar of the international system, as well as the institution of hope and trust. Both the continuing determination of the peoples and the means for attaining the ends envisaged at the time of its inception continue to be an inspiration.

The purposes and principles of the United Nations constitute the solid foundation of international relations. However, a review of the past seven decades of the United Nations also reveals that much more remains to be done on many fronts, despite several far-reaching achievements to its credit. The United Nations continues to confront numerous challenges in the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as in the effective employment of international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

We therefore feel that there is a need for a stronger United Nations that is capable of delivering results based on wider respect for and observance of the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference, as well as of preserving the universal values of peace, justice, equality, freedom and human dignity.

The reforms of the United Nations are needed to strengthen and revitalize its work so that it may better respond to the increasingly complex and profound challenges. The reforms should promote good-neighbourly relations and should contribute to smarter maintenance of international peace and security. The reforms should encourage stricter adherence to the principles and purposes of the Charter. They should serve to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples and to enhance the dignity of the peoples in a just international order. These are the kind of reforms we advocate, support and aspire to. The reforms should encourage those who can do so to contribute more to the cause of peace and progress. The reforms should instil hope and confidence in those who are marginalized and extend support to those who confront difficult circumstances.

Nepal has been consistently contributing to United Nations peacekeeping for about six decades now.

More than 120,000 of our peacekeepers have served so far with outstanding professionalism in more than 40 different missions around the globe, and 70 have made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty. As one of the leading troop-contributing countries, Nepal remains steadfast in its commitment to maintaining international peace and security.

Loss of life and injury incurred in the line of duty must be minimized. A strong sense of safety and security enhances the confidence and efficiency of the peacekeepers. Moreover, leadership opportunities should be made available to the member countries commensurate with their contributions. This would make the best use of their experience and would enhance efficiency and inspire commitment. Given its long-standing contribution and experience, both in the field and at Headquarters, Nepal has the ability to make a contribution in senior-level leadership positions in the United Nations peace architecture and is willing to do so.

Nepal fully aligns itself with the United Nations and the international community in dealing with all threats to peace and security. Terrorism is the biggest threat to peace, security and development. It is shocking to see the emergence of various terrorist groups, some of which espouse violent extremism and religious fundamentalism, in different parts of the globe. We unequivocally condemn terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. As terrorism is a multifaceted problem, its solution demands greater unity, solidarity and the concerted collaboration of nations to address its root causes. This is best done under the auspices of the United Nations, and we are in favour of concluding a comprehensive convention on international terrorism at an early date.

Nepal stands for the general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction and against the illicit transfer of small arms and light weapons. It wishes to see the world without weapons and would like all resources spent on armaments to be urgently diverted to the cause of development in the interests of meeting the pressing needs of the people.

We consider both the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba and the nuclear deal with Iran to be important indications of forward-looking approaches with positive implications for international peace and security.

We support the call for a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and an end to the conflicts in the region. We recognize the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to an independent State based on United Nations resolutions. We recognize the right of every nation in the region to live in peace within secure and recognized international boundaries.

Since their categorization in 1971, the least developed countries (LDCs) have grown in number from 25 to 48. However, only four countries have so far been able to graduate from this status. The rest continue to struggle for development and prosperity. Their struggle has been unfairly long and has also been at the cost of the dignity of their people. An enhanced level of partnership and collaboration is key to addressing the challenges they face. We welcome the Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted in July. Its implementation will be critical for the success of the new Agenda. We look forward to a meaningful review of the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in 2016.

Similarly, there is a strong need for effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action to make a difference in the lives of about 450 million people living in landlocked developing countries (LLDCs). The world needs to ensure unhindered access to the sea by the LLDCs, without restriction on the free movement of people and goods. We stress that the freedom of transit of LLDCs should not be constrained under any circumstances or on any pretext, and that nothing should disrupt the flow of goods and services. The freedom of transit of LLDCs must be fully and unconditionally adhered to by all transit countries.

As a country with many of the highest peaks in the world, as well as fragile mountain ecosystems, Nepal is aware of the hardships faced by the mountainous countries. An enhanced level of international collaboration is essential to conserve and promote the mountain ecosystems for the benefit of all.

Climate change has emerged as one of the greatest development challenges confronting us. For the least developed countries, like Nepal, it increases the cost of development and also causes disproportionate impacts on them. There is an urgent need to translate commitments into concrete actions based on the accepted principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, equity and respective capabilities. The achievement of a binding international instrument in Paris later this year is a must.

Human rights, equality and human dignity constitute an integral part of the United Nations objectives. We believe in an integrated approach to democracy, development and human rights, and we firmly hold the view that democracy is indispensable for development, as well as for the enjoyment of political, cultural and social rights and the right to development. We underline that the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity must be strictly adhered to. The new Constitution promulgated in our country guarantees the fundamental rights of our citizens. Its ambitious scope has broadened the rights of women, children, the elderly and differently abled persons and of marginalized communities.

The issue of refugees is intricately linked with peace, security and human rights and therefore must be addressed with the seriousness and priority it deserves. Migration has emerged as a megatrend. Migrant workers today represent a significant proportion of the mobile population. In view of the greater vulnerabilities of such people, due recognition and priority should be given to the protection of their rights and dignity.

We in Nepal were overwhelmed by the unprecedented scale of the expression of solidarity and cooperation from the international community in the aftermath of the devastating earthquakes that struck Nepal in April and May. I would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere appreciation and gratitude to our neighbours, India and China, fellow members of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, and all those friends and well-wishers who so promptly extended their humanitarian support and expressed solidarity with us in difficult moments and made us feel that we were not alone. We consider the global outpouring of support and solidarity to be astonishing but significant evidence of the vast scope and potential of the spirit of the United Nations. Nepal looks to continued support and solidarity in the phase of rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development on the historic occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations has generated optimism for a better future across the world. To be truly transformative, the Sustainable Development Goals must embrace everyone and must be implemented in their entirety with the required resources. To this end, guaranteed means of implementation, encompassing finance, technology transfer, capacity and partnership, are critical. Many of the development issues that many

countries face, particularly the most vulnerable ones, deserve more serious attention if we are to strengthen the cause of peace and security.

We want the United Nations and the international community to turn their immediate attention to the issues of growing inequality and dwindling resources and to the existential threat of global warming. Poverty remains a powerful threat to peace, security and human rights. It is a minefield, compounding the woes and sufferings of society. Let us not forget that it is the poor who are constantly exposed to violence, corruption, extortion and the malpractices of the powerful.

I would like to conclude with what Bishweshwar Prasad Koirala, the first elected Prime Minister of Nepal, told the General Assembly at the fifteenth session,

“As we look at the world, we find that the economic disparity between countries, as between the rich and the poor people within the nation, is the source of much friction and tension” (*A/PV.878, para. 232*).

Economic disparity continues to stare at us all, as it did then. Let us commit ourselves to creating a sustainable, equitable and inclusive development in larger freedom to address this problem.

I am confident that the spirit of the United Nations will continue to prevail for the benefit of humankind in the days to come.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear a statement by His Excellency Mr. Ri Su Yong, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Mr. Ri Su Yong (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) (*spoke in Korean; English text provided by the delegation*): I would like to congratulate Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election as President of the General Assembly at this historic seventieth session. I hope that his able stewardship will lead this session, under the theme “The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights”, to a successful outcome.

We are now at a critical point in time in which we are reflecting on the 70 years of the United Nations and defining the road ahead.

First and foremost, it is important to learn lessons from both the successes and the failures of the United Nations over the past 70 years. It is fortunate that

humankind has evaded a third world war during this time. That should be considered a victory for the noble ideal of peace over war, which was an important source of inspiration leading to the founding of the United Nations. Since the start of the new millennium, the percentage of the world population living under the poverty line has been reduced by half. This amounts to a triumph for the ideal of cooperation for development, which, along with peace, represents one of the two main pillars of the United Nations.

Yet the world has not been at peace over the past 70 years, nor has humankind lived in comfort. The world has undergone hundreds of wars and armed conflicts, big and small, some of which drove us to the brink of a nuclear disaster. The peace sought by humankind is not fragile in nature, like a thin layer of ice, but rather it is as firm, durable and permanent as a rock. It is not the peace of a slave, requiring subservience to the master; it is a peace of dignity, a peace befitting an independent human being. Such peace remains only a dream for humankind.

The world has come a long way and tremendous changes have taken place. However, the United Nations system and its peacekeeping and security operations are not so very different from the old ones in the days when it was founded. The arbitrariness and undemocratic practices of the Security Council have not been redressed. Consequently, the United Nations, a hallowed international Organization, is constantly being abused and monopolized as a forum for confrontation by a few Powers. The result is that world peace and security are under constant threat and humankind has grown accustomed to having to live, against its will, with the smoky clouds of war overhead. This is the biggest failure overshadowing the 70-year history of the United Nations, as well as the greatest challenge we are facing on our road ahead.

Unless the sovereign equality enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations is fully translated into reality, the ongoing practice of domination, inequality and unfairness cannot be eradicated at the United Nations. Until international relations are democratized, the United Nations will not be able to fulfil its mission to safeguard international peace and security. Furthermore, the United Nations will be degraded to the point of becoming a haven in which the forces bent on disrupting and destroying peace and security camouflage their designs. This is the main lesson we

have learned as we look back on the 70 years of the United Nations.

Reflected on every page of the annals of the United Nations is the history of our national division, stained with the misfortunes and pains that our people have suffered over the past seven decades. The same year the United Nations was founded, our nation was liberated from Japanese colonial rule and divided into the north and the south by a foreign force. The same foreign force now sits on the Security Council as a permanent member State.

For the past seven decades — from its inception to today — the United Nations has been used as a tool to violate the sovereignty, dignity, peace and security of our nation. It was none other than the United Nations Temporary Commission on Korea that granted so-called legitimacy to the manoeuvres of the United States, which had brought about the division of our nation by setting up a separate Government in South Korea in 1948. It was also in the name of the United Nations forces that the troops of the United States and 15 other satellite countries joined the Korean War in 1950.

At its thirtieth session, in 1975, the General Assembly adopted resolution 3390 B (XXX), on the subject of dissolving the United Nations Command and withdrawing foreign troops from South Korea. Like all the other resolutions that the United States voted against, this resolution also was not implemented.

At present, nearly 40,000 United States troops, a massive number, are stationed in South Korea—more than in any other foreign country. The Commander of the United States Forces Command in South Korea is also the United Nations Commander and so wears two hats. The so-called United Nations Commander commands the large-scale nuclear war exercises held several times a year by the United States of America and South Korea and has done so during the past seven decades.

Even in the twenty-first century, the Security Council continues to commit arbitrary acts against the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in flagrant violation of justice and international law. Today, a body of international law exists that stipulates that the use of outer space is the sovereign right of every country. More than 10 countries have launched satellites. However, the Security Council passed a resolution prohibiting

the Democratic People's Republic of Korea alone from launching satellites. Moreover, nine countries have already developed and conducted over 2,000 nuclear tests in total. But again, the Security Council adopted resolutions prohibiting the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from conducting nuclear tests, which it did only three times.

In 2014, the United States launched yet another anti-Democratic People's Republic of Korea smear campaign in the General Assembly and the Security Council on the basis of the detailed findings of the commission of inquiry on human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (see A/HRC/25/CRP.1), a report that relied on fabricated evidence, thereby demonstrating that the United Nations is still manipulated by the United States.

Our development of outer space technology for peaceful purposes is within our legitimate rights as a sovereign State. Our nuclear testing is a defensive measure to counter the hostile policy and nuclear threat of the United State of America. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is steadfast in its resolve to uphold its dignity and rights and will continue to do so robustly and persistently by using all the defensive measures at its disposal to counter the unjust actions aimed at thwarting its peaceful launch of a satellite.

The Charter of the United Nations provides that the Security Council acts in accordance with the principles of justice and international law. However, the United Nations is now in a state of chaos, and it is difficult to determine whether it is the Charter or some Security Council resolution that takes precedence. Moreover, the fact that the Security Council, which is endowed with greater responsibility and power than any other body of the Organization, has become so reckless and is made a mockery of by an individual Power is a twenty-first century tragedy.

Late last August, the situation on the Korean peninsula moved once again towards the brink of war. In this case, the situation was triggered by a minor incident, whose cause remains unknown. However, it is apparent that such incidents occur every time that a large-scale joint military exercise conducted by the United States of America and South Korea reaches its zenith.

In exercising its right as a State Member of the United Nations, a right enshrined in the Charter, the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea brought to the attention of the Security Council the matter of the aggressive and provocative large-scale joint military exercises of the United States of America and South Korea. We requested the Council to place the matter on its agenda, as the military exercises constitute a serious threat to international peace and security. We also referred the August incident to the Security Council. However, every time the Security Council has remained silent on this issue.

What measure can the United Nations take when the so-called United Nations Commander himself commands the large-scale war exercises that create a vicious cycle of heightened tension? Other extremely strange phenomena have no logical explanation. Over 20 years have passed since the Democratic People's Republic of Korea joined the United Nations. But in Panmunjom, the flags of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United Nations are hoisted opposite each other. In other words, the United Nations is in a state of war against one of its Member States and their guns are levelled against each other.

Successive United Nations Secretaries-General have stated that the United Nations Command mechanism was not under the control of the United Nations, and that only the Security Council could decide to dismantle it. In the long term, that means that as long as the United States is a permanent member of the Security Council with the right of veto, the United Nations Command cannot be dismantled. That establishes an equation in which the United Nations equals the United States of America, since the United Nations force on the Korean peninsula is made up of United States troops.

The United Nations should uphold the original purposes and principles of the Charter and address its abnormal relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, both in the interest of international peace and security and for the welfare and prosperity of the Korean nation. The August incident clearly showed the fragility of the current peace on the Korean peninsula, which is due to the abnormal relationship with the United Nations. A rational, in-depth analysis of that incident leads to the conclusion that the Korean Armistice Agreement, as written, can no longer maintain peace on the Korean peninsula. For the Korean Armistice Agreement has no provision regarding such aggressive and provocative large-scale war exercises. Replacing the Korean Armistice Agreement with a

peace treaty first and foremost requires the United States of America to make a bold decision.

Although currently intra-Korean relations have been defused thanks to a great deal of effort, the atmosphere does not promise to be as durable as one would want. For the situation on the Korean peninsula is such that even a minor provocative act can aggravate tensions and freeze relations in an instant.

Since the experience of the August incident that made North-East Asia and the entire world watch with bated breath, it has been clear that replacing the Korean Armistice Agreement with a peace treaty without further delay is crucial. The safeguarding of peace on the Korean peninsula requires North Korea and South Korea to address certain issues. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America also have issues to address.

The Korean Armistice Agreement was signed in 1953 between the Korean People's Army and the Chinese People's Volunteer Army on one side and the so-called United Nations forces on the other. With all the other foreign troops withdrawn, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America are the only two parties in charge of the armed forces currently deployed on the Korean peninsula. The United States of America has wartime operational control of the South Korean army and also administers the Korean Armistice Agreement.

It is high time for the United States to step forward and sign a peace treaty. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is ready to hold a constructive dialogue to prevent war and conflicts on the Korean peninsula, once the United States agrees to replace the Korean Armistice Agreement with a peace treaty and refrains from making accusations of provocation in the mass media. If the United States of America displays courage in making a policy change, the security environment on the Korean peninsula will improve dramatically and the security concerns of the United States of America will eventually be addressed. That is the best option and the best solution we can offer in this forum as we look back over the past 70 years and look forward to the road ahead.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea is strongly convinced that a peace treaty should replace the Korean Armistice Agreement as a means of ensuring peace and security on the Korean peninsula and of redressing the abnormal relations between the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United Nations. We also believe that that would help the United Nations to remain true to its founding ideals and the purposes and principles of the Charter. For its part, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea pledges to make sincere and energetic efforts to that end.

The Acting President: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Raymond Tshibanda N'tungamulongo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Tshibanda N'tungamulongo (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): As I address the Assembly from this rostrum on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Joseph Kabila, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, whom I have the honour and privilege of representing, I should like at the outset to join earlier speakers in congratulating Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. His experience as President of the National Assembly, Foreign Minister and Finance Minister of Denmark, as well as his skills in development issues, are major assets for the success of his mandate. I would also like to commend his predecessor, Mr. Sam Kutesa, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Uganda, on his excellent work as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session at a historic moment of our Organization. Lastly, I wish to pay a well-deserved tribute to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his tireless efforts to defend and promote the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Seventy years after its creation, the objectives and principles of our universal and increasingly indispensable Organization are more relevant than ever. Peace and development are indeed the perennial and common desires of all peoples. The core of our collective action as a community of nations will essentially and necessarily continue to be maintaining international peace and security, ensuring justice, upholding human rights and promoting social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom. Those objectives of our Organization are complementary and reciprocal.

Without peace, no human rights can endure, whether civil and political rights or economic, social and cultural rights. The systematic denial or constant violation of such rights will inevitably lead to a breakdown of peace and social cohesion and to latent or open crises. Likewise, without peace, development

is hypothetical and the satisfaction of the vital needs of the populations is problematic. On the other hand, underdevelopment and the poverty and insecurity that accompany it are fertile grounds for social demands that often result in violence that is directly proportional to the perceived suffering.

Moreover, in a perpetually changing world in which issues involving security, development and basic human rights know no frontiers, all our fates are interrelated. Solidarity of action and synergy of efforts are not mere options, but rather *sine qua non* conditions for survival and success.

The reform of our Organization, particularly reform of the Security Council, is another *sine qua non* condition for our collective effectiveness. Security Council reform must mean expanding its membership and improving its collective representation, while ensuring that the continent of Africa, so far marginalized, is incorporated neither too slowly nor too fast. We cannot sacrifice justice and fairness for speed. The Democratic Republic of the Congo would also like to reaffirm its support for intergovernmental negotiations and would like the integrity of this process to be maintained. It would also like to reaffirm its wholehearted support for the Ezulwini Consensus, which provides the only reasonable basis for remedying the injustice done to Africa and settling the question of its representation.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo believes that armed conflicts, civil wars and all the acts of cruelty and destruction committed by terrorist groups, which perpetuate suffering and misery and create profound tension in the world, must be condemned, regardless of the perpetrators, places, goals or motivations. Today, terrorism is one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. One of the priorities of our Organization must be to fight this scourge, and each of our States must support and participate in the global counter-terrorism strategy. To remain passive against the rise of radicalism and extremism in their most barbaric and murderous forms would be no more nor less than to condone the dehumanization of the world.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is a peace-loving country whose history has taught it the inestimable value of peace. It is working tirelessly to preserve peace and stability within its borders, in the Great Lakes region of Africa and in the world. To that end, on 28 February 2013 in Addis Ababa, it signed the

first Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. It is resolved to keep all the commitments it made by this signature and we call on the other signatory States to do likewise.

It is also in that context that, although at a prohibitively high cost, given our country's limited resources, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been leading successful operations against hostile forces and armed groups, which over the past 15 years have spread death and destruction in the eastern part of its territory. To that same end, it has also dispatched its own sons and daughters as soldiers and police officers to serve under the flag of the United Nations throughout the world.

It also feels challenged, as does the rest of humankind, by the current migration crisis, which demonstrates—as if a demonstration were needed—the precariousness of the human condition.

While the efforts undertaken by others to overcome that crisis are welcome, it is important, necessary and urgent to attack the root causes, which include the denial of human rights, underdevelopment, poverty, armed conflicts, and natural disasters, some of which have been caused by climate change.

Moved by this need, the Democratic Republic of the Congo participated in the drafting and adoption of the new post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (see resolution 70/1). That agenda embodies every hope for the peoples of the world. Our collective duty is to do everything possible to make it a reality. Impelled by the same need to take action, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been actively involved in preparations for the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December, as well as in relevant international negotiations.

We are all striving for development that is economically efficient, socially equitable and ecologically sustainable. The realization of those aspirations requires action and firm commitments from all of us. In that respect, we all subscribed to the Millennium Development Goals. However, their full and complete implementation has been hampered by numerous issues that we need to resolve promptly, as well as by many challenges that must be urgently

addressed, especially those regarding the environment. In that respect, we can no longer hesitate.

Climate change is one of the major challenges that our planet faces today. Its negative impact on vital socioeconomic sectors such as agriculture and health is more apparent than ever. The same can be said of its effect on the availability of resources that are necessary to life, such as water. It is urgent that we conclude a universal and legally binding agreement that holds the increase in global average temperature to below 2°C in relation to pre-industrial levels. Let us all demonstrate our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular to the targets involving environmental protection, by making the December session of the Conference of the Parties our deadline.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, we are committed to making responsible sacrifices without jeopardizing our development. To that end, we have developed and submitted an intended nationally determined contribution. It includes both mitigation measures, focusing on four main priority sectors — agriculture, forests, energy, and transportation — and adaptation measures, which in addition to those four sectors also concern the protection of the coast. All of that will result in a 17 per cent rate of reduction in greenhouse gas emissions — the equivalent of 77 million tons of carbon dioxide — by 2030.

We have established the same timetable in our country for a comprehensive and ambitious development programme known as the revolution of modernity. In turn, we hope that the international community will reward our efforts accordingly within the REDD+ process.

Having given our position on some of today's burning issues, I would now like to talk briefly about the situation in my country. Allow me to talk about the Democratic Republic of the Congo today, a country that has certainly seen difficult times and could have very well disappeared from the map, if it had not been for the United Nations support and, especially, had it not been for the sacrifices made by a people determined to maintain, against all odds, the sovereignty of the country and the integrity of its territory.

I would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge the gestures of international solidarity that we have benefited from and that have come from other States Members of our Organization, in particular from

the contributors of troops to the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I pay tribute to the heroism of our defence and security forces and of our population, who represent a mix of every age and background.

Owing to the concerted efforts of all concerned, we can affirm, without fear of contradiction, that despite the persistence of a few residual areas of unrest, which we are actively trying to quell, peace, security and State authority have been restored to almost the entirety of our national territory. In conjunction with important structural reforms, the restoration of peace and security has fostered the resumption of large-scale economic activities. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is today one of the fastest-growing economies of Africa, with an annual growth rate, from 2010 to 2014, consistently higher than the average for sub-Saharan Africa. In 2014, the growth rate stood at 9.5 per cent, the third fastest such rate in the world. For nearly three years, we have had an inflation rate of less than 1 per cent and a remarkable level of stability in the exchange rates of our national currency. Furthermore, governance and the business environment have continued to undergo such significant improvements that the Democratic Republic of the Congo was ranked among the top 10 reform-oriented countries in the "Doing Business" classification of the World Bank in 2013.

However, we continue to face major challenges on the path ahead. We are well aware of that, because we know that we are a post-conflict country. Institutional stabilization efforts, security planning and the reconstruction of basic infrastructure must and will continue, with the aim of overcoming poverty, injustice and social inequalities.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo today is a large building site and abounds in business opportunities. It is a country full of potential and, in order to fulfil that potential, is open to the possibility of partnerships of every type, provided that they respect its sovereignty, do not harm its vital interests and are mutually beneficial. In that regard, several sectors of commercial activity that had been limited to the public sector have been opened to competition. Accordingly, new laws are either in the process of being adopted or have already been adopted to liberalize the electricity and insurance sectors, to promote public-private partnerships in the fields of agriculture and infrastructure and to attract and retain domestic and foreign investors.

The obligation that now lies with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and with all partners truly concerned about the welfare of the Congolese people, is that of ensuring the consolidation of all those achievements. Maintaining peace and stability and making our democratic achievements and economic and social progress irreversible are therefore our top priorities. That is why we attach great value to the process of decentralization under way, which has recently been accelerated with the establishment of provincial assemblies in the 21 new provinces and the imminent arrival of provincial executives in those provinces.

Similarly, and in accordance with the electoral timetable published by the Independent National Electoral Commission, the Democratic Republic of Congo is preparing its general election, the third after those of 2006 and 2011. This election, scheduled for the 2015-2016 cycle, confirms a definitive break with the spiral of violence and instability that has characterized our country in recent decades and ushers in a lasting era of democracy for the Congolese people.

Despite the many financial and logistical constraints complicating the electoral process, everything necessary for the holding of transparent and credible elections in a peaceful climate has been put in place by the Independent National Electoral Commission, with the support of the Government and under the direction of the Head of State. To this end, convinced that dialogue is a central principle of democracy and a powerful factor in social cohesion, the Head of State has held consultations since last May with all segments of Congolese society — political actors, civil society, religious and traditional authorities — with a view to supporting a national dialogue.

Finally, after the defeat of the Mouvement du 23 mars and the surrender of several rebel groups, the Democratic Republic of the Congo wishes to consolidate the new-found peace and return to normal life. Accordingly, while we remain sincerely grateful to the United Nations for its contribution to the restoration of that peace, we believe it is high time to reconsider the question of a United Nations presence on Congolese territory and to think about a gradual but major withdrawal of the troops of the Stabilization Mission from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Scappini Ricciardi (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Our country expects to receive the Assembly's support for this responsible and legitimate request of a Member State, which it makes in full exercise of its sovereignty. It is a request that already has the support of the regional economic communities to which we belong, the Southern African Development Community and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, as well as the African Union. We fully expect that the ongoing strategic dialogue with the Secretary-General and his experts will lead to a recommendation to the Security Council to this effect.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Erlan Abdyldayev, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Mr. Abdyldayev (Kyrgyzstan) (*spoke in Russian*): I would first like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session and wish him every success in this high position of responsibility. At the same time, we would like to express our gratitude to the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, for his very fruitful leadership.

I would also like to congratulate States Members of the United Nations and the Secretariat, headed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the Organization and the adoption of the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and the Sustainable Development Goals. We welcome the theme of this year's session, "The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights", which clearly and eloquently speaks for itself.

This year also marks the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War, which was the most bloodthirsty and destructive war that humankind has ever experienced. We believe that the most important outcome of the war was, first and foremost, the defeat of the forces of fascism. The war also ended policies based on an inhuman ideology and attempts to overthrow the world order. This victory provided an opportunity to affirm such values as the recognition of the freedom and equality of peoples and the universality of international law, which meant an end to a planet divided into great Powers, on the one hand, and the rest of the world, on the other. In this context, we consider that the United Nations has played a historic role as the international Organization whose membership includes almost all

the countries on the planet and to which any State can turn if it feels that its rights have been violated or its security challenged.

Today, the United Nations plays a clear role in improving the well-being of the citizens of the world. The Organization remains the only legitimate universal structure in the field of multilateral diplomacy and intergovernmental cooperation. Kyrgyzstan recognizes the central role of the United Nations in maintaining international peace and security, in addressing today's challenges in the financial, economic, social, cultural, humanitarian and environmental spheres, in promoting and protecting human rights, and in strengthening friendly relations between countries, in keeping with the principles of international law.

We firmly advocate taking into account the various interests of all nations, in accordance with international law, and building a peaceful world order based on a multilateral approach. We believe that it is just this type of development of international relations that the United Nations should promote.

Ironically, the seventieth anniversary of the end of the Second World War and the creation of the United Nations, which has become a symbol of unity, collaboration and cooperation, coincides with a very alarming international situation. One quarter of a century after the end of the cold war, the international community is once again facing the threat of a polarized world, brazen violations of fundamental rules of international law, the growth of armed conflict and other negative phenomena. Instead of the demolished Berlin Wall, we have new walls being built — those of sanctions, bans and trade barriers.

Differences have increased among the members of the Security Council, which of course is not conducive to the maintenance of international peace and stability. We are in fact facing a situation where some States prefer to act outside the Security Council. We consider such an approach counterproductive and not in keeping with the very purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It leads to increasing differences, a loss of trust and confidence, the destabilizing of the international situation and a new arms race.

During the recent United Nations Sustainable Development Summit, each of us took note of the event's importance and took upon ourselves the obligation to collectively ensure over the next 15 years that humankind will develop sustainably, in harmony

with nature. Kyrgyzstan welcomes the adoption of the 17 overarching Sustainable Development Goals and all of their related targets. We will make every effort to fully implement them as best we can with our national capacities. We will also continue to work in a targeted way to meet the Millennium Development Goals that have not been entirely achieved yet.

At the same time, achieving sustainable development at a national level requires solving the issue of appropriate and adequate international financing. That issue was fully and intensively discussed by the least developed countries and donors at the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in mid-July. We agree with the view that developing States should take greater responsibility for financing their national development programmes through the effective use of internal resources, including by improving their tax administration and, of course, by fighting corruption. However, donor countries will also need to remain involved and should promptly fulfil their commitment to increasing their official development assistance to 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product.

At the same time, we wish to underscore the need for an environment conducive to the successful sustainable development of States and the possibility of creating and maintaining such an environment. In the light of our national experience, Kyrgyzstan believes that every State has the right to development, which is an inherent, inalienable right that cannot be limited or constrained by anyone or anything. We are convinced that the issue of upholding that right is relevant for the majority of developing States throughout the world. It seems to us that it is especially important in the case of landlocked developing States, of small island States and all other countries that are especially vulnerable in the face of climate change, and of heavily indebted States, which do not have the opportunity to eradicate poverty.

We regret to note the increasing number of situations in which one State, guided only by its self-interest, strives to further its own development at the expense of another State by constraining the latter's opportunities for development. We believe that such conduct has no place in today's civilized world. At the same time, we note that the concept of a State's right to development has not yet been incorporated into general international law. Of course, it is important to clarify that the right to development does exist and is part of

international law, but only within the framework of human rights. I refer first and foremost to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, among other documents. However, we believe that the relevant human rights cannot be fully implemented unless an analogous right is granted to the subject of international law itself..

We believe that respect for and guarantees of the right of every State to development should in time become the foundation for forging new, equitable international relations at the global level and should take their place alongside such other principles as respect for territorial integrity and sovereignty, rejection of the use of force and non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States. In that regard, my country considers it important for the concept of a State's right to development to be widely disseminated throughout the United Nations. We propose that the issue be considered at the expert level.

Successful sustainable development depends to a great extent on the maintenance of security and stability at the global level. We believe that countries should set aside their differences and work more actively together under the aegis of the United Nations to combat terrorism and violent extremism. Kyrgyzstan strongly condemns all acts of terrorism, irrespective of their motivation and without regard to where and by whom they are committed. Terrorism has root causes and reasons, but they can never be justified. We would like to stress that the international community needs to work together more effectively to combat not only extremism but also its violent manifestations.

Today we are seeing the nature of extremist threats morph and change. To a lesser degree, activities of this nature have already spread geographically. Extremist ideology is seeping into the consciousness of people in various regions and around the world; it is mounting an attack on society from within. Various extremist and terrorist organizations, after consolidating their power under the banner of a single ideology, are evolving into powerful criminal structures with a wide network of like-minded people.

We believe that combating extremism should not be limited to addressing violent methods but that it must also include the adoption of preventive measures to curb the influence of harmful ideologies. In the effort to combat extremism, it is also crucial for States to develop policies that protect the secular character

of the State and to strengthen their interaction with traditional religions by implementing their citizens' right to freedom of religion.

Speaking of counter-terrorism activities at the national level, I would like to note that Kyrgyzstan has faithfully fulfilled its obligations and that it is committed to constructive engagement at the national, regional and international levels in the fight against that evil. We see Security Council resolution 2178 (2015) as a decisive step in combating foreign terrorist fighters. Within the framework of its implementation, we have focused our efforts on strengthening border controls, aviation security and building the capacity of law enforcement agencies, as well as on improving the exchange of information.

In February and May, our courts characterized the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant, the Al-Nusra Front and other organizations as terrorist and extremist and banned their activities in Kyrgyzstan. On 24 July, a law was adopted that establishes accountability for mercenary activities and the participation of citizens in armed conflicts or military actions on the territory of a foreign State. Our law enforcement agencies have been active in the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, and we are determined to continue the fight.

We are sincerely interested in the peaceful and stable development of our brother country, Afghanistan. Exactly one year ago, we witnessed the inauguration of President Ghani Ahmadzai and the formation of the Government of National Unity headed by Mr. Abdullah Abdullah, which marked the first democratic transfer of power in the history of Afghanistan. We consider it important to set the Afghan economy on a path of stable and sustainable development, which is crucial in the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. We call upon the international community, particularly donors, to fully comply with their commitments to provide assistance to Afghanistan. For its part, Kyrgyzstan is ready to work closely with Afghanistan on regional trade, energy and communication projects.

The current situation in the Middle East, a region torn by protracted conflicts and sectarian violence, is of particular concern, as thousands of innocent people, including women and children, are being killed. We call on the countries of the region and the conflicting parties to start direct negotiations under the aegis of the United Nations, in order to reach a political solution to the problem. Without strong political will

and determination, it will be impossible to stop the bloodshed and to pave the way for national unity, reconciliation and reconstruction. We believe that external intervention in any conflict should remain a last resort and should be used only with the approval of the Security Council.

At the same time, we believe that special attention should be paid to the emergence of new challenges to world civilization. Those new challenges differ from the more traditional challenges of inter-State conflicts; rather they take the shape of ideological conflicts. Such challenges do not arise solely in situations of religious extremism; they also appear in numerous situations in which one State attempts to impose its vision of development on other States. In that context, a principled assessment of such practices is essential, regardless of the source of the ideology. We believe that the permanent members of the Security Council — which, as the victorious Powers of the Second World War, took responsibility for the fate of the world — should now likewise assume the responsibility to combat such practices, which undermine the very basis on which development of inter-State relations rests.

It has been 70 years since the first use of a nuclear weapon occurred, and 45 years since the date of entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Yes, humankind has managed to prevent a recurrence of the use of nuclear weapons. However, as long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of their intentional or even their unintentional use will remain. We regret to note that the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty has not yet entered into force, and that the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons ended without the adoption of the most important outcome document.

In such circumstances, the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia represents a significant contribution to the global process of nuclear disarmament. As the depositary and the coordinator of the States parties to the Treaty, Kyrgyzstan expresses its appreciation to the Russian Federation, China, France and Great Britain for their ratification of the protocol on negative security assurances and urges the United States to ratify that instrument without further delay.

We have recently witnessed the successful completion of the long-running negotiations between Iran and the group of six countries as well as the

adoption of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme. I wish to congratulate the group and the Islamic Republic of Iran on the occasion of this historic event.

As a member of the newest nuclear-weapon-free zone, Kyrgyzstan urges the countries of the Middle East to establish in the region a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems. This would serve as a milestone in the field of disarmament, thereby promoting peace in the Middle East.

One of the most important instruments in terms of sustainable development is upholding the security of the State. Here we deem crucial the strengthening of the entire spectrum of cooperation with our neighbours. Inclusive dialogue and cooperation, in our view, are the only ways to resolve the problems in our region.

On the other hand, it must be noted that not all of the existing problems in the region of Central Asia can be successfully and rapidly resolved. We refer here primarily to the development of trade and economic relations on an equitable, fair and mutually beneficial basis.

Efforts remain insufficient in the areas of resolving border issues, coordinating efforts to promote regional security, liberalizing trade rules, harmonizing national legislation and ensuring safe transit over inter-State roads and railway lines. The coordination of approaches to developing the energy and transportation sectors remains insufficient.

Issues related to the shared use of water resources are also a focus of Central Asian inter-State relations. In this regard, it should be noted that in the implementation of the national development course it has chosen, Kyrgyzstan intends to focus in particular on the development of our hydropower potential as the basis for the sustainable development of our country. Our principled position is that our water resources and our energy potential are closely linked. So to achieve its right to development, Kyrgyzstan has been using its water resources to achieve sustained social and economic development, including on the basis of the model of the green economy.

No less important at the regional level is the fact that a number of border issues have not yet been settled, although their successful resolution is clearly in keeping with the interests of all States in the region.

This will increase transit trade potential and promote the development of border infrastructure in our country, which would improve the economy and help reduce social tension in the region.

Against that backdrop, we believe that the development of a comprehensive regional cooperation framework would be fundamental to ensuring sustainable development, stability and security for the whole of the Central Asian region.

The absence of a direct multilateral political dialogue among the Central Asian countries themselves exacerbates regional problems and constrains the economic development of our countries. Unfortunately, however, we are forced to note that the common problems we face do not mean that our countries form a united front when addressing these problems in international forums.

We believe that the time has come to create a broad platform for dialogue among all five Central Asian States. It is vital to create such a new, high-quality mechanism within the framework of which we could discuss issues related to trade, economy, borders, energy, water use, transport interfaces, the environment and climate change. We call on our neighbours to consider our initiative. Kyrgyzstan, in turn, stands ready to start discussing the details of such a new regional platform.

In the political Declaration of the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit (see resolution 70/1), we agreed to strengthen democracy, good governance, the rule of law and respect for human rights, as well as to ensure economic growth, all of which make a positive contribution to sustainable development. We fully agree with this concept and intend to make a worthy contribution to international efforts to that end. However, it should be pointed out that Kyrgyzstan has its own historical policy on and path towards democracy; it is fundamental to our national identity. For centuries, democratic values have formed the basis of our society; they are not foreign, abstract ideas. Kyrgyzstan, based on its own historical and cultural experience, has been consistently developing and strengthening its model for national governance based on the principles of parliamentary democracy.

Kyrgyzstan will soon hold parliamentary elections, which will serve as an indicator of the country's level of democratic development. Their outcome will strengthen the principles of openness and togetherness of our people. The elections will be held on the basis

of the democratic principles of openness and fairness, in accordance with national legislation and our international obligations.

In August of this year, a historic event took place when Kyrgyzstan became a full-fledged member of the Eurasian Economic Union. That membership provides Kyrgyzstan with unrestricted access to a regional market for goods and services, capital and labour and with a further opportunity to develop our agriculture and industry, as well as our transport and transit potential. Participation therein will also enhance the competitiveness of our national economy and its integration into the world economy.

At the same time, as a result of our recent positive accomplishments, in 2014 the World Bank moved Kyrgyzstan from the category of poorest countries to that of middle-income countries. In order to maintain sustainable economic growth in Kyrgyzstan, 2015 was declared the "Year of Strengthening the National Economy".

I would also like to note that we in Kyrgyzstan are waging an uncompromising fight against corruption. In 2014, Kyrgyzstan improved its status in international community rankings on corruption, moving from 150th to 136th place. We are determined to continue to work in this direction in accordance with the international campaign to strengthen good governance.

The protection of human rights is one of the main priorities of our State policy. My country seeks to fulfil all of the obligations it has undertaken under the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights treaties and agreements. Today in Kyrgyzstan there is freedom of the press, and civil society is developing actively. We have also strengthened inter-ethnic relations.

Kyrgyzstan has put forward its candidacy for election to the Human Rights Council for the period 2016-2018. Here I would once again request the States Members of the United Nations to back our candidacy in the elections, to be held in October this year.

By way of conclusion, I wish to revisit the topic of the creation of the United Nations 70 years ago, which infused us with a sense of confidence in the future and has become the embodiment of the best of universal ideals and a champion of the interests of peoples of the world. In the 70 years of its existence, the United

Nations has firmly established itself as an effective and universally recognized centre for international security and responsibility.

The achievements of the United Nations include mechanisms for conflict prevention, impartial mediation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. The United Nations has also become one of the most important tools for resolving socioeconomic, financial, cultural, humanitarian and other problems at the international level. Its specialized agencies, funds, programmes and structures are highly relevant and much needed and often function as effective partners for developing countries.

Today humankind is experiencing a very difficult time its development, and the United Nations is being tested in terms of its ability to promote the modern world order. In this situation, we must pool the efforts of the Member States in addressing global challenges and threats to international security and sustainable development. At the forefront of this campaign should be a reformed United Nations, one that enjoys political and financial support from its Member States. In this respect, I encourage all to support and strengthen our Organization.

Kyrgyzstan, for its part, will always cooperate actively and responsibly with the United Nations to support its activities to find joint solutions to global problems.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Frederick A. Mitchell, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas.

Mr. Mitchell (Bahamas): I bring you, Sir, and the Assembly warm fraternal and sisterly greetings from the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, the country which one of our most famous sons, the Reverend Dr. Myles Munroe, now sadly deceased, described as the place where God resides.

I would like to pause just for a few minutes to acknowledge the expressions of concern that have come from across the world about the fact that there is a hurricane sitting over the southern part of the Bahamas. There has been considerable flooding. We have not heard of any loss of life. There is likely to be some property damage. I suppose that by morning we will know the true impact of the hurricane. I would like to thank the Assembly for its expressions of concern.

We return this year, on the seventieth anniversary of the Organization, to reaffirm the values we committed to in 1973 when we subscribed to the Charter of the United Nations — from democracy, the rule of law, the protection of the weak and vulnerable to the elimination of all forms of discrimination. Each year at this time we join the struggle anew to fight to uphold those values. Tonight, I pause to reflect on the progress we have made in some areas.

This year, for example, marks the thirtieth year since the Nassau Accord was agreed and signed by the Heads of Government of the Commonwealth of Nations in our capital city, in October 1985. That Accord led to a comprehensive set of sanctions on the apartheid regime of South Africa and helped free Nelson Mandela and establish full democracy in the Republic of South Africa.

As we look back, despite the world's troubles, we can repeat the words of the old African American preacher: "I know we ain't what we want to be, but thank God we ain't what we was." I also repeat the concerns that I raised last year: the environment, climate change, crime and security, the economy and the development of our young people (see A/69/PV.20).

I want to turn to the Sustainable Development Goals. Our Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Perry Christie, was among the world leaders who last week unanimously adopted the ambitious, transformative and universal 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), which will chart our way forward for the next 15 years and solidify and reaffirm our commitment to the pillars of the Organization and to environmental protection.

With respect to crime and security, I recall the words of a former Prime Minister of Jamaica, the late Michael Manley, who often spoke of a symbiotic relationship between the developed world and the Caribbean region. He said that each year, millions of people from the developed world travelled to our region to have a peaceful, quiet and salubrious vacation. That, he argued, was a benefit to them. The Caribbean region, including the Bahamas, provides a tourist experience that is unparalleled in the world. However, the world must pay attention to the underlying development issues that the region faces, lest that benefit be threatened. For example, we must stop the escalating crime and violence from drug trafficking, human trafficking and smuggling and juvenile gangs. That is why we have

been so strong in our support of the small arms trade treaty. The carnage of our young people, which is due in particular to the fact that guns are easily available to young males,, is not acceptable and is unsustainable.

The Bahamas was pleased to have participated actively in the First Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), held in Mexico in August. While we are disappointed that the ATT secretariat will not be located in our region, in our sister Caribbean Community (CARICOM) country of Trinidad and Tobago, we, nevertheless, are committed to the full and effective implementation of that Treaty. We call on the producers of these weapons to do more to stop their illegal export to our region and end the carnage. As Mr. Manley rightly pointed out many years ago, the developed world will not be immune if the matter is not brought under control.

With regard to development and reform, there can be no economic and social development unless we achieve gender equality and empower women and girls. The Bahamas is committed to this achievement and empowerment and has actively participated in various meetings on gender equality and the advancement of women, regionally and here at the United Nations. We were represented on 27 September at the Global Leaders Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment by our Minister for Gender Affairs, the Honourable Melanie Griffin. The Bahamas is proud to have now ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocols to the Convention of the Rights of the Child. These acts, in our view, enhance our commitment to human rights.

Scales of assessment for peacekeeping are being reviewed. The Bahamas attaches great importance to the United Nations peacekeeping operations as these, in part, underpin the purposes of the United Nations. It remains fully committed to meeting its financial obligations to the Organization in a full and timely manner and without any conditions. The Bahamas is, however, of the view that those scales of assessment should take into consideration the unique circumstances of small island developing States, particularly those that are most vulnerable. It also maintains that gross domestic product and gross national income per capita, should not serve as the main component in determining the levels of assessment for peacekeeping operations and, furthermore, that no developing country should be categorized above level C.

I would now like to address the issues of human rights, the human rights aspects of national development and the fact that we are presenting our candidature for election to the Human Rights Council. With the same critical sense of direction, commitment and urgency expressed earlier with regard to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and reform within the Organization, the Bahamas is actively crafting, with a critical eye, a 25-year citizen-driven national development plan — Vision 2040. The national development plan will provide a comprehensive overview of the economy, set policy direction for economic growth and identify strategies, programmes and projects to improve the overall health and sustainability of the Bahamian economy. It is being led by one of our young Ministers, Khaalis Rolle. It will also reinvigorate our national outlook and set new priorities for our international engagement going forward. We will enhance our expertise in the areas of maritime affairs and ocean conservation, environmental sustainability and economic and tax matters to assist in the further development and execution of our national priorities, both regionally and internationally. We are continuing to try to build a stronger Bahamas.

The Bahamas is seeking a seat on the Human Rights Council in the election to be held on 28 October. The Bahamas is the first State member of the Caribbean Community and the first English-speaking country in the Latin American and Caribbean region to do so. We do not do so lightly. Our election to the Human Rights Council would provide a unique opportunity to bring balance in the promotion and consideration of global human rights issues in that we would provide the perspective of a small State. We hope that we can count on the support of Member States for our candidature for election both to the Human Rights Council and to the Council of the International Maritime Organization.

I speak up again this year for the right of the people of the Turks and Caicos islands to self-determination. The Bahamas is among those justly demanding reparations for the damage inflicted on Caribbean societies by slavery. In the words of our poet and singer Tony McKay: "I come to collect everything that you owe me ... pay me what you owe me." The Bahamas supports our sister CARICOM State, Belize, in its quest to live within secure and recognized borders. Similarly, we are deeply concerned about the attempt to undermine the territorial integrity of our sister CARICOM State, Guyana.

The Bahamas is pleased at the rapprochement between the United States of America and Cuba. President Barack Obama of the United States has made the right, courageous decision. This enhances the peace in our neighbourhood, and our officials are working with Cuba on synergies for the development of our economies. This year we will once again support an end to the economic embargo when the draft resolution is voted on in the General Assembly.

Concerning the environment and climate change, I would like to say that we welcome the launch on 30 September of the Small Island Developing States Sustainable Energy Initiative (SIDS DOCK), which was jointly developed by the Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre and the secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, in cooperation with the Alliance of Small Island States. SIDS DOCK is meant to assist small island developing States in the Pacific and Caribbean regions in addressing the effects of climate change, providing them with a collective institutional mechanism to help them transform their national energy sectors into catalysts for sustainable economic development and generating financial resources for addressing adaptation to climate change.

We affirm our commitment to a binding agreement in Paris at the forthcoming Climate Change Conference and urge all countries to work to that end. As I said earlier, even as we speak the Bahamas is under the threat of flooding and a hurricane. When one realizes that 80 per cent of our land is lower than five feet above sea level, one understands that a tidal surge is certainly an existential threat to our country and an example of a threat posed by climate change. We urge continued support for the people of Dominica, our sister CARICOM State, which suffered enormous damage and loss of life from Tropical Storm Erika in August. We would also like to express our solidarity with the people of Chile, who suffered damage and loss of life during the recent earthquake there.

Migration and the global refugee crisis are an increasing problem around the world. In the view of the Bahamas, we are facing the most pressing refugee crisis since the Second World War. In recent months, we have seen hundreds of thousands of migrants and refugees from conflict- and war-torn areas throughout the Middle East embarking on perilous journeys in their search for refuge in Western Europe.

For the Bahamas, illegal migration through its territory is an awful reality. We are resolute in our task

of ensuring that migration is lawful, safe and orderly, and that it involves increased dialogue and greater participation in the process by all countries of origin, transit and destination. We are equally mindful of our international obligations, in tandem with our sovereign right to protect our borders. We strive to ensure that respect for human rights is integral to our migration policies. The Bahamas will, however, take all measures within the law and international norms to protect its borders and ensure that it is not overrun by illegal migrants.

I end with a plea for the young people of the world. We must commit to them afresh, here at the United Nations. They are the future, and everything we do must be done keeping in mind the fact that, whether we like it or not, we are handing things over to them. Now is the time to act to end their sense of hopelessness and their joblessness. The Prime Minister of the Bahamas said it here again last week: if we ignore them, we do so at our peril (see A/70/PV.4).

Back in 1919, the Irish poet William Butler Yeats, speaking to his generation, lamented that the centre could not hold. That poem was written before the United Nations came into being. Today, this body is at the centre of the human endeavour, so let us ensure that the centre does hold. The Bahamas is committed to the United Nations and to a sustainable future for our world. Where better than in this building, and who better than the United Nations? I say again, now more than ever we need the United Nations.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Adel Ahmed Al-Jubeir, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Al-Jubeir (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): Seventy years have passed since the United Nations was founded, and we are gathered here today to recall together the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. My country was among the founding signatory Members in 1945.

We all realize that the United Nations came into the world in the wake of two world wars that resulted in enormous financial and human costs, something that makes us understand the importance of upholding the principles of the Charter, aimed at establishing security and stability in our world. Paramount among those principles is that of preventing new destructive and lethal wars and conflicts. We should not forget

that the main principle and goal is the maintenance of international peace and security. That can be achieved only by promoting justice, equality and respect for international law among our nations, and in particular the principle of State sovereignty, in accordance with the Treaty of Westphalia of 1648, which established State independence and sovereignty as the basis of modern international relations.

The Palestinian question has become a permanent item on the General Assembly's agenda. Today, despite all the initiatives and opinions that have been put forward, the Palestinian people continue to suffer and to be deprived of their right to live in dignity, in flagrant defiance of the rules of international law and internationally legitimate resolutions. We are in urgent need of a solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict, based on the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the Arab Peace Initiative, which was promoted by my country and adopted 13 years ago by the Arab and Islamic worlds and has garnered wide international support. Its aim is to establish an independent Palestinian State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. That is why we repeat our denunciation of Israel's violations of the Al-Aqsa Mosque, which have exacerbated the conflict, as well as extremism and violence in the world.

The crisis in Syria has now entered its fifth year. The international community continues to be incapable of taking decisive steps to save the Syrian people from the machinery of killing, destruction and forced displacement operated by Bashar Al-Assad, which has resulted in the deaths of more than 300,000 people and the displacement of 12 million Syrians and the destruction of the country in one of the worst humanitarian disasters we have seen in our times. The only way to resolve this crisis is through a political solution based on the Geneva I final communiqué (A/66/865, annex), in order to maintain Syria's national unity and preserve its State institutions, both civil and military, and to create a transitional council on which Bashar Al-Assad and those who have Syrian blood on their hands have no place. We will continue to push for such a solution and will be among the first countries to support the Syrian people and to contribute to alleviating their suffering.

The legitimate coalition forces accomplished much in Yemen. Chief among their achievements was the liberation of the city of Aden and of the Bab al-Mandab Strait, which secured international maritime freedom. The military option was a last resort following the

coup d'état staged by the Houthis and Saleh in which they seized power and laid siege to the presidential palace and residence in Aden, thereby threatening the legitimate President. In response, we initiated a military intervention on the basis of a demand by the legitimate Government of Yemen and in accordance with Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations. Our aim is to find a political solution based on the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, the conclusions of the national dialogue, and Security Council resolution 2216 (2015). Although we recognize that the Houthis are part and parcel of the social fabric in Yemen, that does not give them the prerogative to own militias outside the framework of the State of Yemen or at the expense of the rest of the Yemeni people.

Certain parties are trying to exacerbate and escalate the crisis in Yemen through incitement and arms smuggling, as when an Iranian ship laden with arms for the rebels was intercepted on 26 September. Our Kingdom and our partners are intensifying efforts in order to mobilize international humanitarian assistance to Yemen. The King Salman Humanitarian Aid and Relief Centre has provided assistance to the brotherly people of Yemen. His Majesty, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, is striving to improve the conditions of the Yemenis who live illegally in the Kingdom by providing employment, education and health care.

Convinced that the realization of the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations should focus on the maintenance of security and peace the world over, we were in the vanguard of the nations calling for a zone free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East. That is why we welcomed the recent agreement between the P5+1 and the Islamic Republic of Iran, which prevents Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. We call on Iran to renounce its meddling in Arab affairs, which we will firmly resist in our desire to build good-neighbourly relations with Iran, based on mutual respect, good neighbourliness and non-interference in the affairs of other countries. We also call on Iran to end its occupation of the three islands in the Arabian Gulf belonging to the sisterly United Arab Emirates.

We are among the States targeted by terrorism and extremism. We continue to fight terrorists and are determined to find a way to eradicate the grave phenomenon of terrorism. We were among the first countries to combat terrorism in all its intellectual and ideological aspects and to seek to cut off its financial

resources. We denounce the attempt by terrorists to attribute their crimes to Islam, the religion of love, peace, moderation and tolerance.

We attach primary importance to development issues, especially in developing countries. Successful development hinges on the international community's respect for a nation's specificities, whether historical, ethnic, religious or cultural. The achievement of sustainable development should therefore take into account the specific aims of each individual country and its particular level of development. For that reason, we have been actively and directly involved in shaping the Sustainable Development Goals.

In closing, I wish to stress the role of the United Nations and its bodies in our changing world. The challenges we face in various fields make it incumbent upon us to enhance the role of the United Nations and to reinvigorate its bodies, pushing ahead with the reform of the Organization so that it can keep pace with the changes in the international arena.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Rimbink Pato, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Immigration of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea.

Mr. Pato (Papua New Guinea): On behalf of the Government and the people of Papua New Guinea, I congratulate the President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session on his election. We also pay tribute to his predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, Foreign Minister of Uganda, for his able leadership as President of the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session and for steering the course for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. Furthermore, we extend our gratitude to the Secretary-General for his unfailing commitment and visionary leadership of the United Nations, thereby ensuring that the spirit of the Charter remains an enduring pillar for our collective well-being as we retool it to meet the emerging challenges and opportunities of the twenty-first century and beyond.

We commend the theme of the general debate, "The United Nations at 70: a new commitment to action", and pledge our support to the presidency in ensuring the effective implementation of the transformative 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) that was adopted unanimously a few days ago. As Papua New Guinea celebrates its fortieth year of nationhood, we also join the United Nations family this

year in marking the founding of the United Nations 70 years ago. My Government is committed to working in close partnership with all stakeholders to implement the post-2015 development agenda, which in turn must be nationally owned and driven.

We can succeed only when countries truly own and lead their national development plans and strategies, while integrating the 2030 Agenda. Consistent with its 2014 national strategy for responsible sustainable development, Papua New Guinea recognizes that a healthy, well-educated population is the underlying driver for development.

The principle of responsible, sustainable development means that we do not conduct ourselves in a manner that will compromise future generations. The high-level political forum must support national, regional and global efforts with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and avoid issues such as those that undermined the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Government of Papua New Guinea has adopted enabling national policies, strategies and plans to provide an environment conducive to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the SDGs. Those policies cover the areas of population, water and sanitation, hygiene, free basic health services and tuition-free education. The free-education policy has led to the enrolment in schools of an additional 2 million children in the past two years.

Papua New Guinea has laid a strong foundation for development in the past decade. This has resulted in unprecedented economic growth, which reached double digits in 2012. However, the current depression in international commodity prices and stock markets has negatively impacted the country's economic performance. We are taking steps to ensure that the recent adverse conditions do not jeopardize the positive gains made in the past 10 years. Papua New Guinea is part of the global economy and, as such, seeks a stable, equitable international economic and financial architecture to support our efforts in advancing human development. The challenge for Papua New Guinea is to translate enhanced economic growth and other transformations into improved practical human development outcomes, in order to achieve our National Vision 2050. That should then result in the achievement of the SDGs.

As we gather here today, there are many conflicts worldwide, with millions of people displaced and forced

to leave their homes under risky conditions, in search of safety and security. Threats to peace and security hinder the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. Those security concerns, including transnational crime and international terrorism, if not adequately contained, will have proliferating cross-border effects on global peace, stability and economic prosperity, including for us in the Pacific Islands region. Papua New Guinea echoes the calls on all conflicting parties to amicably discuss and resolve their differences under the mandate of the Charter of the United Nations, with a view to maintaining global peace and security.

Papua New Guinea is proud to contribute to the United Nations and regional peacekeepers in South Sudan and Darfur. We hope to increase our deployment numbers as our economy grows.

The global refugee crisis has reached Papua New Guinea. We have received refugees and asylum seekers since independence. We are currently working closely with the Government of Australia by providing an asylum-seeker processing facility and contributing to finding lasting solutions to the global challenge. We strongly believe that it is high time for the global community to seriously address the root causes of the refugee situation and the forced displacement of people and families.

The illicit trade in small arms and light weapons remains a serious threat to national and global peace, security and development. In that light, Papua New Guinea has prioritized policy initiatives and programmes to curb the importation and trading of firearms.

Papua New Guinea reaffirms its commitment to upholding and protecting fundamental human rights. Our national population policy 2015-2024 recognizes that human rights are closely intertwined with sustainable development.

Papua New Guinea welcomes the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. This global mechanism is essential, given the increasing frequency and severity of climate-induced natural disasters, particularly in our Pacific islands region. Recognizing the need for better preparation for timely responses to disasters and crisis situations, the Pacific subregional grouping — the Melanesian Spearhead Group — is in the process of establishing a humanitarian and emergency technical response coordination centre. We welcome technical

and capacity-building assistance from the international community to support our efforts, as provided for under international agreements, including the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway.

The world has changed since the formation of the United Nations 70 years ago. The current United Nations system requires urgent reform, and we support the efforts of the Secretary-General in that regard. On Security Council reform, we welcome the General Assembly's recent adoption of decision 69/560, on equitable distribution and representation in the Council's membership. Additionally, Papua New Guinea supports the initiative to review the use of the veto power in the Security Council, particularly during times of grave humanitarian crisis and mass atrocities.

In the regional context, we are fully supportive of the 2014 Pacific Islands Forum reforms, whereby a new regional development road map — the Framework for Pacific Regionalism — was adopted to promote greater regional cooperation, integration and connectivity. Through this Framework, Papua New Guinea committed \$100 million for 2014-2018 to its regional outreach programme, to support Pacific SIDS in critical areas of development such as good governance, education, health, capacity-building, climate change, relief assistance and natural disaster reconstruction efforts.

Our assistance to Pacific SIDS exemplifies and promotes the spirit of South-South cooperation, and we encourage others to join us in similar partnerships. In that respect, Papua New Guinea has made modest financial contributions to Fiji, the Marshall Islands, Niue, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, as well as to various regional entities including the Pacific Islands Forum, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the Melanesian Spearhead Group, to add value to regional partnerships.

The Pacific region continues to attach critical importance to ensuring the sustainable development, management and conservation of the Pacific Ocean for our peoples' livelihoods, food security and economic development. In this regard, we welcome SDG 14, on conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources. We call upon development partners to assist us in addressing various challenges related to the oceans, including illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing in our territorial waters.

Climate change poses imminent dangers with wide-ranging implications, including threats not only to human security, survival and development, but also to the entire global ecosystem. Our Climate Change Management Act is possibly the first legislation of its kind in the Pacific islands. It provides for funding arrangements to assist in the adaptation to climate change.

Along with other Pacific island States, Papua New Guinea looks forward to the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris and hopes that a new comprehensive and legally binding climate agreement will be adopted to set the schedules for the reduction of carbon emissions from both the developed and developing world. The most imminent threat resulting from sea level rise due to climate change is the forced displacement of populations and complete inundation and loss of sovereign territories, particularly in Pacific small island developing States. We therefore call on the Security Council to deal decisively with the implications of climate change and security issues.

The recent Pacific Island Forum summit in Port Moresby adopted the Pacific Island Forum Leaders Declaration on Climate Change Action. Leaders were deeply concerned about the serious effects and impacts of climate change, particularly on national and regional development and security issues. Among other things, the Pacific island leaders declared that an increase of 1.5°C would severely exacerbate the particular challenges facing the most vulnerable smaller island States of the Pacific and urged that all efforts be made to keep us within the global temperature goal, as noted by the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC at its twentieth session, in its decision 1/CP.20.

The 2015 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Declaration on Climate Change Action also expresses an expectation that there will be access to financial resources for climate change actions and resilience in vulnerable developing countries; recognition of the special circumstances and vulnerability of SIDS, particularly those in the Pacific, and the least developed countries (LDCs); support for inclusion in the Paris outcome document of loss and damage as a critical and stand-alone element, building on the ongoing work of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage; and finally, recognition of impacts of climate change on women and youth, the

elderly, the disabled, indigenous peoples and other vulnerable and marginalized groups, acknowledging their contributions to effective implementation of the Paris outcome document.

Let us not leave anyone — particularly those of us in SIDS and LDCs — behind, drowning. We must strive to come together in accordance with the rule of law for a better, more secure and prosperous world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in the general debate for this meeting.

Several representatives have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. May I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second intervention and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): We have requested the floor in response to India's statement in the general debate (see A/70/PV.22).

India's attempts to deny its illegal occupation of Jammu and Kashmir are a travesty of history. To perpetuate its occupation, India has deployed over 700,000 troops in Indian-occupied Jammu and Kashmir. Only the occupier would oppose the implementation of Security Council resolutions that promised self-determination to the people of the disputed State of Jammu and Kashmir.

Over 100,000 Kashmiris have been killed. Thousands of women have been widowed and raped and thousands of children orphaned by this brutal occupation and the most egregious form of State terrorism by India. Independent human rights organizations have confirmed the existence of over 6,000 unnamed mass graves in Indian-occupied Kashmir. If India had respect for international law and moral courage, it would end its reign of terror, withdraw its troops and let the Kashmiris freely decide their future in the United Nations-mandated plebiscite promised to them by the resolutions of the Security Council.

Security Council resolutions 47 (1948) of 21 April 1948, 51 (1948) of 3 June 1948, 80 (1950) of 14 March 1950, 91 (1951) of 30 March 1951, 122 (1957) of 24 January 1957 and the resolutions of the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan of 13 August 1948 and 5 January 1949 declare that the final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir

would be made in accordance with the will of the people expressed through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations. The people of Jammu and Kashmir await fulfilment of that promise.

The core issue of Jammu and Kashmir cannot be cast aside by empty rhetoric. It has been and will always be at the top of the agenda of any talks between India and Pakistan. That is because durable peace and stability in the region depend on a just and lasting settlement of this dispute, in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council. It is therefore disingenuous of India to ignore the serious peace initiative proposed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan from this rostrum (see A/70/PV.19).

While proclaiming its willingness to talk, India has imposed preconditions, knowing that they would be unacceptable to Pakistan. India's insistence on limiting the talks to a one-point agenda proves that it is neither interested nor serious in engaging in a genuine dialogue. Using the terrorism bogey, India has not only stalled the bilateral dialogue but also vitiated the overall atmosphere between the two countries.

Pakistan's commitment and its role and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism, including the success of our ongoing counter-terrorism operations, have been acknowledged and praised by the entire international community. The entire world, with the exception of India, is also united in unequivocally condemning terrorism. India is insensitive to the tragic human dimension of terrorism. It seems to suggest that acts of terrorism in Pakistan are acceptable. By doing so, India in fact seeks to mask its own support and sponsorship of terrorism in Pakistan.

India has also failed to bring to justice the perpetrators of terrorism against innocent civilians in the 2007 Samjhauta Express bombings. The decision of the Indian Government not to challenge the bail granted to Swami Aseemanand, the man accused in the case, raises serious doubts about India's willingness to convict its nationals involved in terrorist incidents against Muslims. That is a continuation of the sad saga of the massacre of Muslims in Gujarat.

Pakistan has today handed over to the Secretary-General dossiers containing evidence of Indian involvement in terrorism and fomenting instability in Pakistan. The dossiers include details of Indian interference and support for terrorism in Balochistan

and Karachi, as well as of its security and intelligence agencies linked with the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan, especially in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

The international community supports dialogue between India and Pakistan. Despite India's hostile attitude, it remains our desire to move forward in an open and constructive manner. Our Prime Minister's peace initiative is in line with his vision of a friendly neighbourhood that he enunciated immediately after taking office two years ago. We hope that India will respond positively in the interest of peace and prosperity — the cherished collective objectives of our peoples.

Mrs. Vadiati (Islamic Republic of Iran): Once more, the representative of the Israeli regime (see A/70/PV.22) demonstrated clearly how much he grieves the loss of the smokescreen that he needed to use for hiding his regime's crimes and atrocities against the Palestinian people and how much he regrets the nuclear deal between Iran and the P5+1, which is harmful to his schemes. He allocated the major part of his speech to attacking all members of the international community for their strong support for the nuclear deal, a deal that just removes one layer of tension from the very tense Middle East. He and his cronies expected to continue basking in the happiness of keeping everybody busy with the phony issue while they continue to keep Palestine under their occupation and brutally suppress any resistance.

The support that the Israeli regime provides to the elements of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham in the occupied Syrian Golan and the vicinity is further evidence that they wish to keep all tensions high in the region and to stoke them. They wish to keep tensions rising because peace and stability in the region is an existential threat to them. If the region becomes quiet, they will be back in the spotlight and will need to explain why they keep expanding illegal settlements in the occupied Palestinian territory while pretending to have been engaged with them in the so-called peace process for the past 25 years without any results.

Moreover, the Israeli regime and its cronies in many countries did whatever was in their power to prevent Governments from supporting the nuclear deal, and they utterly failed. In that context, it is quite understandable why the Israeli representative was so angry and shamefully insulted the representatives of the nations represented in the Assembly Hall and the whole international community.

My Government is committed to faithfully implementing its obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and, with the help of the international community, to restoring stability and peace to our region. In that light, we will surely see

more annoyed and angry representatives of the Israeli regime year after year in the Assembly. The angrier they are, the calmer our region will be.

The meeting rose at 8.45 p.m.