



# General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

**4**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Tuesday, 24 September 2019, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Muhammad-Bande ..... (Nigeria)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Amde (Ethiopia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3.55 p.m.*

## Address by Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Angola.

*Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Lourenço** (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like to salute all present from this important rostrum. I hope that this session will represent a further decisive step in the search for peace and international security and towards a fairer and more balanced relationship among all nations.

Ongoing political and military conflicts, including pervasive economic inequalities, pose a permanent threat to all humankind — a fact that compels us to unite in a common effort to solve the real problems that constitute our priorities, such as by protecting the environment and definitively eradicating hunger and

poverty, endemic diseases, human trafficking, drug trafficking, illegal immigration, terrorism and other threats against peace, in order to create an environment conducive to social progress and development. In order to meet those noble goals, it is imperative that we focus all our efforts on the peaceful resolution of conflicts that have created a permanent climate of tension and imminent war in some countries.

We stand for multilateralism in international relations, as it alone contributes effectively to the world's peace and security. For that reason, it is never too much to insist on the need for a deep reform of the United Nations, so that the Organization can better fulfil its great responsibility for conflict management and resolution and the prevention of war. We reiterate the need to increase the number of permanent members of the Security Council, in particular to include members from Africa and South America, as the current composition, which at the time of the Council's formation mainly comprised the winning Powers of the Second World War, no longer reflects the need for a fairer global geostrategic balance.

The prevailing tension on the Korean peninsula, which constitutes a danger to world peace, should remain one of the major concerns of the international community. We therefore encourage and commend the diplomatic efforts being made by the major world Powers — the United States of America, Russia and China — to make that part of our planet a zone of peace and security.

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We are also concerned about the perpetual Middle East conflict. It is crucial that the many relevant Security Council resolutions be upheld, in particular those calling for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State that can live in peace with the State of Israel and for those two countries to develop normal neighbourly relations and economic cooperation.

With regard to the growing tension in the Persian Gulf, where extensive reserves of crude oil are threatened by latent conflict that imminently endangers global energy security, we call on all parties to exercise moderation. The best solutions are found at the negotiating table.

Africa, our continent, has been ravaged by terrorism, especially that of a religious fundamentalist nature, which affects countries such as Mali, the Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, Burkina Faso, Chad, the Central African Republic and Somalia, to name just a few. The international community — and the African Union in particular — should pay special attention to the need to normalize the political situation in Libya, as its territories, which are controlled by different militias, constitute the logistical source of the arms and ammunition of the fundamentalist groups operating in Africa.

Angola has made a modest contribution to conflict prevention and resolution as often as it can, in particular in the Southern African Development Community and the Great Lakes and Central African regions, the most recent case being the Rwanda-Uganda memorandum of understanding signed in Luanda, which seems to represent an important step towards preventing a simmering conflict that was about to break out.

I would like to take this opportunity to call from this rostrum for an end to the decades-old economic embargo imposed on Cuba, especially given the recent window of opportunity for rapprochement and normalcy of relations. Allow me to also call for an end to the current trade war between two economic Powers, the United States and China, considering the negative consequences that are already being felt in the global economy.

The world is helplessly witnessing the effects of climate change and global warming, which have been worsening as confirmed by the latest scientific studies, as well as the rapid rise of natural hazards and their devastating consequences, such as the typhoons,

cyclones, tsunamis, floods and even severe droughts that are proliferating around the world.

Stark examples of such hazards are multiplying all over the world, which leads us to associate ourselves with those who point out the responsibility of those who persist in ignoring those signs and feel entitled to continue supporting polluting industries. We welcome the initiative taken by the recent protests in many countries around the world, which have become a true symbol of advocacy to preserve the environment and defend our planet — our common home.

Let us work together to preserve the remaining rainforests in South America, Africa and Asia, such as the forests of the Amazon and Congo river basins, which have not yet been completely devastated by humankind. Those are the planet's last reserves for oxygen renewal and also absorb carbon dioxide and other pollutants that deplete the ozone layer.

Although noble and fair, the Sustainable Development Goals, which were intended to give continuity to the Millennium Development Goals, are not themselves a guarantee of better results in the future. In order for us to achieve the desired levels of sustainable development, it is important to make the expected outcomes of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development the object of positive brainstorming on alternative projects that are appropriate to the political situations and concrete realities of the countries most affected.

Conflict, hunger, misery and disease cannot be eliminated by political and bureaucratic solutions alone, but also — and more importantly — by good governance, combating corruption and other social evils, protecting the environment and strengthening values such as human dignity, responsible and inclusive citizenship, social justice and equal opportunities.

It is important in that context to highlight the role of young people, the only force capable of overcoming all those challenges. It is imperative to enhance the quality of their education, both technically and culturally, so that their specific training takes into account the contribution of the different cultures and civilizations which, for centuries, have helped us to better understand and love the world of our fellow human beings. It is with firm hope in the commitment of young people that I remain optimistic and continue to believe that we can bequeath a better world to our descendants.

Speaking of Angola in particular, I would like to highlight the major ongoing reforms that aim to build a truly democratic State that respects the rule of law, fights corruption and impunity, and promotes a culture of accountability among civil servants. Such reforms will create a business environment that is more attractive to domestic and foreign private investment, thereby increasing the domestic production of goods and services, reducing the import of foreign goods and increasing the range and quantity of exportable domestic goods as well as the supply of jobs.

The Government is addressing all those challenges very seriously and transparently. Among other measures, approximately 150 State-owned companies and assets from different sectors of the economy, including the oil and gas sector, are being privatized. We have also launched an ambitious plan for the construction and rehabilitation of water and energy production and distribution infrastructures, as well as the construction of hospitals, educational establishments and secondary and tertiary roads and other repairs across the country's 164 municipalities, the budget for which has already been secured.

Finally, I take this opportunity to declare that Angola is now open to the world and to foreign investment in all areas of its economy.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Angola for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço, President of the Republic of Angola, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Portuguese Republic.

*Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Rebelo de Sousa** (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): What a happy coincidence it is to follow, at this rostrum, President João Lourenço from the brotherly country of Angola, 20 years after the referendum that opened the door to the independence of Timor-Leste. That confirmed the strength of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, which is taking steps towards greater internal mobility.

I would ask you, Sir, to convey our congratulations to President Tijjani Muhammad-Bande on his election, which symbolizes the presence of the African continent to which we are bound by ties of affection, deep friendship and respect. I would also like to thank his predecessor, María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, for her always tireless and warm-hearted performance of her duties.

Portugal welcomes and reaffirms its support for all the priorities that Secretary-General António Guterres has pursued in his coherent, dynamic and resolute mandate, including by defending effective multilateralism, based on international law and the Charter of the United Nations, and its legal extension to new global realities, such as the oceans, combating terrorism and artificial intelligence.

We also support his reform of the United Nations system in the areas of conflict prevention; development cooperation; peacekeeping; human rights, in particular those of children, young people and women; migration and refugees; and, as always, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development at all levels. Yesterday's successful Climate Action Summit is an example of such work, as well as the Sustainable Development Goals Summit, the Ocean Conference, the digital cooperation initiative and the Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites.

We recall the creation — 100 years ago — of the League of Nations, an initiative of United States President Woodrow Wilson, who signed its establishing treaty but saw an isolationist Congress reject its ratification upon his return home. The United States of America, which had been the starting point of what might have been a new international order, shunned the new organization and never became a permanent member of its deliberative body. For ideological reasons, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics did not wish to join the founders of the League of Nations either and went on to join too late.

Without the United States and, for a long time, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the League of Nations — itself conceived for a waning imperial and colonial world — never recovered from the lack of commitment of one of the world Powers and the late entry of another, which coincided with the growth of ever more hypernationalist, isolationist and unilateralist leadership. It was a failed attempt to embrace multilateralism.

The Second World War began exactly 80 years ago. What had appeared in 1919 to be a promise, however precarious, had become a hecatomb by 1939. Notwithstanding the differences in time frame and style, it is worth stopping and reflecting for a moment on the lessons of that still recent past now that we are entering the seventy-fifth year of existence of the United Nations.

We believe that it is worth fighting for stronger international laws to help steer relations among States and peoples; for international organizations to help solve problems that affect everyone, not just a few; for a political and not merely a technical role for those organizations; and for a multilateral vision that is shared by all, including those deemed most powerful, because nobody is an island and nobody, alone or with a few allies, can address the increasingly complex problems that affect us all.

It is important to bear in mind the lessons that history has taught us and not to mistake transitory power or leadership for eternity. Over the last 40 to 50 years we have seen many changes. The world used to have two super Powers and now has one — an absolute super Power, meaning that multilateralism is now even more important. The world has indeed changed a great deal.

It is all the more essential that we use dialogue to prevent conflict and agree initiatives in areas of common interest. We must resist the temptation to fixate on our own power, our upcoming elections and the immediate demands of difficult times or of rapid change, which may lead us to ignore, fail to accept and reject others and pretend that the rest of the world does not exist and can only exist if it resembles us.

In line with Secretary-General António Guterres' guidance, Portugal calls for multilateralism, investment in international organizations, the alignment of the 2030 Agenda, the payment on time and in full of assessed contributions and United Nations reform of

its management, development system and peace and security architecture. We continue to believe that it is important to alter the composition of the Security Council to include the membership of one or more countries from Africa and of Brazil and India at the very least.

We also advocate for participation in peacekeeping operations; the adoption of a resolution on a moratorium on the death penalty; engagement in the twenty-fifth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Chile; the conclusion of the treaty on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction; and the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

At the same time, Portugal is proud of its participation in eight peacekeeping operations, six of them in Africa. We are also involved in European Union training and capacity-building missions in Africa, especially in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, where Portugal has a quick reaction force that is truly essential for the protection of civilians.

We are also proud to be organizing, together with Kenya, the United Nations Ocean Conference, which is to be held in Lisbon in June 2020 in synergy with the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. We take pride in the launch of the national road map for carbon neutrality 2050, an instrument for economic competitiveness, employment, wealth and social justice.

We recall the success of the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth and Youth Forum Lisbon+21 and, in that regard, we presented the traditional draft resolution on policies and programmes involving youth (E/CN.5/2019/L.3). We also draw attention to the measures we have adopted for the promotion of women's rights in the 40 years since the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and in the 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action.

We not only support the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the global compact on refugees, but we have also approved a national implementation plan on the issue. Ever since our nation was founded nine centuries ago, we have been a country of migrants and there are millions of Portuguese citizens scattered around the world.

We combat xenophobia and intolerance and view education as a priority, as shown by the global support platform for Syrian students, an initiative of President Jorge Sampaio. Moreover, we advocate for inclusive and sustainable development in migrants' and refugees' countries of origin in order to prevent and eradicate terrorism, radicalization and human trafficking, while also safeguarding peace and the rights of peoples and communities.

This autumn we have seen global and regional indicators that point in opposite directions, some of them troubling and others — regrettably fewer in number — favourable and even promising. In the international arena, we are seeing the emergence of a trade, economic, financial and currency war, an open arms race, a cyberpresence used as a fairly common means of external intervention, and disinvestment in international law and international organizations. Examples of the most acute situations in the world include Yemen and Libya and, despite the steps taken to resolve the situation, Syria, as well as the Sahel, where the situation is increasingly critical.

We advocate progress in maternal and child health and the agreement between the European Union and MERCOSUR, which we hope will go hand in hand with a shared sensitivity to environmental challenges. We also have fresh hope for the Republic of North Macedonia and hope the window of opportunity regarding the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula will remain open. In addition, we support a stable transition in the Democratic Republic of Congo and further promising developments in Eastern Africa.

Equally important is the vision for a closer cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union and between the European Union and the African Union. Portugal, which was directly involved in the first Europe-Africa summits, is willing to organize the next meeting of the European Union and African Union leaders during its upcoming presidency of the Council of the European Union in 2021.

In short, we have positive hopes for the future. We must stay on this path, which will enable us to not only harness multilateralism but also practice patriotism in our own countries. To be a patriot is to be proud of the past, one's roots and one's history, while also understanding the world as it is and that others are also entitled to be proud of their countries. If we no longer

act as islands then dialogue and a common patriotic spirit will be able to govern the world.

*(spoke in English)*

After 75 years we continue to believe in the United Nations. Only those who disregard history and therefore do not mind repeating the mistakes of the past minimize the role of the United Nations. In this Hall, fortunately we are all patriots, because we love our motherlands, our roots and our history and only want the best for our present and future. The best does not mean ignoring the world we live in; we all depend on so many others. We, as patriots, know that we need more and not less United Nations. One hundred years after its founding, let us not repeat the same mistakes of the League of Nations.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Portuguese Republic for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Rwanda.

*Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Kagame:** The international community stands at a crossroads. The decade starting in 2020 will either be remembered in history as a turning point or as the moment when multilateralism lost its way. Fortunately, the path forward is clear. Never before have we had such well-defined road maps for joint action on development, climate change and global health. I therefore congratulate the Secretary-General and his team, as well as the President of the General Assembly, for the relevance of this week's high-level events.

The transformational potential of universal health coverage is now at the top of the global health agenda, thanks to the outstanding leadership of the World

Health Organization and many other stakeholders. In Rwanda, more than 90 per cent of the population have insurance coverage, which has contributed to significant improvements in health outcomes, showing that it is possible for countries at every income level to make health care affordable and accessible for all. We must also commit to replenish the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization. Those are not things that should or can be done on Africa's behalf.

The Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development are also Africa's goals. Africa has the means and the responsibility to fulfil them, which is why the African Union continues to strengthen its capabilities and effectiveness. Next July, for example, trading will commence under the African Continental Free Trade Area — the largest of its kind in the world.

However, Africa continues to lag behind other regions on the Sustainable Development Goals despite the fact that our continent is home to several of the fastest growing economies in the world. Growth must be fully inclusive so that inequality within countries continues to diminish. The fundamentals needed to unlock that transformation are already in place. With a concerted push involving our partners, including in the private sector, it is indeed possible to make up for lost time and to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Closer cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations is streamlining the implementation and measurement process and that good partnership will continue to grow stronger.

All around us we see the urgency of fulfilling our commitments to slow the pace of global warming and adapt our infrastructure to a changing climate. One key lesson of yesterday's Climate Action Summit was that innovative technologies and approaches are allowing us to act without slowing economic growth. Perhaps the most effective action that countries can take is to ratify and fully implement the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Security and sustainability are the prerequisites for rapid progress towards a more equitable and prosperous world.

It is essential for Africa and the rest of the international community to work closely together on peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts with mutual respect. In the coming weeks, Rwanda is preparing to

receive and protect a number of refugees and asylum-seekers from detention camps in Libya. The support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the African Union is greatly appreciated. We call on every Member of the United Nations to uphold their legal obligations in a spirit of solidarity.

Those partnerships are a clear sign that we can cooperate to address complex problems. Africa itself is also a source of solutions. There is no doubt that the challenge of global inequality can be addressed only by working together. Rwanda stands ready to do its part, including by guaranteeing the rights and opportunities of women and girls. I therefore take this opportunity to invite Members to Kigali in November for the Global Gender Summit.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Rwanda for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Finland.

*Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Niinistö:** Let me congratulate Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande on his election as the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. He can count on Finland's strong support in his work to guide this important organ. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for his tireless efforts in leading the United Nations.

I have been glad to note how the new President of the General Assembly has stressed a trust deficit as a key concern for the world today. I could not agree more. I believe trust to be a central prerequisite for any functioning community — local or national, regional

or global. Without trust, even the best of institutions cannot deliver. Without trust in institutions, we are less capable of acting together to address the challenges of the future; without trust in a sustainable future, we will not trust each other. That vicious cycle needs to be broken.

First, let me begin with trust in a sustainable future. Crucial questions concerning that trust are at the heart of two major summits here in New York this week — one on sustainable development in general and another on climate action in particular. Under both headings, we already have the framework for the transformation we need. And yet, despite our joint commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement, the results are far too meagre. Recent reports show that we are not nearly on track to achieve the goals that we set together. The inability to keep our promises on matters of this magnitude will inevitably erode trust — the trust of citizens in their leaders, to be sure, but also trust among generations and, above all, our collective trust in our common future. Nothing less than the fate of our planet is at stake.

For yesterday's Climate Action Summit, the Secretary-General asked us to come with a plan, not with a speech. Indeed, a good plan is already more concrete than a speech, but that is only the beginning. In order to build trust in our common future what we really need are results — deeds, not just promises; and action, not just targets. The pressing need for action applies to all 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Still, Goal 13, "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts", stands out as the most urgent. The rapidly growing impact of climate change also makes achieving the other SDGs more difficult.

The scientific evidence on climate change has long been clear, but it is no longer just a question for the future. Climate change is already here in the form of melting glaciers, large-scale forest fires and extreme weather events across the globe from the Arctic to the Amazon. Even if we were able to end all of our carbon dioxide emissions tomorrow, we would have to live for decades to come with the climate change we have already caused. We are no longer able to completely avoid the climate crisis.

We also have to achieve concrete results in adapting to the inevitable, although that should not distract us from what we can do to prevent further damage. We all have to accelerate our efforts, reduce our emissions and

increase our carbon sinks. We cannot afford to wait for others to move first. The climate crisis calls for leaders, not just followers.

As for Finland, we have recently set ourselves new climate targets. The Finnish Government is committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2035 and to be carbon negative soon after that. We have already decided to ban the use of coal for energy by 2029 and we will stop using fossil fuel for heating by 2030. We are rightly proud of those targets, but targets are just the beginning. Only verifiable results matter and only concrete deeds serve as a credible example to others.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to one example. Finland and Chile are co-chairing the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, while the Helsinki principles of the Coalition are driving the systematic change we need with concrete deeds and the powerful tools of finance ministers — taxation and budgeting, public investment and procurement. When those instruments work for climate action, the prospects for a carbon-neutral world are much better. There are now 40 committed members in the Coalition and we warmly welcome new ones.

Secondly, I want to raise the issue of trust in institutions. We have all seen how rapidly that trust has evaporated in recent years. The whole concept of multilateralism is increasingly under threat — from the competition among great Powers and from a lack of respect for existing agreements. The entire rules-based order is endangered. Passively complaining about the crisis of multilateralism will not help; instead, we have to become more active and determined in defending it.

Trust in institutions is ours to rebuild and the international order is ours to shape. We, together, are the United Nations. The United Nations as an Organization also bears a responsibility in that regard. It has to show that it deserves the trust of its Members. Finland has steadfastly supported the Secretary-General in his reform agenda. Again, the results are what matters.

The disappearing trust in institutions and regimes is particularly dangerous in the field of arms control. On nuclear weapons, we are actually losing the last elements of control altogether. With the collapse of the INF Treaty and the uncertain future of the New START Treaty, the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons next year is now of utmost importance.

We should also be able to address other weapons of mass destruction, conventional weapons and completely new weapon technologies. We can only manage those challenges together. Finland therefore fully supports the Secretary-General's efforts to bring the disarmament agenda back to the core of the United Nations.

Thirdly and to conclude, I will turn to trust in each other. Trust among States and trust among individuals is the fundamental basis for peace and security. In the absence of trust, the potential for conflict grows and once conflicts have erupted, their resolution always requires rebuilding trust. It is our collective duty to seek solutions to the many ongoing wars and conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, Ukraine and elsewhere. Of at least equal importance is preventing new conflicts from breaking out in the first place. Finland has always emphasized the value of dialogue in its own diplomatic relations. We are also happy to provide our good offices to assist others.

Trust in each other is also closely linked to equality between genders and among generations. The future of our planet lies on the shoulders of today's young women and men. The inclusion of women and young people in peace processes, conflict prevention and mediation has proven to be decisive. We are approaching the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most progressive policy documents ever for advancing the rights of women. Unfortunately, there is not much cause for celebration.

We are deeply worried to see that sexual and reproductive health and rights are now being questioned. Finland remains strongly committed to advancing the rights of women. Respect for universal human rights is the key to a peaceful and just world. Finland strongly believes in multilateral cooperation on human rights, with the Human Rights Council as its cornerstone. Accordingly, we have announced Finland's candidacy for the Human Rights Council for the period from 2022 to 2024.

As the United Nations nears its seventy-fifth anniversary, the Organization may well be more important than ever. Our shared global problems cry out for shared global solutions. Together we are also better able to seize new global opportunities, and there is no organization better placed to lead that work than the United Nations. In order to unleash its full potential, it is our responsibility to reduce the trust deficit.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Finland for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco.

*His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**Prince Albert** (*spoke in French*): We would be either presumptuous or dangerously indifferent if we did not assess the impact of the renewed call from the world's youth about our climate emergency and failed to respond to it with speed, ambition and effectiveness. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande is well aware of our young people's importance. The African continent, which he is honouring as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, is the only region in the world whose population under the age of 24 continues to grow. Those young people behind the movements in support of our planet are quite rightly driven by an unprecedented anxiety about the future but above all by an immense hopefulness that should push us to make real change. We must reflect those messages in our policies if we are to respond bravely and with determination.

*Mr. Balé (Congo), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

This year's Climate Action Summit, which was so well organized by the Secretary-General with the support of Special Envoy Luis Alfonso de Alba, enabled us to showcase the mobilization and creativity of all the actors in our societies. For its part, the Principality is firmly committed to carbon neutrality by 2050 and plans to take the steps needed to achieve that ambition. Our energy transition mission, established in 2016, is redoubling its efforts to accelerate the transition of multiple stakeholders to run on low carbon. Our national energy transition pact will enable

everyone — individuals, public and private companies and associations — to commit to becoming actors and partners in making the changes in our lifestyles that must inevitably result.

Only proactive policies will enable us to grapple with the strains on a country that welcomes more than twice its permanent population on a daily basis. In that regard, we are paying particular attention to aligning policies combating climate change and preserving air quality in order to safeguard health, in line with the commitments under the BreatheLife campaign, coordinated by the World Health Organization, the United Nations Environment Programme and the Climate and Clean Air Coalition. Monaco has also joined the Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action with a view to making progress in implementing economic and financial policies supporting the global transition to a low-carbon economy. Beyond measures at the national level, Monaco will be taking its full share of responsibility with regard to the collective goal of mobilizing \$100 billion annually between now and 2025 for climate action in developing countries. In that regard, the Principality will participate in the first replenishment of the Green Climate Fund.

Monaco is committed to the nature-based solutions coalition with a view to maximizing the major contribution of natural capital to climate action. Climate change and the collapse of biodiversity, far from being isolated crises, are two alarming symptoms of the anthropocene age that we must respond to together. Based on that belief, the Government of Monaco is committed to attaching the same degree of importance to the preservation of biodiversity and the fight against climate change. Starting in 2020, for example, Monaco will be increasing its international funding aimed at preserving and regenerating biodiversity, while mitigating and promoting adaptation to climate change and improving the resilience of vulnerable populations.

The protection of forests and the essential services that they do for human communities, especially as carbon sinks, is of course fundamental. That is why the recent devastating fires in various parts of the world constitute a real ecological disaster. It will also be crucial to preserve the seas and oceans, whose key role in climate balance and extreme vulnerability to global warming we have been made aware of thanks to advances in science. In that regard, the *Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate* of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which

was the subject of a meeting concluded yesterday in Monaco, is damning. It is therefore up to us to take full account of its conclusions and of the recommendations made by many scientists so that we can translate those findings into the political decisions we will take next year in the areas of climate change, conservation and the sustainable use of oceans and biological diversity. Monaco has historically chosen to support science. The fact is that it is essential that the policies we implement be based on the most reliable scientific knowledge possible.

The commitment of so many of us to standing with the Secretary-General is testament to our support for his leadership and our recognition of his unwavering commitment to the multilateralism that the United Nations embodies. Nevertheless, international institutions and civil servants, however dedicated, cannot be held responsible for our inaction or failure.

We are aware of the many challenges that we face, and we know perfectly well that we will either deal with them together or succumb to them individually. Our common future depends on regularly adapting our guiding light, which is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Summit, which today launched an ambitious “decade of action”, lists ten priority areas that we should focus our efforts on. In the *Global Sustainable Development Report*, scientists speak of a tipping point or critical point for certain ecosystems, which means that we are reaching a level of degradation from which there can be no return to a normally functioning state. *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*, from the Secretary-General, and the *Global Sustainable Development Report* on the first cycle of SDG implementation, by the group of independent experts mandated by Member States, show that progress has been made in some key areas and that there have been promising developments, in particular the reduction of extreme poverty and a decline in the under-five mortality rate.

However, despite those advances, the reports urge us to redouble our efforts urgently. The natural environment is deteriorating at an alarming rate. Sea levels are rising, ocean acidification is accelerating, the last four years have been the hottest on record and 1 million plant and animal species are threatened with extinction. At the same time, the number of people suffering from hunger continues to increase, more than half of the world’s population still lacks essential health

services and too many children still lack adequate reading and mathematics skills. That is why the direction I have set for my Government since 2005 combines the vision of a world that prioritizes progress and well-being with the implementation of activities to protect the environment, fight for peace, respect justice and sustainable development, defend the underprivileged and work for a more just and harmonious planet. In this way, every part of the Principality's Government action must adhere to the requirements of sustainable development. Economic progress must foster social progress while also respecting the environment.

The transition to a more sustainable way of life cannot be achieved without creating a more inclusive and fulfilling society for individuals. Women and girls therefore cannot be excluded from those efforts at a time when we are preparing to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. In October, in order to reaffirm its commitment to the defence of women's interests, my Government established a committee for the promotion and protection of women's rights. It is a deplorable fact that in today's world, our women, mothers and daughters are among the first victims of the wars and conflicts that continue to rage and are also particularly vulnerable when populations are forcibly displaced.

The fourth industrial revolution is under way. Artificial intelligence brings hope, but also poses risks that must be comprehensively addressed. The digital revolution is leading us into a movement of creative destruction that is neither linear nor predetermined. We hold the keys to it and it is our responsibility to shape the way forward. We must seize the opportunities that arise, but we must also guard against threats caused by our societies' uncontrolled development, particularly where security and worsening inequality are concerned. The speed, scale and scope of the changes that have already begun should encourage us to lay the foundations for dialogue.

In the face of those challenges, Monaco has reached a technological turning point and launched a digital transformation that is both an economic necessity and a way to honour our commitments in the area of sustainable development. The launch in April of our Extended Monaco programme has put us on the road to a digital transition of unprecedented scale, while giving particular emphasis to the concepts of responsibility and sustainability. As part of its digital transition strategy, the Government therefore plans to use the assets that

technological innovation offers in the fields of health, education and the economy, as well as to make Monaco a model for smart cities.

In an interconnected world, the spirit of good neighbourliness mentioned in the Charter of the United Nations and to which "nations large and small" must adhere should take on special meaning. That is the path to follow in a world where we have all become each other's neighbours and where notions of time and space have become more relative. We owe our capacity to transcend adversity and establish norms for managing our interdependencies to the multilateral institutions that we have created, and the sovereignty of all of our States will emerge the stronger from that.

As we follow one another onto this rostrum, we are beginning the countdown to the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations in 2020. This Hall has seen so many debates, confrontations, promises and advances, and yet so many dashed hopes as well. But we are still here, because when we adopted the Charter, we decided to pool our efforts to achieve these goals — saving succeeding generations from the scourge of war, proclaiming our faith in the dignity and worth of the human person and promoting better standards of life in larger freedom.

Over the past three decades in this General Assembly Hall we have travelled together along a path that is certainly strewn with pitfalls, but we have nevertheless taken important steps. We have adopted, amended and corrected many texts and created mechanisms, processes and frameworks for addressing new challenges. From disarmament to human rights, from the preservation of the environment to major pandemics and from the fight against terrorism to social development, our strength has always resided in our unity and ability to compromise when we are dealing with the best interests of the peoples for whom our Organization was founded. Paradigm shifts and the funding that they require are beyond the reach of individual Member States, but they are not impossible if we strive for them in solidarity in the service of humankind.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco for the statement he has just made.

*His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

### Address by Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Republic of the Niger

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of the Niger.

*Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Republic of the Niger, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Republic of the Niger, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Issoufou** (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to express my warmest congratulations to the President on his outstanding election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. It is eloquent testimony to the great esteem in which the international community holds his great country, the Federal Republic of Nigeria, a friend and brother of mine. I also see it as the well-deserved culmination of his exemplary academic and diplomatic career, which confirms my belief that he will successfully carry out his difficult mission. I assure him that the delegation of the Niger is willing to provide him and the other members of the Bureau with every possible support in fulfilling his mandate.

I would also like to pay a deserved tribute to Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, the outgoing President, for the exemplary manner in which she led the work of the seventy-third session.

To Secretary-General António Guterres, I would like to express our appreciation for the tireless work he has done to strengthen the effectiveness of our Organization's action, not just through his implementation of various reforms but also thanks to his personal commitment to certain causes, such as the climate, security in the Sahel, migration and humanitarian issues, among others. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to him and my wishes for his continued success.

On 7 June, here in this Hall, Member States overwhelmingly supported the Niger's candidacy, put forward by Africa, for non-permanent membership in the Security Council (see A/73/PV.89). I feel it appropriate here to express my sincere thanks for that mark of confidence in and esteem for my country. For

my part, I am fully cognizant of our responsibility and I can assure the Assembly that the Niger will assume it with commitment and conviction and with a view to helping to find solutions to the various challenges facing the international community.

The theme of this year's session, "Galvanizing multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion", is pertinent for several reasons. First, it rightly continues the theme of our previous session on our shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies. It is also an opportunity for us to recall that to date, multilateralism has made progress only in the wake of bloody conflicts, as was the case with the treaties of Westphalia, in 1648, and the Treaty of Vienna, which founded the European orders that succeeded the Thirty Years' War, the Eighty Years' War and the Napoleonic wars, respectively. The same was true of the attempt to establish the League of Nations after the First World War, and the creation of the United Nations following the Second World War. Each time, the objective was to create rules and institutions capable of establishing an order that was conducive to peaceful international relations and governed by the rule of law, and that could enable us to emerge out of a state of nature in which every State had absolute freedom to resort to force.

The preamble to the Charter of the United Nations states, among other things, that its aim is to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. We must therefore not forget the lessons of history. The increasing complexity of international relations means that multilateralism is more necessary than ever in an increasingly globalized world, where the interdependence of States and nations is also ever increasing. The world must engage in win-win cooperation, not zero-sum relationships, as the theory of the prisoner's dilemma shows. The world needs regulatory institutions. While it is true that national interests govern politics, national interests are better defended through cooperation rather than confrontation.

The theme of this session is also relevant given the challenges facing the international community today. In the international arena we see countries returning to the arms race, trade tensions, rising populism and xenophobia, growing inequalities, huge increases in migratory flows, the spread of terrorist and criminal organizations and the effects of climate change. We live in a world where some are dying of obesity and others of starvation. We live in a world where the number

of refugees and displaced persons in 2018 driven by problems related to poverty, climate and insecurity was estimated at more than 70 million, 300,000 of whom we are hosting in the Niger. We live in a world where 800 million are estimated to be in poverty, while the top 1 per cent of the world's richest people enjoy twice as much income growth as 50 per cent of the poorest. Inequality has been increasing in almost every country for the past 40 years or so.

If we are to effectively address those challenges, we must reform the current multilateral system. To galvanize multilateral efforts, we must give special attention to reform measures that have been under way for several years and are still struggling to succeed. Reform packages will remain incomplete without significant progress on reforming the Security Council both in terms of its equitable representation and its working methods and functioning. In that regard, my country remains committed to the common African position, as expressed through the Ezulwini Consensus.

Alongside reform of the Security Council, we must also carry out the revitalization of the General Assembly, our representative body par excellence, and the Economic and Social Council, the guarantor of the establishment of a new global economic order. Reform should not be limited to global political governance but should also include economic governance and institutions, including the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Without that it will be difficult to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, especially Goal 1, on the eradication of poverty. Without that, it will be equally difficult to meet the aspirations of the African peoples outlined in the African Union's Agenda 2063. The theme of our session is of course an opportunity to take stock of the progress we have made in eradicating poverty through the implementation of those agendas.

Four years have already passed since the adoption of the ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The conclusion that emerged from the work of the latest High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, held in July, is that despite the progress we have made, we are not on track to achieve the Agenda's goals and targets in the desired time frame. That is why we must raise the level of our ambition and renew our commitment through concrete actions that can have an impact on several SDGs at once, giving us hope that we can win the battle against poverty and ensure inclusive economic growth that

takes into account the aspirations that our peoples have for a better quality of life.

The SDG Summit, which is taking place on the margins of this session, will give us an opportunity to renew our commitment and a fresh impetus to catch up and achieve our goals by 2030 through concrete development actions. That leap forward can be effective only through the genuine mobilization of financial resources, including in the private sector. I should point out that Africa needs \$600 billion a year if it is to achieve the SDGs. In that regard, I welcome the Secretary-General's successful initiative in convening the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development. I personally believe that it will enable us to identify new avenues for bridging the current funding gap and directing resources to productive sectors and structural projects linked to the SDGs. In that regard, I want to emphasize health education, especially for young girls, including on reproductive health and reducing maternal and infant mortality. I am appealing for vaccinations in particular, not only regarding the restoration of funding for the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization for the period from 2021 to 2025 but also the development of vaccines for diseases such as malaria, cancer, diabetes and the Ebola virus.

In that same spirit, regional integration could serve as a catalyst by creating markets and facilitating trade. Alongside the SDGs, our continent must implement Agenda 2063, operationalize the African Continental Free Trade Area, promote industrialization by transforming its vast resources into raw materials, build road, rail, port, airport, energy and telecommunication infrastructure, develop human capital by promoting education and health so as to turn our demographic potential into economic dividends, develop agriculture to feed our population, create jobs for our young people and put an end to the tragedy of illegal migration. We can achieve those goals only by boldly reforming global economic and financial governance. I am pleased to be able to inform the Assembly that we initiated the operational phase of the African Continental Free Trade Area in Niamey on 7 July. That initiative, which I have had the honour of spearheading since 2017 on behalf of my African peers, will enable Africa to strengthen integration and pave the way for the continent's transformation by establishing the conditions for prosperity through the implementation of our agreement and Agenda 2063, including by creating jobs for young people.

It is now clear that the countries of the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin have become a theatre of operations for terrorist and criminal organizations. That threat is one of the issues that particularly require multilateral action. The fact is that security is a global public good, which the international community has shown that it has fully grasped in its forging of strong coalitions to fight terrorism in Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria. It is regrettable that such is not the case in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin, where the threat of terrorist and criminal organizations has been amplified by the Libyan crisis, for which the international community bears a serious responsibility. As I have emphasized on numerous occasions, the international community must not turn its back on those regions, whose populations, particularly women and children, have undergone indescribable suffering. Their peoples have become refugees or been displaced and their schools have been closed, sacrificing generations of young people who no longer have the opportunity to learn.

In order to tackle this situation, the international community must work urgently to find a solution to the Libyan crisis, including by appointing a joint African Union-United Nations special envoy, helping to strengthen the operational and intelligence capabilities of Member States' defence and security forces and of the Multinational Joint Task Force fighting Boko Haram in the Lake Chad basin and the Joint Force of the Group of Five for the Sahel, which we would like to see operating under Chapter VII of our Charter. The terrorist groups' new strategy aimed at creating intercommunal conflict, and the spread of insecurity to countries that have been spared until now, are also reasons that demand that we act in concert against such groups.

That is why on 14 September in Ouagadougou we held an Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) specifically devoted to regional security and to examining ways and means of addressing it collectively. The Summit reflected the strong commitment of the leaders of our region to addressing this problem and also reinforced the idea of pooling our resources in the face of an increasingly organized common enemy with a proven military capacity. I am pleased that ECOWAS took firm decisions about this at the Summit. To that we can add other equally decisive measures, such as the request for changing the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission

in Mali and extending it beyond Mali's territory, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2480 (2019), and the adoption of a plan of action for the period from 2020 to 2024, with an initial funding from ECOWAS member countries of \$1 billion. As Chair of ECOWAS, I urge the international community, particularly the United Nations, to take account of the Summit's conclusions, given their relevance.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the joint initiative of President Emmanuel Macron of France and Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany on implementing a partnership for security and stability in the Sahel. I hope it will enable our peoples to see the interest that the international community has in us. I want to sincerely thank all the partners who have been supporting us, including through the Alliance for the Sahel, with a view to backing our States in their development efforts and thereby contributing to the stability of our region. We believe those various partners' actions should be harmonized if we are to achieve better results. It is always worth remembering that defeating terrorism ultimately depends on economic and social development.

The issue of the effects of climate change transcends borders and is part of the international community's remit. As the situation in the Sahel and the Lake Chad basin illustrates, poverty, terrorism and climate change are closely linked. That is why I want to call on all Member States to ensure that the conclusions of the Climate Action Summit, held yesterday, on 23 September, are implemented. The fact is that all of us here today recognize the desperate need to pool our strengths and resources in order to find acceptable and sustainable solutions to protect our planet and enable future generations to inherit a world worth living in. We do not have a planet B. Our immediate commitments will have an impact on the survival of humankind. We in the Niger are aware of that. That is why we have emphasized climate change resilience in our sectoral policies and strategies for health, transport, agricultural and pastoral production and for local and regional land planning and development. We have also taken steps to integrate the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions into our national programme for access to energy services and to strengthen the resilience and adaptive capacity of our agriculture and water sectors. Lastly, the Niger has decided to implement a long-term national adaptation plan by establishing its determined contribution at the national level, among other things.

In that regard, I would like to highlight the importance of the Sahel's climate investment plan for the period from 2018 to 2030 and its priority programme, important strategic instruments that were formulated under the Niger's leadership in its capacity as Chair of the Climate Commission for the Sahel. On behalf of the other members of the Commission, I would like to reiterate our appeal to the international community to give the conclusions of the round table on financing the plan and the climate agenda for the Sahel the attention they deserve, because continued poverty, climate change, terrorism and organized crime have immediate negative consequences for our States' efforts to achieve the SDGs.

The vast increase in migratory flows is another issue characteristic of our time. It cannot be addressed by one country alone. It is the responsibility of the international community. In that regard, I welcomed the adoption of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in December 2018. That first commitment on the part of our Organization on this subject constitutes a first step in addressing the matter in its entirety through the 23 identified objectives. As the Assembly is already aware, I am personally committed to that fight, owing partly to the security problems that illegal migration creates for us, but also because we are horrified by the intolerable spectacle of the tragedies that the migrants endure across deserts and oceans. The Niger is therefore truly motivated to participate in the 2022 forum for examining the Global Compact's implementation, with a view to sharing our own experiences and being enriched by other countries' positive experiences. I hope that between now and then, bold decisions will have been taken to address the underlying causes of migration, including poverty, climate change and insecurity.

The world has undergone rapid and profound changes in recent years. If we are to respond to the legitimate aspirations of the peoples of the world, we must adapt our strategies to that new context. More than ever, the international community needs a strong United Nations if it is to achieve the ambitious goals of its Charter. We must therefore give the Secretary-General our unwavering support in his efforts to reform the Organization, strengthen its role and equip it with the means to adequately fulfil its missions.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my call for a new global political and economic governance. The instruments put in place in the aftermath of the Second

World War are no longer sufficient as they stand. That is a sine qua non for addressing the challenges I have mentioned — poverty, climate change, terrorism and organized crime and migration.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*) On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of the Niger for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, President of the Republic of the Niger, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, King of the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the King of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

*His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, King of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Majesty King Willem-Alexander of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**King Willem-Alexander:** During the general debate of the General Assembly, all the States Members of the United Nations make their voices heard, and I am proud to be standing in this Hall representing the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which is made up of four autonomous countries located in Europe and the Caribbean: the Netherlands, Aruba, Curaçao and Sint Maarten. We are familiar with both the trade winds of the tropics and the cold gales of the North Sea. Anyone wishing to understand our character can best begin with a concept that is close to the heart of everyone in our Kingdom — freedom.

Over the coming year, we will be celebrating the seventy-fifth anniversary of our liberation from oppression and tyranny. From the city of Amsterdam to the smallest villages, there will be commemorations and celebrations by old and young alike. The Caribbean part of the Kingdom will also reflect on its own contribution to the allied struggle. We remain forever grateful to our allies both in and beyond Europe for the sacrifices that they made for our sake. This collective remembrance still moves and inspires us today.

For our Kingdom, freedom is bound up with cooperation with other countries, based on equality, justice, honest relations and international law. That is why we were involved in building the United Nations from its inception, and why we look forward to next year, when we will celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary. As a platform for managing international conflicts and creating opportunities for people across the entire world, the United Nations is unparalleled in history.

We believe in multilateral cooperation. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is convinced that close collaboration within a broad-based partnership of States offers the best guarantee of freedom, security and prosperity for all. The fight against poverty and inequality is best served by joining forces at the international level. We believe that it is vital to express that clearly here in the General Assembly, given the pressure that that cooperation is under. We should cherish the multilateral system and its international agreements and rules as a precious achievement. Let us appreciate the value of what has been carefully built over many years. Let us acknowledge that we need one another, just as we did 75 years ago. In fact, we need each other more than ever. “The future we want, the United Nations we need” is the motto of next year’s session — a motto that offers plenty of food for thought. What kind of future do we want? Anyone who asks their children that question will get a clear answer. Our young people want a fair, clean and sustainable world that gives them the freedom to develop as individuals and discover who they are, where no one is left behind or has to fear violence, want or oppression. If we listen to the voices of the young, it is clear where we need to look for solutions. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will bring the world imagined by those young people closer. That is why it is essential that we put all our energies into achieving them.

We are concerned about the fact that in several countries and regions, young people risk losing all hope of a better future. One example is Venezuela, which is a neighbour of the Caribbean part of our Kingdom. We fervently hope that a way can be found out of the current stalemate by means of free and fair elections. In many places around the world people are not free to be themselves. In many places, there is no room for diversity, no respect for the rights and opportunities of minorities and no equality between men and women. As a result, breeding grounds for instability endure.

After all, every human being strives for recognition. If that recognition is denied, tensions and conflict are inevitable. We must hold firmly to the principle of freedom of religion or belief, including for minorities in places where the great majority profess a different faith. No one can prescribe how another person should think. Christians, Muslims, Hindus, Jews and people without religious convictions should be able to follow their own conscience in peace everywhere.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes the fact that the rights of lesbian, gay and transgender people and other minority communities are being enshrined in law in more and more places around the world. We hope that that trend continues. But, ultimately, words must translate into action. The fight against discrimination, whether open or hidden, must continue on every continent.

If we are to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, we must protect human rights. The Kingdom of the Netherlands wants to work with all Member States to champion that aim. We have therefore announced our candidacy for a seat on the Human Rights Council from 2020 to 2022, and we hope to have the support of everyone here in the election this autumn. Human rights are for everyone, even those who have committed crimes and are punished for them. People are not infallible, which means that the administration of justice is not infallible either. An irreversible sentence can never be justified. The death penalty is a violation of the fundamental right to life. That is why the Netherlands, together with all other members of the European Union, advocates the abolition of capital punishment worldwide.

We care deeply about the plight of those who are victims of war and violence. Many are refugees and many have reached the point of despair. It is essential that people whose rights are trampled underfoot know that the United Nations is on their side. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is actively involved in the Secretary-General’s efforts to make United Nations peace missions more effective. The Action for Peacekeeping initiative is a crucial part of that process. It is equally important that we take effective action to combat terrorism and eliminate the factors that fuel it. As co-Chair of the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the Netherlands is firmly committed to that goal. Anyone guilty of genocide, war crimes, terrorism or human trafficking must be held to account. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is determined to combat impunity. This week, we will be hosting an event aimed at encouraging

the criminal prosecution of fighters from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, preferably in the region where they committed their atrocities. We will also continue our efforts to strengthen the International Criminal Court, which is an indispensable component of the international legal order. It is unacceptable for individuals responsible for international crimes to escape their just punishment. In this forum, I want to repeat that under Security Council resolution 2166 (2014), all countries, including Russia, must cooperate fully with efforts to establish the truth about the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 on 17 July 2014. The families of the 298 victims expect justice, and we will not rest until justice is done.

Human rights, peace and development opportunities for all are the cornerstones of the world order that we seek to build, and they are at the heart of the Sustainable Development Goals. Everyone deserves the chance to build a decent life and find respite in times of adversity. To that end, the United Nations is working with Member States in all manner of ways. But we are not working fast enough. At our current pace, we will not achieve our goals by 2030 in the area of reducing inequality, for example. We can and must speed up our efforts. The international community has shown in the past that it is capable of great things. Thirty years ago, one in three people lived in extreme poverty. Today that figure is one in 10. We have made a huge leap forward in just one generation. Let us take heart from that and put all our energies into reaching the Sustainable Development Goals. Among the many people working on those goals is my wife, the Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development. For 10 years now, she has fulfilled that role with enormous drive, passion and pleasure.

Anyone who champions sustainable development must also champion climate action. Climate change is one of the biggest threats to the achievement of the SDGs. All over the world, people are feeling its impact. Climate change is affecting our livelihoods, security, health, living environments and future. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development demands that we all take more action to combat climate change. The Secretary-General deserves praise for giving this issue such a prominent place in the General Assembly. Never before has international cooperation been so urgent for the future of our planet. Greenhouse gases do not recognize national borders. We can combat climate change only if we work together, and we are glad to

heed the call to take responsibility and show ambition. Transitioning to a sustainable, circular economy is no simple task. Every Member State is wrestling with that challenge, including our Kingdom, and that is precisely why we all need one another. We must join forces and share our knowledge and experience.

In the Netherlands, the Government, municipalities, the business community, civil society and the general public have joined together with the goal of almost halving emissions by 2030 compared with 1990 levels. At the same time, we are partnering with Costa Rica to help developing countries that want to raise their climate ambitions and take action. The Nationally Determined Contributions Partnership is a vital platform in that regard, and we strongly urge the private sector to play its part and make greening a priority. As a country with more than 1,000 years of experience in water management, the Netherlands is also an expert partner for anyone working to enhance flood protection. We are proud that Dutch engineers and water managers are doing their part all over the world. What is more, next year we will be hosting the international Climate Adaptation Summit.

As we approach next year's celebrations to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the Kingdom of the Netherlands sees this as a time for reflection. How can we ensure that as the twenty-first century unfolds, the United Nations remains fit for purpose? After the horrors of two world wars, we created a multilateral system based on dialogue and cooperation, a system that places international agreements and rules above ultranationalism and power-based spheres of influence. As a result, we have improved the lives of billions of people and made our world more secure, and that is a unique achievement.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands believes in the need for an effective multilateral system because it offers the best guarantee of stability, peace and sustainable development. That does not mean that we can simply carry on the way we were. Reforms are needed in order to prevent the system from coming to a standstill and losing its credibility. The reforms initiated by the Secretary-General must be put into practice as a matter of urgency. He has our full support. In order to achieve that, it is crucial that Member States honour their financial commitments. It is also essential that United Nations organizations improve their cooperation and that financial resources be spent smartly and efficiently in order to achieve the best possible return for the people

they are intended to help. Every person counts; every Member State counts. The United Nations will have an inclusive future or no future at all. The voices of small island developing States must therefore be heard more at the United Nations level, because their concerns have too often fallen on deaf ears.

Together, we can make our world greater. So let us remember where we began, 75 years ago. Let us realize that the building of an international framework for cooperation has given billions of people hope, security and confidence. Let us retain those achievements and uphold the values of the United Nations. But at the same time, let us rejuvenate our United Nations so it is fit for purpose in today's world.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank His Majesty the King of the Kingdom of the Netherlands for the statement he has just made.

*His Majesty King Willem-Alexander, King of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Mauricio Macri, President of the Argentine Republic**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Argentine Republic.

*Mr. Mauricio Macri, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Mauricio Macri, President of the Argentine Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Macri** (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to once again address the Assembly, a few months before completing my first term as President, in order to share the path that Argentina has taken regarding its links with international society. That path has been characterized by the constructive role we have played in collectively addressing global challenges, focusing on the quest for consensus and collective action, acting in the belief that the world as a whole represents much more of an opportunity than a threat, and working to build international trust, diversify our partners, expand spaces for cooperation

and seek areas in which Argentina can play a relevant and leading role. And most importantly, it is a path that aligns with the deep desire of Argentine society to take its place in the international order of the twenty-first century, because we are a diverse, multicultural country in which different origins, beliefs and religions coexist peacefully in a pluralistic identity, and because we value dialogue and respect as ways of building a shared future.

Beginning in 2015, when I took office as President, we made a decision to leave behind the preceding period of confrontation with the world and work in an intelligent way to integrate ourselves internationally. In a complex global context full of uncertainties and growing geopolitical tensions, we decided to take responsibility and contribute to strengthening multilateralism and global governance. That has been reflected in the meetings of the World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference in 2017, the Group of 20 leaders' summit in 2018 and the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, all held in Argentina within the past three years. Those three events put Argentina on the world stage and brought the world to Argentina, where we demonstrated our ability to cooperate in building an international order that includes all of us. But our responsibility to multilateralism and seeking consensus has gone much further. Over the past few years, Argentina has also reinforced its positive role in strengthening international peace and security, contributing to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, space development and the fight against terrorism and transnational organized crime, among many other things.

We want to once again express here our firm commitment to non-proliferation, which has been a pillar of democratic consensus in recent decades in Argentina and has guided our development of nuclear technology. In 2020 my country will preside over the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and we also hope to make a contribution through our candidate for the position of Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Argentina's commitment to combating terrorism in all its forms is greater than ever, and was reflected this year in our organization of the Second Western Hemisphere Counterterrorism Ministerial Conference. With the support of other countries and international organizations, we have strengthened the exchange of

information and measures for preventing terrorism financing. We also created a database to expedite the freezing of assets suspected of being linked to terrorists, which, for example, enabled the Argentine Financial Information Unit to freeze assets of persons and entities related to Hizbullah.

Despite all of those efforts, we Argentines still have open wounds. We continue to fight the impunity that has persisted for the attacks we suffered in 1992 on the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires and in 1994 at the headquarters of the Israeli-Argentine Mutual Association, which took the lives of 107 people and left hundreds more wounded. We want all those involved in perpetrating the attacks to be brought before Argentine courts so that they can be tried and ultimately sentenced. Twenty-five years after the most brutal terrorist attack ever experienced on our territory, we once again urge the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate with the Argentine judicial authorities to advance the investigation of the attack on the Association. And we reiterate our call for cooperation from friendly countries to prevent the accused from being hosted or sheltered under diplomatic immunity.

Since assuming the presidency of Argentina, I have wasted no time in advancing the fight against drug trafficking and money-laundering. We have increased the amount of drugs seized, stepped up captures of national and international fugitives, dismantled criminal drug networks and reduced the number of homicides linked to drug trafficking throughout the country. Last year, for example, we immobilized more than 500 billion Argentine pesos, around \$8.5 billion, linked to organized crime. We also speeded up the process of bringing money-laundering and corruption cases to trial and seized goods and property belonging to those accused of such crimes. We also continue to work with other Governments in Latin America and the Caribbean on reaching the consensus needed to create a regional legal body capable of addressing this and other types of transnational organized crime.

In the past few years, we have demonstrated a renewed and ambitious commitment in the fight against climate change and dedicated ourselves to sustainable development. We are aware of the climate emergency, and we must act in accordance with the commitments of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. That is why we have taken the decision to implement a plan for a long-term low-emission strategy that will enable us to take the necessary steps to achieve more ambitious

targets, such as carbon neutrality by the year 2050. That initiative is underpinned by the efforts that we are already making today, for example with regard to cleaner energy — particularly renewable energy — energy efficiency, the conservation of ecosystems, doubling the area of national parks, creating marine protected areas, caring for our forests and increasing our afforestation efforts, capturing carbon in our soil, promoting technologies for sustainable agriculture and good livestock practices and reducing emissions in the transport sector.

During these past few years, equality between women and men has been much more than a mere slogan in Argentina. We have been firmly committed to continuing to empower girls and women and eliminate gaps in employment, education and political participation. We have implemented a plan for equal opportunities and rights and built a system aimed at preventing women from becoming victims of violence as well as assisting such victims. We have established a parity law for posts in the legislature and designed our national budget with an egalitarian strategy in mind. We know that much remains to be done, but we are sure that there will be no going back on the rights and opportunities that women have in my country today.

For a more efficient multilateral system and global governance and a safer and more peaceful world, we need regions that are more stable, better integrated with one another and connected to the rest of the world. We therefore decided to make a firm commitment to the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), thereby confirming the importance that we have attached to regional integration since day one of our Administration. Through the four members' concerted efforts we have set in motion a plan to adapt it to the twenty-first century so that it can be a competitive and dynamic bloc with clear rules of the game. We have given our internal and external agendas a renewed, ambitious boost with concrete actions and achievements designed to benefit our citizens. After more than 20 years of negotiations, we have reached an agreement with the European Union that is unprecedented for both trade blocs and hugely important globally. It will enable us to enhance trade and investment with positive effects for our people's quality of life. And while that in itself is an important step, what is most relevant, as in life in general, is the direction taken, which is towards a MERCOSUR that is modern and open to the world.

I firmly believe that a country's path to global integration requires core values guiding its action. Our history and geography unite us in a region that deeply values democracy, freedom and human rights both as a way of life and for peaceful coexistence. That is why, since the beginning of our Administration, we have led the condemnation of the very serious situation of human rights violations in Venezuela, as evidenced in the annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (A/HRC/41/18/Add.1). The dictatorship of Nicolás Maduro has plunged Venezuela into an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. The mass exodus of millions of Venezuelans has seriously affected the stability and governance of our region. I want to once again call on the international community to use all available diplomatic and legal tools to reverse this situation so that Venezuela can be free and democratic once more.

Argentina reaffirms its legitimate and imprescriptible sovereign rights over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, and we maintain our position and call for the United Kingdom to resume bilateral negotiations that will enable us to find a peaceful and definitive solution to the dispute. We have nevertheless created a new relationship framework with the United Kingdom, thereby improving the conditions for moving towards a solution. Part of this, working with the International Committee of the Red Cross, was to identify the majority of Argentine soldiers buried in the Darwin cemetery, thereby paying a historic debt to their families. We have also resumed scientific cooperation in the fisheries sector, including by carrying out joint scientific maritime missions, and we have promoted greater rapprochement between the islands and continental Argentina by establishing a new weekly flight to the Malvinas.

Before concluding, I want to convey to the Assembly that today, in the uncertain situation that we Argentines are facing, my absolute priority is to be there for all of them and bring them relief to get through these difficult times. But without wanting to neglect that responsibility, I decided to come to share with the Assembly this assessment of Argentina's international integration over the past four years. Because amid the current trends of fragmentation, I believe that the best response enabling us to move towards a prosperous future is greater cooperation and more and better multilateralism. Because I am convinced that in order

to grow and develop, to have the life that we Argentines deserve, we must be better integrated into the world and deploy all of our labour and talent to that end. I know we can do it. It depends on us.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Argentine Republic for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Mauricio Macri, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Egils Levits, President of the Republic of Latvia**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Latvia.

*Mr. Egils Levits, President of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Egils Levits, President of the Republic of Latvia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Levits:** I am greatly honoured to address the General Assembly for the first time. I would like to congratulate the President on his assumption of the presidency of the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. I assure him that Latvia will provide active and constructive support to our joint efforts during this session.

Thirty years ago, as a young politician and lawyer, I had the opportunity to fight for the restoration of my country's independence. Latvia, like Estonia and Lithuania, was occupied by the Soviet Union at the beginning of the Second World War. Unlike in western Europe, where the war ended in 1945, the Baltic States regained their independence only in 1991. We will be forever grateful to the States that never recognized the occupation of our countries as legitimate. Our independence was regained through strong mass movements whose demands were rooted in international law, and was the result of a non-violent freedom fight, a rare occurrence in history. At the same time, it was a triumph for international law. It proves that even seemingly hopeless situations can be overcome by

belief in the law and strong civil societies. Sooner or later, justice will always prevail.

In the 25 years that followed, I had the privilege of serving as a judge in two international or supranational courts — first the European Court of Human Rights, then the Court of Justice of the European Union. That explains why justice and the rule of law at the national and international levels is so important for the Latvian State, the Latvian nation and for me personally. I was therefore pleased earlier today to deposit Latvia's declaration joining the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice as yet another sign of our strong commitment to the rule of law and a rules-based international order.

A strong multilateral, inclusive and rules-based international order is essential to the maintenance of global peace and security. It must be our joint responsibility to defend and strengthen it. The United Nations is and must remain the central forum for multilateralism and a rules-based global order. Experience shows that our goals are best achieved through cooperation in multilateral forums. With that aim, Latvia is actively seeking opportunities to contribute to a more peaceful and just world. For example, over the past year we are proud to have presided over the fifth Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty.

The multilateral order also demands that territorial integrity and sovereignty, as enshrined in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, be respected by all States Members of the United Nations. In that regard I should point to Russia's open disrespect for the principles of international law, as its violations of the territorial integrity of Ukraine and Georgia continue. Such brazen disregard for international law must not be accepted as a new normal. Latvia's experience shows that the rule of law, like democracy and respect for human rights, is an important catalyst for a State's successful development. We will therefore strongly support the consolidation of those principles in international law.

Nowadays, violations of international law are committed not only with direct military force but increasingly through disinformation, cyberattacks, economic influence, energy pressures and interference in electoral processes. Given that such hybrid threats do not recognize national borders, no country is immune. The United Nations can and must be a significant

global player in promoting peace, security and stability in cyberspace. Latvia is ready to participate actively in relevant discussions and share its experience in promoting responsible behaviour in cyberspace and boosting institutional and individual resilience to malicious intent. While there can be no doubt that digital technologies have brought humanity progress, we must be careful to prevent them from being used maliciously. There can be no excuse for unintended or unexpected consequences that undermine our societies. Technologies must be developed with greater responsibility and accountability.

We must be aware of the impact of technological advances on human communication and connectivity. Vast amounts of personal data are being collected every second of every day by both State and non-State actors. Our private communications, our health, location and movements can be constantly monitored. In recent times the use of facial recognition has been increasing, and we are coming under constant surveillance. Yet the rules governing the ownership, authorization and protection of that data are opaque to say the least. Our data can easily become a threat to our freedom and privacy. When we feel that we are being observed, we often adjust our behaviour and speech. The potential risks to the independence of our thoughts and actions will only grow in the coming years, given the rapid development of artificial intelligence. We must not allow artificial intelligence rather than humans to take legally binding decisions. Humans must retain control.

The United Nations must therefore actively promote the discussion of personal data protection in cyberspace, especially the ethical and legal standards for the collection and use of personal data. We need an intensive public discussion of risk reduction at the national, regional and global levels. The international level is essential, since cyberspace is global. We believe that the report of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, *The Age of Digital Interdependence*, and the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament, which addresses key technology security concerns, are a useful stimulus for a more intensive exchange of ideas in this area.

The climate, too, is global. Climate change must be tackled at the international, State and individual levels. We must collaborate across borders to mitigate the negative impacts of climate change. The empowerment of young people can play an important role in climate action, as we recently witnessed at the Youth Climate

Summit. Technologies also have a leading role to play in healing our planet. Innovations, combined with computing power and connectivity, enable us to become more effective. I am proud that Latvian information technology companies are willing to take up the challenge and have joined the green pledge launched by our neighbour Estonia.

Latvia is committed to the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In Latvia, we have reduced our greenhouse-gas emissions by almost 60 per cent compared to our 1990 levels, but we understand that it is not enough, and we therefore support climate neutrality as a goal for the future. We are currently working on an ambitious low-carbon development strategy that will enable Latvia to reach climate neutrality by 2050. Earlier this year, my Government approved a national climate change adaptation plan for 2030. It sets out concrete actions on adaptation to be implemented in the near future. A major solution for mitigating climate change that aligns closely with Latvia's own experience is sustainable forest management, which provides continuous carbon sinks and sustainable forest products that can replace fossil-based materials, thereby reducing emissions. Forest coverage in Latvia has almost doubled since the first half of last century, and we are committed to sustainable forest management for our current and future generations. Meanwhile, our civil society is also making efforts. On World Cleanup Day, 21 September, individuals young and old planted trees all over Latvia as a contribution to our sustainable future, building on a long-standing volunteer tradition in my country to promote a clean environment.

Latvia remains a strong advocate of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with a view to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals both nationally and globally. The Sustainable Development Goals have changed the way we plan our own long-term national development strategy. At the national level, we are focused on two main directions — promoting an innovative and eco-efficient economy and reducing inequalities. I believe that ensuring gender equality and women's empowerment is not only the right thing but also the smart thing to do from an economic perspective. Latvia is showing leadership in this area. According to the World Economic Forum's *Global Gender Gap Report 2018*, Latvia is one of the few countries in the world that has closed the gap in terms of both health and survival and in educational attainment, and it is above

the 80 per cent milestone for economic participation and opportunity. Through bilateral development cooperation programmes, Latvia is contributing to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly in the European Union's eastern areas and Central Asia. We share the lessons we learned through our own transition to a democratic State, based on the rule of law.

Thirty years ago, 2 million people joined hands to make a 600-kilometre-long human chain through Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania called the Baltic Way, to demonstrate our wish for freedom. The Baltic Way and the fall of the Berlin Wall marked the end of the Cold War. Latvia was finally able to join the United Nations. We have actively used the opportunities provided by multilateralism through this unique global body, and my country and people have experienced impressive change over the past 30 years. I believe that the United Nations, too, can adapt to resolve the global challenges of today. Let us use the run-up to its seventy-fifth anniversary to make the United Nations more purposeful and valued by working with renewed determination on its own reforms, notably that of the Security Council. The United Nations must evolve if it is to stay effective. All the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations are as relevant today as they were 74 years ago, when it was adopted. I am gratified that Latvia now has the freedom to enjoy those principles within its borders and the responsibility to uphold those principles across the globe.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Latvia for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Egils Levits, President of the Republic of Latvia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Slovak Republic.

*Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome

to the United Nations Her Excellency Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

**President Čaputová:** All the achievements of the United Nations have one thing in common — respect for rules and principles. As much as we need those principles today, we also need trust and responsibility. And the best way to build trust is to respect the rules and to live and act by them, because we can then predict how we behave and be prepared when the unexpected happens. For me, mutual trust is the invisible silver lining that holds our societies together. Today I see two major challenges in that regard.

First, we do not respect the rules and principles. As a lawyer and a long-term activist in the field of justice, I cannot ignore the fact that many of these rules and principles are under immense pressure, including through dangerous efforts to twist or break them. That is why it is important to remind ourselves that if one country takes away territory from another, that must be called occupation and not mistaken for peacemaking. Suppressing the human rights of minorities must not be confused with fighting against extremism. Spreading hate or false propaganda cannot be called freedom of speech; and using chemical weapons against innocent citizens cannot be justified as fighting against terrorism. These and many other examples are the reason for having a strong United Nations as a guardian of rules and of our trust.

Secondly, we have serious difficulties in agreeing on new rules. Often, we cannot agree at all. That applies to new areas that have emerged as a result of our successes and progress. Those mostly concern climate change but also new technologies, cybernetics or artificial intelligence.

We are going to face difficult times. More than ever, we need responsible Governments that will draw their legitimacy from the trust of their people, refrain from populism and keep their own ego under control. We need Governments that will give our people hope that there is still justice and that it is worth playing by the rules because our future rests on our ability to repair broken trust. More and more often we hear leaders speaking about putting their national interests before the global good. Yet the best way to be patriotic actually lies not in national egoism but in cooperation.

In that regard, I see climate change as the key issue. If I had to name just one thing that concerns me the most

at the global level, it is denial — denial that the climate crisis exists or that it is not that serious. The scientific evidence is clear: climate change is a fact, and we are running out of time. But if we act now, we can reduce carbon emissions within 12 years and keep global warming at 1.5°C. If we can succeed at the local level, thanks to activists and non-governmental organizations, and if we have successful green companies, why can we not do the same at the global level?

As if the fear of business that it will lose its competitive edge and profits or the fear of Governments losing popular support was greater than all rational arguments. To overcome such fears, we need to change our mindset that the green economy is costly and not profitable and learn that, in the long term, it is far less costly and far more efficient.

I can provide one concrete example. For many years, it was politically unthinkable to close old and inefficient coal mines in our country. Instead, we had to subsidize the mining industry to keep it alive. But, finally, we found the courage to make that difficult decision. I am very proud that yesterday, at the Climate Action Summit 2019, I could present a credible plan to close the coal mines and transform the entire coal-mining region. In addition, Slovakia is firmly committed to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

Each country can contribute with its fair share. We have no time and no excuse to wait for the others because they are bigger or richer. That is why I highly appreciate the initiative of the Secretary-General, and I thank him for his leadership and personal engagement in convening yesterday's summit. If we manage to combine our knowledge and our means with leadership, it will bring about a change of policy.

To that end, we need to fulfil what we have already agreed on. The Paris Agreement is central to keeping us on the right track. But its commitments are still far from met, and we need to go far beyond that. We need a rapid and profound change in how we do business, generate power, manage transport and make investments. We also need to change our lifestyle.

This year we celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. It seems that our young people understand the urgency better than us. What kind of future are we preparing for our children? We are in debt to this planet and to our children and we need to pay that debt back. The good news is that technological development is on our side.

Green energy is becoming increasingly competitive. Private companies and investors are starting to realize that investment in the green economy can be profitable and economically rational because, instead of undermining economic growth, climate action generates new opportunities for businesses and new jobs for our people.

We must make sure that, in the end, everyone can benefit from climate action, especially the most vulnerable, who bear the burden, but also those affected by the transformation, because the bottom line of development is primarily about the dignity of every human being.

We know what we need to do. We have been discussing it for years. We have all the knowledge and means. The time has come to no longer accept the excuses. I would suggest being bold and going even further. I believe that if we succeed in uniting over our action for climate, we can generate a new sense of solidarity in other areas. That can become a basis to overcome divisions among nations and bring new opportunities.

Our citizens are already moving in that direction. We have the primary responsibility. We must lead. Let us use this opportunity to become the generation that laid the foundations for cooperation that is based on the common sense of our shared destiny.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Slovak Republic for the statement she has just made.

*Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will hear an address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

*Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Kassym-Jomart

Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Tokayev** (*spoke in Kazakh; English text provided by the delegation*): It is a great honour for me to speak from the rostrum of the General Assembly for the first time as President of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The United Nations is a unique and universal organization that protects the needs of humanity and will always continue to do so.

Next year marks the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Organization, which protects humanity from many challenges and dangers and much bloodshed. Today, the United Nations plays an extremely important role in ensuring global development and the interlinkage of civilizations. Kazakhstan fully supports the idea of Secretary-General António Guterres not to ignore but to acknowledge the fate of every person and every State as our common heritage. However, we have every reason to be concerned about the geopolitical and socioeconomic changes of the present age. This situation will clearly be a complex test for our joint actions to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

(*spoke in English*)

In my view, the alarming new global reality is influenced by the following major trends.

First, a growing number unresolved conflicts and tensions in various parts of the world have revived old dividing lines and created new ones, bringing world Powers to the verge of full-scale military stand-offs.

Secondly, we all suffer from the lack of trust among global and regional actors. It leads to the erosion of the current security and arms control architecture, resulting in a renewed arms race. Those challenges are aggravated by restrictive sanctions, trade wars, an intense rivalry in space, cybertechnology and artificial intelligence. All of the afore-mentioned represent alarming facets of the deepening fundamental crisis.

Thirdly, the widening social, economic and technological inequalities, growing disparities between the North and the South, together with the emerging global debt crisis, distort the existing world economic landscape. Consequently, we are witnessing the rise of protectionism and nationalistic policies, which undermine international partnerships and cooperation.

Fourthly, environmental degradation has become one of the most destabilizing factors globally. The impact of climate change in Central Asia in particular will result in dramatic existential challenges, such as desertification, the melting of glaciers and the subsequent depletion of drinking and irrigation water. In that complex environment, Kazakhstan firmly pursues a policy of inclusive and sustainable development, comprehensive dialogue and peaceful endeavours.

Achieving a nuclear-weapon-free world remains a top priority for my country. That aspiration has become an essential part of the nation-wide identity of the Kazakh people, giving us the moral right to be at the forefront of the global movement to eliminate nuclear weapons. That stems from the firm conviction that nuclear weapons are no longer an asset but a danger to global peace and stability.

Unfortunately, some countries still rely in their strategic defence calculations on nuclear arsenals, prompting their rivals to consider acquiring asymmetric responses but equally deadly types of weapons of mass destruction.

Leading by example, Kazakhstan works hard to alter such misperceptions. Under the strong leadership of the first President, Mr. Nursultan Nazarbayev, Kazakhstan closed down the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site and voluntarily renounced the fourth largest nuclear arsenal in the world. Those acts were the first step in our long and successful journey towards a global championship of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Among our contributions to that noble cause, I would mention the establishment of the unique nuclear-weapon-free zone in Central Asia, hosting the low enriched uranium bank of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the adoption of resolution 64/35, on the International Day against Nuclear Tests, and the recent ratification of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

We all should stand resolutely by the Universal Declaration on the Achievement of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free World as our road map to a safer future. We also seek enhanced cooperation among nuclear-weapon-free zones and the creation of new ones.

Kazakhstan believes that the current issues concerning Iran's Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and the denuclearization of the Korean peninsula should

be settled only by political means, with due respect for each other's interests and concerns.

My country has always been a steadfast supporter of preventive diplomacy and mediation on the global stage. As early as in 1992, from this rostrum Kazakhstan's first President proposed convening the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia (CICA) as a platform for collective approaches to addressing security challenges (see A/47/PV.24). Over time, CICA has proved its expediency and viability. We are grateful to all our partners who have embraced that process.

The growing economic might of Asia demands a more integrated continental security architecture. It is time to transform CICA into a full-fledged regional organization for security and development. As Chair of CICA in 2020, we will put our efforts to that end.

As a non-permanent member of the Security Council in the previous two years, we focused on strengthening security, non-proliferation and regional cooperation, affirming our commitment to the cause of peace. Kazakhstan contributes to United Nations peacekeeping by co-deploying with our Indian partners a 120-strong unit to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, as well as by providing military observers.

We are also proud that Kazakhstan has become a global centre for the dialogue of religions and civilizations. Since 2003, our capital has been honoured to convene the triennial Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions, supported by the United Nations.

All of us are observing with alarm the developments in the Middle East, the cradle of human civilization, which is plagued by mutual hatred and violence. We therefore stand ready to support bilateral and multilateral actions aimed at finding viable peace and confidence-building solutions.

As a good example of our commitment to inclusive dialogue, Kazakhstan provides a platform for inter-Syrian negotiations. Thirteen such rounds have taken place in our capital. Thanks to the Astana process, which complements the Geneva talks, a cessation of hostilities has been reached. The de-escalation zones, with conditions for the safe return of refugees, have also been established.

We all know that conflicts are devastating and give rise to terrorism and extremism. Those challenges

can be defeated only by joint actions through a global anti-terrorism network under the auspices of the United Nations. As a counter-terrorism measure, Kazakhstan initiated the code of conduct towards achieving a world free of terrorism by the United Nations centenary in 2045, and we urge others to join it.

This year, Kazakhstan successfully accomplished a special humanitarian mission called *Zhusan* in cooperation with our international partners. As a result, 595 Kazakh citizens trapped by terrorist propaganda, including 406 children, returned home from the war zones in Syria. We are ready to share our experience with other countries and urge them to take similar actions.

For decades, the Central Asian States had weak economic ties, which impeded their sustainable growth. Now, by sharing common interests and challenges, our region has entered the next stage of its development. In that respect, close and constructive political dialogue among all five regional countries will be instrumental for trade, economic, investment and people-to-people interaction. New opportunities have emerged for the region following the first informal consultations at the highest level held in our capital last year.

I am fully convinced that Central Asia is becoming a global stakeholder. We are strongly united by our common historic and cultural heritage, as well as by our common future. Kazakhstan, as the largest economy of Central Asia, has a vital interest in further strengthening mutually beneficial cooperation among all States. The situation in Afghanistan has a direct impact on our region. We hope that the Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process, assisted by all key stakeholders, will produce lasting peace and prosperity for this country. Kazakhstan will continue to support the Afghan people in rebuilding their nation. Enduring global and regional partnerships, long-term investments and regional connectivity are vital to securing the peaceful future of that nation.

The United Nations ability to deliver on its core mission faces a serious test. The bold and clear vision of the Secretary-General on United Nations reform therefore deserves the wide support of all Member States. We pay special attention to the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as we strive to avoid the notorious middle-income country trap, and as the Goal 8 targets for Sustainable Development are integrated by 80 per cent into our strategic Government programmes. This May, I opened a new building for

international organizations in Kazakhstan; it hosts 16 United Nations agencies. As the next step, we propose to establish on its premises a United Nations centre for the Sustainable Development Goals with the mandate of assisting Afghanistan and countries in Central Asia. Being one of the largest transit and transport territories in Eurasia, Kazakhstan is set to play a pivotal role in promoting transcontinental trade as a member of the Eurasian Economic Union and a reliable partner of the One Belt-One Road initiative.

In these challenging times, we shall continue to work towards the comprehensive transformation of our society under the motto “Continuity, justice, progress”. My formula for Kazakhstan’s political system is one of a strong and visionary president, an influential Parliament and accountable Government. I firmly believe that this concept meets the basic needs of our nation and ensures its peaceful and sustainable future. As the new President, I am committed first and foremost to building a modern welfare State. My ultimate goal is to ensure that millions of my fellow countrymen benefit from large-scale reform and enjoy an inclusive society, a robust economy, high quality education and advanced health care. Kazakhstan will not become a success story of socioeconomic development unless profound political transformation is accomplished. At the same time, one should keep in mind that democracy in Kazakhstan is a work in progress, requiring regular scrutiny. We are constantly looking for a way to improve it by building on the positive and learning from the negative experiences.

As part of my agenda, I launched the National Council of Public Confidence to promote meaningful dialogue between Government and society. My vision is based on the concept of different opinions, but one nation. It is through the exchange of views and dialogue that we should move forward. Big changes will drive all law enforcement agencies and courts to uphold the rule of law in every sphere and in the everyday lives of our citizens. Populism is about mediocre policy. I am in a position not to make empty promises, but to pursue concrete deeds. I will be steadfast in implementing my reform agenda.

Next year, the United Nations family will mark an important milestone in its history. That occasion should provide a new impetus for our joint endeavours in promoting comprehensive international cooperation in order to put an end to animosity, distrust and militancy. I call on the international community and all

our partners to get together to strengthen the world's momentum towards security, cooperation and mutual trust. We all must take care of our future generations so as to ensure their just and meaningful engagement in developing a new economy and new technologies. We must take care of the environment, promote scientific development and ensure health care and education for all. The destiny of our future generations deserves to be much better than what it is now in this fragile world. As a responsible member of the global community, Kazakhstan will not cease to contribute to the collective action of promoting peace and advancing human rights, dignity and prosperity.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Poland.

*Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Duda** (*spoke in Polish; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I warmly congratulate Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, on his election to that honourable position. I pledge Poland's full support for his mission. I also warmly thank Ms. Espinosa Garcés for her active work as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-third session.

Peace, environmental protection and welfare are the three concepts on which I would like to centre my message today. Those three concepts should also serve as a cement that binds the entire international

community: peace through respect for the law, environmental protection achieved through cooperation and co-responsibility, and welfare through engaging for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

On 1 September, we commemorated in Warsaw the eightieth anniversary of the outbreak of the Second World War, which began with an attack on Poland by two totalitarian States and two criminal ideologies, German Nazi Hitlerism and Soviet Stalinist communism. The Second World War, which violated the fundamental rights of nations and States to self-determination, claimed nearly 18 million victims worldwide and became a long-term trauma for millions more. This extremely painful historical experience has left its mark. Not only has it influenced international relations in the decades since, but it has also greatly affected the cultural and social consciousness, shaping both the ideas that we profess today and the goals that we set and pursue.

I would now like to repeat what I said during the commemoration ceremony in Warsaw with regard to the outbreak of the Second World War, which is that, despite the progress of civilization, despite that terrible lesson, today, in the twenty-first century, acts of incomprehensible barbarity are still being perpetrated all over the world — ethnic cleansing, mass murders and even genocide. Moreover, we continue to see assaults on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States, and borders are still being moved by force. Looking at this, one cannot help but draw historical analogies. There is also the temptation today to buy time for peace through passiveness and submission, and sometimes even parlaying with aggressors in the name of one's own interests, submission or appeasement, thereby succumbing to dangerous illusions that one can bargain with an aggressor at the expense of others in order to prolong peace for oneself. Such parlaying, in other words, involves pursuing individual interests, often economic, in one's relations with aggressors, while at the same time invoking solidarity with the victims of aggression in grandiloquent words.

When creating the United Nations out of the ruins of the previous world order, we were guided by a completely different set of tenets. The guiding principle was "never again". It seemed that we had all learned the cruel lessons of the Second World War. Unfortunately, as recent years have shown, that same temptation to deal with the aggressor exists today as it did then. I firmly believe that it is high time to shake ourselves out

of the state of lethargy inherited from the past and stop repeating the same mistakes.

In this vein, as President of the Republic of Poland, I cannot fail to refer to the situation in our part of Europe. I want to make it clear once again that every country has an equal right to self-determination. Poland has been and will continue to be a champion of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, both for Ukraine and Georgia. State borders must not be changed by force. Poland, so gravely affected in the previous century, has a moral duty to speak out very clearly on this matter — and we are doing so. We are making efforts to ensure peace and justice in the name of peace and freedom, which are so dear to us.

This year we are coming to the end of Poland's two-year membership of the Security Council — an experience we regard as valuable and meaningful. Our tenure has emphasized the role of my country which, as a founding Member of the United Nations, considers itself an integral part of the great international system of cooperation between nations and States. It is primarily common values, objectives and legal norms that bind the system together. The past few years have unfortunately shown that international law is often challenged and disavowed today, even though it is precisely international law that provides the basis for the implementation of principles such as the sovereign equality of States, justice, responsibility and security.

The law exists not only for the benefit of States, but for the benefit of humankind as a whole and for the benefit of each individual. A violation of its norms must produce consequences and individuals responsible for such breach must be held accountable. It was in this spirit that, during its presidency of the Security Council in 2018, Poland organized a high-level debate on the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security, which I presided over as President of the Republic of Poland (see S/PV.8262). I would like to make it very clear that international law is the strongest tool that civilized nations have to ensure long-term peace. Peace comes through law — there can be no peace without the law. Poland, which in its history has tragically experienced genocide and war crimes as a result of acts of aggression from other countries, will always unalterably be on this side of the law and on this side of the victims of violence. We have strongly and consistently emphasize this point in international forums.

First of all, through our work in the Security Council, we emphasize the indisputable role of international law in maintaining the global security architecture that was created after the Second World War and in protecting civilians in armed conflicts.

Secondly, we remain a consistent advocate of children's rights. This year we celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which Poland initiated. It has a special dimension for us. It is a universal and historically unprecedented international document that relates solely and exclusively to children. This groundbreaking Convention has changed the way we think about children. It has given children the protection they need and deserve. Children are the most vulnerable group in terms of exposure to the consequences of conflict. In this connection, we are placing particular emphasis on the problem of the reintegration of children previously enlisted in armed groups and of children born as a result of sexual violence in wars.

Thirdly, we call for strengthening protection for persons with disabilities in conflicts. These people are particularly exposed to a range of negative phenomena associated with conflict and post-conflict situations — violence, threats to life and health and difficulties in accessing health care, education, rehabilitation and, in extreme cases, life-saving humanitarian aid. In June, on the initiative of Poland, the Security Council unanimously adopted resolution 2475 (2019), the first ever devoted to persons with disabilities in armed conflicts.

Fourthly, and finally, we promote the protection of the rights of persons belonging to religious minorities. We are concerned about the surge in violence and religious hatred. We are particularly painfully aware of the spreading violence against Christians, and yet freedom of religion is one of the fundamental human rights and freedoms. Enhancing mutual understanding and cooperation among ethnic, cultural and religious groups is more important than ever before. That is why, for several years now, Poland has been calling for the increased engagement of international organizations in promoting full respect for the rights of religious minorities and in ensuring freedom of religion and belief. A living testament to the Polish commitment to the cause is the fact that this year the General Assembly decided to designate 22 August as the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence Based on Religion or Belief.

Today, as President of the Republic of Poland, I would like not only to take stock of Poland's achievements in the field of promoting peace in the world, but also to emphasize our contribution to solving the second key challenge of the contemporary world, which is caring for the natural environment. We will soon be handing over to Chile the presidency of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Our term in office has produced a significant contribution to global climate policy. At COP 24, held in Poland, the Katowice Rulebook was adopted. The objective of COP 24 was to provide a manual on how to implement the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. That is what we achieved. Therefore, I would like at this point to thank all the political leaders for their personal commitment and presence in our meetings, both during the COP 24 leaders summit and in the closing stretch of the negotiations in Katowice. Thanks to the Katowice climate package, the world has at its disposal a set of guidelines on operationalizing the Paris Agreement and taking related action.

I realize many of us believe that more needs to be done to protect the environment and that our ambitions should be greater. However, I also believe that the essence of the fight to counter the negative processes taking place in the natural environment lies primarily in building international consensus on the issue, and one cannot transgress its limits. Ambitions must be expressed together because only then can they be realized. Only together can we save our natural environment. The fact that the document crowning COP 24 was adopted unanimously is all the more gratifying. After laborious negotiations, part of this arrangement resulted in the acceptance of the Just Transition Declaration. For me, it is a source of great satisfaction that this concept, coined during the Katowice Conference, is now part of the official language used by the European Union and the Environmental Action Program (EAP) of the newly formed European Commission.

Let me assure members of the Assembly that Poland will support the European Commission in the implementation of the just transition concept, as defined at COP 24. Responding to the call for a higher level of ambition on environmental protection, in conjunction with yesterday's Climate Action Summit, convened by the Secretary-General, on behalf of Poland I have proposed five initiatives that are either already under way or about to be implemented at the national

level. In pursuit of sustainability, the aim is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and their production will be balanced through their absorption by ecosystems and adaptation to climate change.

First, we have created a programme that is aimed at reducing household emissions. Secondly, we will seek to reduce emissions from public transportation. Thirdly, through large-scale afforestation programmes, we want to enhance the absorption of emissions by ecosystems, which should bring us closer to climate neutrality. Fourthly, we have developed plans to adapt cities to climate change. Fifthly, we have drafted a long-term programme to change the economic profile of one of Poland's strongest economic regions — Silesia.

First and foremost, Poland emphasizes the issue of a solidarity-based and just, low-carbon transition. We are also convinced that building a green economy is possible only when voices of all social groups are duly taken into account. Environmental policy must be understood as a social policy and cannot be used as an instrument to gain economic advantage derived from the different energy mixes of individual economies or reserves of natural resources at hand.

The issue of the environment should be seen in the wider context of debate on sustainable development. In that vein, I believe that the time has come to launch an international discussion on the modern model of welfare policy. It is worth reflecting on the meaning of the term today and how to position it in a globalized world. What goals should we set ourselves on the road to its achievement? What model of a modern welfare State would we adopt — the model against which we would pitch our political ambitions? In Poland, we have now started that debate, facilitated by the dynamic development of Poland's economy and extensive social aid programmes implemented by the Polish authorities.

Welfare policy should be based on the concept of sustainable development, as set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which we have all adopted — in other words, responsibility, solidarity and justice. At the July session of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development, we noted significant progress in achieving the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals. However, the discussion revealed a lag in implementing many of its Goals, as confirmed in the *Sustainable Development Goals Report 2019*, which indicates that Sustainable Development Goal 4, concerning education, is at risk.

That delay is an acute problem and should be eliminated as soon as possible. We all agree that education is fundamentally important.

Secondly, our citizens also consider health care to be a key aspect when defining quality of life. We must make immense financial investments and achieve a much higher level of fair and effective coverage, both as individual countries and globally. In some parts of the globe, negligence in health care has led to the reappearance of diseases that were already considered to have been eradicated, and in developed countries the level of medical services is still under heavy pressure from social expectations. That is mainly due to an ageing population and the consequent increase in health needs. In Poland, that problem is currently being addressed as one of the most pressing challenges for the country's social policy.

Thirdly, the harmonization of the standard of living is an equally important element of sustainable development and a welfare State, next to increasing educational opportunities and health protection. Policies should aspire to systematically combat poverty and prevent exploitation, including economic exploitation, and to reduce social disparities through the systematic increase in the average standard of living for families. Only an economy based on respect, honesty, the harmonious cooperation among all social groups and the fair distribution of the fruits of labour, can bring about sustainable development in individual countries and the international community as a whole.

We must introduce the concept of commonwealth into the language of economic debate. Those issues are particularly important outside of developing countries as well. Today, even in some rich Western countries, we are witnessing mass protests in which citizens are demanding respect for their social rights and highlighting the deterioration of their living conditions. Instead of respect, they face arrogance and brutal police violence. I believe that a sincere dialogue about welfare policies would help prevent such tensions.

Shared responsibility should be the starting point of our efforts to achieve a better tomorrow for future generations. Poland is determined to continue its endeavours to ensure development, peace and security, respect for human rights and support for vulnerable groups in need of special protection. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to call for the promotion of peace through the law, care for the natural environment

through responsibility-sharing and engagement in welfare policy through sustainable development.

There is no doubt that as an international community we are faced with mounting and often unprecedented challenges. However, I am convinced that by working together we will be able to meet those challenges.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Poland for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by His Serene Highness Prince Alois von und zu Liechtenstein, Acting Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Acting Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein.

*His Serene Highness Prince Alois von und zu Liechtenstein, Acting Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Serene Highness Prince Alois von und zu Liechtenstein, Acting Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**Prince Alois:** It is an honour to speak before the General Assembly today, in the year when Liechtenstein is celebrating its 300th anniversary. We are proud of and blessed to look back at three centuries of absence of armed conflict, good relations with our neighbours and a trajectory from poverty to economic prosperity and political stability. We are grateful for the numerous partnerships that have made that journey possible. An active foreign policy and diplomacy have been crucial for our survival as one of the smallest States in Europe. Without our international connections, we would not have been recognized as a sovereign State, we would not have consolidated our position at the Vienna Congress and we would not have survived as a sovereign State during the difficult times of two World Wars.

Working together with others on the basis of common rules is not just something to which we

subscribe conceptually; it is an indispensable part of our history as a country and of our success as a society. Joining the United Nations in 1990 was therefore a natural continuation of what has consistently been our approach to foreign policy. Almost 30 years ago now, securing our sovereign equality was a key driver in Liechtenstein becoming a member of the Assembly.

Yet we have never looked at that important step as an end in itself. Rather, it has given us the means to help develop a rules-based international order and the rule of law as an expression of that sovereign equality. Today more than ever, we are committed to those goals and to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Sixty years ago, Liechtenstein was still a poor, agrarian emigration country, with a weak economy and very limited employment opportunities. Our path to being one of the most industrialized countries, with a highly diversified and innovative economy, was made possible through the opening of global markets based on common rules. We are witnessing difficult trends today — a more unstable global order, an increase in protectionism, a weakening of international cooperation and the erosion of internationally agreed standards and the rule of law. We will continue our commitment to respect international law, the bedrock of the United Nations, and will work with those who are committed to multilateralism.

As a small State, we will always stand with the rule of law and against the rule of might. We will continue to apply the important lessons of our history — consistent foreign policy investments pay important dividends domestically. Indeed, the United Nations is the key forum in which to promote those goals.

It is not a time of easy successes and quick wins for the United Nations but it is still a time of opportunity. The trust of the international public in the United Nations continues to be very high — surprisingly high, one is tempted to say. More than ever, people around the world understand that the big threats that we face, including to the survival of our planet, require all of us to work together. That is the political capital we are given and that we must use in our conversation with Governments that tend to look for solutions elsewhere or simply deny the challenges.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains a central blueprint for our common future, with the enormous challenge of climate change at

its core. The Sustainable Development Goals have galvanized important initiatives in Liechtenstein, and I am particularly encouraged by the positive response of the private sector.

For years, we have been talking about the need to involve a broader range of stakeholders than just Governments. The need to involve not only the private sector but also local communities, cities and other stakeholders is overwhelming today. Liechtenstein has already developed a number of sustainability initiatives that could potentially be of interest to our international partners. If we can continue being innovative and creative in that area, we can generate an interest in our sustainability initiatives that matches the interest in the products and services of our industrial and financial sectors.

One of our central sustainability initiatives is a public-private partnership in which our financial sector has a key role — the Liechtenstein Initiative for a Financial Sector Commission on Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking. The blueprint produced by the Financial Sector Commission, to be launched this coming Friday, offers a toolkit to help financial institutions to fight slavery — one of the major organized crime models of our time.

I am pleased to be able to witness the discussions at the High-Level Political Forum during my visit to New York. We should all welcome the strong engagement of young people with regard to questions of sustainability. Their voice calls for intergenerational justice as a fundamental principle of our policymaking. We should take that voice seriously.

For the first time, Liechtenstein has appointed a youth delegate, who was part of the delegation that presented our first report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda here in July. It is certainly our responsibility to make the right policy decisions. But in doing so we also have the responsibility to be aware of the consequences for those who will have to live with their effects in the years beyond 2030.

We are committed to strengthening international law, which entails not only securing respect for the norms that we have agreed but also developing new norms where necessary. The rule of law at the international level and international justice are crucial for us. We joined the International Court of Justice many years before we became a Member of the United Nations and have accepted its compulsory jurisdiction.

More recently, we have been strongly committed to furthering international criminal justice, and we have had considerable success in that respect.

The International Criminal Court remains the centre of the international fight against impunity. At a time when agreed international rules, such as the Geneva Conventions, are routinely ignored, the Court has become even more important. The performance of the Court has not always matched our expectations, and it is of course particularly exposed to the headwinds caused by isolationist and nationalist trends. Yet that must be an incentive for us to increase our political investment. In helping the Court improve its performance, we can make it less vulnerable to political attacks.

We have also led the effort to establish accountability for the crimes committed in the conflict in Syria. The creation of the International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 was a major success for the Assembly to help shape the future of the country. The political discussions on a post-conflict Syria must include accountability for the atrocities committed during the conflict. Those discussions will not be easy, but they will be necessary to create sustainable peace for the Syrian people.

The Organization was created to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. It was indeed the disaster of the Second World War that led to its creation. There have been other essential peace projects. For us, of course, the European Union has been central in that respect — it has secured a period of peace that our region has never witnessed before. As a global peace project, however, the United Nations remains unique. Its success in preventing conflict has been mixed, owing especially to the divisions among the permanent members of its Security Council and, recently, to the excessive use of the veto power.

Yet today, more so than in a long time, armed conflict of unforeseeable consequences is a real danger. The existence of nuclear weapons and the options presented by cyberwarfare illustrate the incredible level of risk and the potential devastating impact of armed conflict today.

All of us in this Hall have subscribed to the very strict rules that constrain the use of force in the United Nations Charter. Armed conflict is illegal except when

the use of force is authorized by the Security Council or is carried out in self-defence. The most serious forms of the illegal use of force are also a criminal offence now, both in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court and in many domestic legal systems. Those new legal norms are needed more than ever and also apply to new methods of warfare.

In conclusion, I wish to address a concern that my father, Prince Hans-Adam II, presented to the Assembly (see A/46/PV.10) as the very first of our initiatives presented at the United Nations. As a small State, we have consistently stood up for the right of self-determination. It is one of the fundamental principles of international law and, as such, is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and has also been incorporated in the Liechtenstein Constitution. Many of today's conflicts are rooted in claims for self-determination. If not addressed in an effective and timely manner, the resulting controversies may lead to violence and, in extreme cases, to armed conflict.

We continue to believe that we need models for innovative application of the right of self-determination in cases where independence is not a political option. Our work on that has extended over several decades now. We will continue working to make that part of our contribution to achieving the goals reflected in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Acting Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein for the statement he has just made.

*His Serene Highness Alois von und zu Liechtenstein, Acting Head of State of the Principality of Liechtenstein, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Peru.

*Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Martín

Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Vizcarra Cornejo** (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, I would like to express my best wishes for the success of the presidency of this session of the General Assembly and to assure the Assembly of Peru's support for, and commitment to, the work of the United Nations.

I firmly believe that the future is built with the actions we take today. For that reason, I call for concerted efforts to ensure peace, promote sustainable development and care for and protect the planet on the basis of dialogue and respect among our peoples, while always thinking of future generations when making decisions. Increasing social and economic inequality and high levels of corruption and impunity in a number of countries pose a latent risk to the future of democracy and governance and a source of discontent and apathy among citizens. The economic uncertainty that has persisted since the global financial crisis of 2008 has been exacerbated by trade tensions among the major players of the world economy.

That is why today, as never before, we must redouble our efforts at dialogue and constructive participation in order to find multilateral solutions to global problems. To that end, we must take into account the lessons drawn from the negotiation processes that, in 2015, led to historic milestones such as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Peru, a country with a pacifist and integrationist outlook, reaffirms its commitment to those agreements.

Together with Colombia, we have coordinated efforts in that context with various Member States to agree a United Nations mandate for holding a special session of the General Assembly, in the first half of 2021, to address the fight against corruption. One challenge for that initiative will be to adopt a political declaration on the issue. I am confident that we will have everyone's support and constructive participation. We hope that the head-on fight against corruption and impunity will become a global crusade.

Here at Headquarters one year ago (see A/73/PV.6), I noted that I had been given the honour of leading Peru during a serious political and institutional crisis. I also emphasized how corruption had become a cancer that was preventing us from taking advantage of all the potential that we have to achieve greater levels of progress and development, in the face of which my

Government could not stand by idly. That is why we undertook a number of judicial and political reforms, which are now under way, in an effort to restore the effectiveness, prestige and legitimacy of our institutions.

I would like to inform the Assembly today that a few weeks ago, we established four key norms of political reform, culminating from the debate, dialogue and consensus reached within the framework of the constitutional bodies and legal channels that govern the democratic life of my country. Those reforms will strengthen the Peruvian democratic system through rules on the registration and financing of political parties, on the exercise of internal party democracy, on parity and on alternation in the lists of candidates for the Congress of the Republic.

In the 18 months of my Government, we have managed to guide an orderly transition out of that crisis and to directly combat the corruption entrenched in all branches of the State. I lead a democratic Government that fully respects the separation and independence of powers. All our decisions have been, and continue to be, made within the framework of the political Constitution and the legal system. The rule of law, freedom of the press and freedom of expression are unrestricted in my country, as are the autonomy and independence of the judiciary and the Public Ministry to administer justice.

My country is currently undergoing a process of change that will allow us to embark on a new phase of growth and development. I must underline that those changes are being made exclusively by democratic means. That is why, to confront a situation of political entrapment that has lasted for three years, we have submitted to the Congress of the Republic a bill on constitutional reform that would advance the general elections in order to shorten the mandate of the executive and legislative branches by one year. That requires an act of detachment on the part of all. I am confident that we will achieve that for the good of the country.

After decades of sustained growth, the Peruvian economy continues to show resilience despite the challenges of the international climate. For that reason, my Government has undertaken participatory and inclusive efforts to address the challenges to development, leading to significant results as reflected in two legal instruments that will be key to Peru's development — the national competitiveness and productivity plan and the national infrastructure plan for competitiveness.

Those instruments include measures to underpin the country's medium- and long-term growth and constitute a transparent and consensus-based development agenda to bridge key gaps for Peru's economic and social development. Similarly, they demonstrate the important efforts made by the public and private sectors and the capacity of Peruvians to overcome our differences in order to work for the future of the country and achieve higher levels of well-being.

Those objectives seek, *inter alia*, to provide the country with quality infrastructure, strengthen human capital, develop innovation capacities, stimulate a dynamic and competitive labour market, promote foreign trade in goods and services and achieve environmental sustainability.

I once again reaffirm Peru's conviction and commitment to democracy and human rights. That commitment has led us to promote and support actions to re-establish the democratic order where it has been broken. I recall in that regard the International Conference for Democracy on Venezuela, which we organized and held in August in our capital city of Lima. The presence of 60 delegations from the five continents illustrated the global concern about a crisis whose impact spills over the national borders of the region.

There is no doubt that the rupture of the constitutional order and the entrenchment in power of an illegitimate regime in Venezuela are at the root of the political, institutional and humanitarian crisis that has generated an exodus of more than 4 million people, 900,000 of whom are in Peru. Faced with that crisis, Peru will continue to promote international initiatives and efforts to re-establish democracy in that fraternal country, within the framework of a peaceful process led by Venezuelans, and will continue to condemn serious human rights violations.

That International Conference underscored the urgent need to effectively address the humanitarian situation in Venezuela, in particular the enormous resources required to address the Venezuelan exodus, the full extent of which the international community still does not understand. I therefore encourage them to make every effort to reverse that situation.

Peru aspires to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, as an appropriate universal framework for the promotion of peace, development and human rights. We have initiated national efforts to make them

a reality with determination and political courage, especially by engaging women and young people.

Peru is committed to strengthening the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national gender equality policies, as well as to incorporating that approach at all levels of public administration. Peru is also a leader in the fight against sexual violence at all levels. In that context, I would like to reiterate our commitment to Goal 5 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which calls on us to join efforts to end all forms of discrimination against women and girls.

We are committed to building a peaceful and inclusive country, with transparent and accountable institutions, based on good governance, the head-on fight against corruption and the strengthening of the rule of law, especially in line with Sustainable Development Goal 16. We know from our own experience in Peru that it is possible to transform a country in one generation.

The growth of the Peruvian economy in the past 20 years has allowed us to markedly reduce poverty. Today our development policies and their financing are oriented primarily towards education, health and the infrastructure that Peruvians need in order to integrate and compete in global markets under equal conditions. We also promote greater formalization of our economy and the creation of decent employment for all. To that end, we reiterate the importance of promoting the policies of economic and commercial openness and the promotion of the green economy required to involve the private sector in financing sustainable development. In that context, Peru reaffirms its commitment to a rules-based multilateral trading system, as reflected in the World Trade Organization, and encourages everyone to work towards strengthening and improving that organization in order to guarantee the stability, predictability and transparency of the multilateral trading system, for the benefit of all.

Peru is a country that is particularly vulnerable to climate change and the risk of natural disasters. That is why we have made an ambitious commitment to comply with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We have elaborated a realistic work plan for the next two years, based on technical evidence, with the expectation of being able to improve Peru's nationally determined contributions by 2020. We have drawn up a road map with 91 adaptation measures and 62

climate-change mitigation measures that incorporate cross-cutting approaches to gender and interculturality, which will allow Peru to reach its nationally determined contributions by 2030.

As one of the world's 10 megadiverse countries, Peru witnesses the serious impacts of climate change on biodiversity and ecosystems, particularly in the Amazon. For that reason, the President of Colombia and I, in my capacity as President of Peru, decided to convene a summit on 6 September with six countries of the region to address the challenges of the fires that have affected the Amazon. The outcome of that meeting was the Leticia Amazon Pact, through which we reaffirm our commitment to conserving the Amazon forests and their sustainable development, while promoting full respect for the rights of the indigenous peoples who inhabit them. We also established an Amazon network to enhance cooperation in the face of natural disasters. I invite other Governments and interested actors, with full respect for the sovereignty of the Amazonian countries, to support us in the implementation of the Pact.

Likewise, at the national level, we attach special importance to the establishment of priority areas for fighting deforestation, aimed at reducing deforestation in priority areas by 20 per cent by 2021 and by 30 per cent by 2030. We are working on a national adaptation plan that aims to improve the resilience of the population, particularly those most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

Peru supports any initiative that would help limit the increase in global temperature. That is why we accept with enthusiasm and a sense of responsibility the invitation extended by the Secretary-General to co-lead the Social and Political Drivers of Climate Action Coalition. Peru is also organizing the first high-level conference on the illegal wildlife trade in the Americas, to be held in Lima on 3 and 4 October, in order to generate commitments and implement actions to combat that illicit trade among the countries of the Americas, while promoting the involvement of key transit and destination countries.

All of those actions undoubtedly serve to reaffirm our conviction of the need to create an ambitious global framework for biodiversity beyond 2020, in whose preparatory process Peru has been actively participating.

Peru's commitment to international peace and security and multilateralism is reflected both in

our work in the Security Council and in our active participation in United Nations peace operations since 1958. We currently have Blue Helmets deployed in six peace operations and aspire to increase that participation in order to continue to offer a source of hope and humanitarian support to thousands of people around the world, particularly the most vulnerable.

We therefore welcome the reforms that Secretary-General António Guterres has been promoting to strengthen the Organization's work in the area of peace and security so as to increase the effectiveness and added value of peace operations. As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, Peru has promoted realistic and flexible mandates for peace operations, and we reaffirm our commitment to provide duly trained and disciplined troops who are respectful of host populations, with a progressive increase in the participation of Peruvian women.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the men and women who have given their lives in the cause of peace over the past year. In particular, I would like to pay tribute to the memory of the Peruvian non-commissioned officer Edwin Augusto Chira Reyes, who died serving in the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic.

In the Security Council, Peru has constantly sought the unity of its members in order to contribute to the solution of the serious conflicts that are currently taking place in various regions that, in some cases, such as the Middle East, threaten to escalate and seriously jeopardize world peace. We have also prioritized initiatives that seek to limit the serious consequences of those conflicts for the most vulnerable populations, especially women and children, while ensuring respect for international humanitarian law and addressing the root causes of those conflicts. That has been complemented by the priority given to the involvement of women and young people in national processes of preventing and resolving conflict and of peacebuilding.

In its capacity as Chair of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, Peru has promoted various efforts to address the scourge of terrorism. We have also fostered a deeper understanding of the nature and scope of the links between international terrorism and organized crime, with a view to identifying and dismantling them, in particular through Security Council resolution 2482

(2019), adopted unanimously during our presidency last July (see S/PV.8582).

Finally, on behalf of the people and the Government of Peru, I reiterate our firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as our conviction that multilateralism is a means of addressing such global problems as climate change, terrorism, the proliferation of weapons, corruption and illicit drug trafficking, among others.

I assure the General Assembly that Peru will continue to participate constructively and coordinate its efforts with States Members of the United Nations in order to achieve the objectives that motivated the creation of the Organization.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Peru for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Senegal.

*Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of the Senegal, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Sall** (*spoke in French*): I warmly congratulate the President on his election and wish him every success in steering the work of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. I also thank his predecessor for her contribution to our joint efforts. And I again encourage the Secretary-General to continue his efforts in support of Member States.

We are called upon at this session of the General Assembly to energize multilateral efforts to eradicate poverty, promote high-quality education, take action against climate change and foster inclusion. Those

challenges are major and topical. But for the millions of victims of war and terrorism, the main challenge is existential: that of living in peace and security.

In the Sahel, terrorist groups continue to sow death on a daily basis, causing thousands of people to become refugees or displaced persons and destroying basic social services. As a troop contributor to the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA), Senegal stands in solidarity with the members of the Group of Five for the Sahel and the partners of the Alliance for the Sahel.

Because threats transcend borders, they should not be addressed in a fragmented manner. Peace, security and stability in the Sahel are part and parcel of peace, security and stability in the world. In accordance with the conclusions of the Extraordinary Summit of the Economic Community of West African States on the issue of combating terrorism, held on 14 September, Senegal remains committed to respecting the sovereignty and territorial integrity of countries such as Mali against any separatist intent. We call on the Security Council to provide MINUSMA with a robust mandate and adequate equipment to combat terrorism in the Sahel.

Terrorism is the absolute negation of humanity and must be fought in all its forms and manifestations. That is why our country has joined the initiative launched by France and New Zealand in Paris in May — the Christchurch Call to Action to Eliminate Terrorist and Violent Extremist Content Online — following the 15 March attack on the Christchurch Muslim community. We must firmly reject populist rhetoric, which manipulates minds, fosters hatred and, ultimately, trivializes racism, xenophobia and violent extremism.

In contrast, African wisdom extols peaceful coexistence and respect for diversity, through conciliatory efforts establishing a regime of openness and peace, where every human being lives in peace with themselves and with their neighbours. According to this wisdom, a rainbow owes its beauty to the various hues of its colours. That also means that peace is also diversity, that there can be no superior hub of civilization that would dictate to others how to be and act and that all cultures and civilizations are equal in dignity. Senegal has therefore decided to erect the Gorée Memorial to commemorate the dark days of slavery and for the peaceful coexistence of peoples in respect for their diversity.

The state of peace that inspires the ideals of the United Nations is certainly more compatible with the human condition than the state of war. But peace is not just the absence of war. It is also the state of mind that soothes and makes accommodations. In that spirit, Senegal strongly calls for reconciliation between Palestinians and Israelis and for the fulfilment of the right of the Palestinian people to a viable State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living side by side with the State of Israel in peace and within safe and internationally recognized borders.

Dialogue is the essence of the United Nations — our common house. On the ashes of war, this house was built to improve multilateralism, which is conducive to cooperation and peaceful coexistence among peoples. In the face of global threats and the challenges that transcend the nation-State, this Organization is where our concerns are expressed and where our ideas and proposals intersect to solve our common problems. This is where our hopes for compromise converge to achieve our shared goals, as called for by the Charter of the United Nations.

Faith in multilateralism thrives only in compliance with agreed rules and commitments. When those rules and commitments are challenged, that faith is shaken and the ideals of United Nations are undermined. As a result, Senegal reaffirms its commitment to multilateralism and a reformed and inclusive governance for a more equitable representation of Africa in the Security Council.

In my capacity as Chair of the Steering Committee of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, I welcome the dynamic of partnerships, old and new, with Africa. We support another vision of relations with the continent — free of prejudice and based on renewed partnerships that are mutually beneficial. Africa does not need stewardship. Africa needs partnerships.

We want fairer trade that does not exaggerate the perceived risk of investing in the continent, pays fair prices for raw materials, protects both host-country rights and investor interests and promotes the creation of local value chains. We call for a reform of the international tax system, so that taxes are paid where an activity creates wealth and profit, and for stronger action against tax evasion and avoidance, money-laundering and other illicit financial flows, which cost Africa more than \$100 billion a year.

We call for the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, including the target of \$100 billion per year in support of energy transition and climate-change adaptation. We call for the fulfilment of the commitments made at the third Global Partnership for Education Financing Conference, held in Dakar in February 2018, to mobilize \$3 billion over three years for education and training.

More inclusive global governance, more balanced trade, international taxation reform and the fulfilment of commitments — those are, in Africa's view, the real challenges of multilateralism today. They are the real challenges that we must tackle together if we are to energize multilateral efforts to eradicate poverty, promote quality education, address climate change and foster inclusion.

In doing so the destiny of the people lies first and foremost in their hands, which is why Senegal is pursuing with determination its 2035 development objective through the Emerging Senegal Plan. During the first phase of the Plan, between 2014 and 2018, we carried out several development-infrastructure projects through public investment. The second phase, spanning the period 2019 to 2023, was launched in December 2018 and includes a priority action plan with a sharper focus on private investment in such strategic sectors as agriculture, livestock and fisheries, transport infrastructure and services, energy, education, training and the digital economy, health, hotel and tourism infrastructure, and housing, including a five-year programme to build 100,000 homes. Those efforts have gone hand in hand with the streamlining of public administration and spending and with better mobilization of internal resources.

At the same time, we have been translating the Senegal for All vision into public policies on social inclusion and territorial equity, including the emergency community-development programme, with its components on water, electricity, access roads and equipment for rural women; universal health coverage; the national family-security grants programme for the most vulnerable groups; and the Fast-Track Entrepreneurship Delegation for women and youth.

In the light of the ideal of peace and human brotherhood that brings us together in this Hall, Senegal is delighted to host the ninth World Water Forum, to be held in 2021, and the fourth Youth Olympic Games, to take place in 2022 and the first in Olympic history to

take place on the African continent. We hope that those two events will contribute to strengthening peace and fraternity among peoples and to building a better, more welcoming world for all. We invite the entire United Nations family to attend.

I wish the General Assembly every success at this session.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Senegal for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### Agenda item 8 (continued)

##### General debate

###### Address by Mr. Giuseppe Conte, President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic.

*Mr. Giuseppe Conte, President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Giuseppe Conte, President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

**Mr. Conte** (Italy) (*spoke in Italian; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): In this high-level week, we are confronted with a major challenge, namely, to believe and invest in multilateralism and the irreplaceable role of the United Nations. A few months ago, the Secretary-General used the expression “a world of trouble” to describe the breadth and complexity of the challenges that we are called upon to confront — climate change, armed conflicts, human rights, inequality and trade disputes. Our debate is focused on subjects of great scope, namely, the fight against poverty, quality education as a source of personal and social opportunity and action to protect the environment. The common thread of those topics is inclusion and putting the human person at the heart of the political action of the United Nations and every Member State. Inclusive humanism, an expression to which I love to

refer, recognizes the equal dignity of every individual and is the true achievement of modernity.

Italy invokes and openly supports effective multilateralism because only collective and coordinated action can lay the groundwork for appropriate solutions to the multiple challenges before us. Effective multilateralism must be nourished by a concept of what the international community can contribute based on cooperation, transparency and the principle of equality among States in order to correct the dysfunctional aspects of globalization. But the inspiration, the north star that must guide that multilateralism is respect for the human person, starting with the recognition of personal and social dignity. Without such a foundation multilateralism becomes a mere tool, which undoubtedly can be useful but cannot be expected to guide the making of solid choices based on values. That humanism is the distinctive feature of the Government over which I preside.

Our objective is to foster a genuine human democracy. At times, we see our democratic institutions as based solely on the interplay of majorities and minorities. We forget that behind those numbers are human relationships, but if we can keep that fact in mind, then our systems of Government will show a human face and not devolve into authoritarianism. Those are the principles, together with the basic principles enshrined in the Constitution of the Italy, that we embrace as we envision the society of tomorrow.

We in Italy have begun a new period of reforms, which seeks to build a sustainable future for all those who will come after us. It is a project that focuses on solutions that will improve the lives of citizens and respond to the urgent needs of our society. It is a path strengthened by measures for social inclusion and equality that we have already adopted and which we will carry forward and implement with the utmost determination.

Turning to the international stage, our strategy for tackling the root causes of destabilization must be ambitious. Four years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we now need to accelerate and intensify the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, while focusing on the most effective medium- and long-term policies. Italy is deeply committed to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. We are expressing our commitment in the private sector, through our major

corporations, and in our civil society, which has a strong sense of tradition, awareness, capacity for action and proactive stance on these issues.

One of the priorities of the recently formed Government is to give life to a green new deal, reorient the entire system of production towards sustainable development and encourage socially responsible behaviour on the part of all economic stakeholders. With regard to the phenomenon of climate change, we fully agree with the urgent need for global action to respond to the challenge, as voiced yesterday at the Climate Action Summit.

We have learned only recently through press reports that a glacier on the Italian side of Mont Blanc — the highest and most majestic peak in the Alps — is in danger of collapse. That alarming news cannot leave us indifferent or able to entertain the illusion that it does not concern us or that it is far off in time or space. Rather, it should shake all of us to our core and move us to take action. That is why we will continue to encourage citizens, in particular young people, to act, as I did when I met with some of them in Rome in March. We recognize the disproportionate impact that climate change will have on future generations.

The Paris Agreement on Climate Change is a crucial starting point, but we must remain cognizant of our moral and political duty to pass the planet on to our children in the best possible condition. Furthermore, owing to its leadership in the area of renewable energy, Italy is at the forefront in combating climate change. Italy has already met the 2020 emissions-reduction targets set by the European Union and, by the end of next year, we are committed to developing a strategy for achieving climate neutrality by 2050.

We will not waver in our support of the Chilean presidency of the twenty-fifth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We are particularly pleased with our partnership with the United Kingdom in preparations for the twenty-sixth Conference, the preparatory meeting of which Italy will host, as well as other important events, including one that is dedicated to young people.

We are aware, however, that everything I mentioned is not enough and cannot be enough. A radical change in cultural mindsets must be pursued. That is why we want to include the protection of the environment, biodiversity and sustainable development in the fundamental principles of the Italian Constitution.

Doing so means forging a new way of conceiving of the relationship between us and the planet and between us and future generations as the basis of our social pact. It means abandoning the logic of ownership that would have us believe that we have exclusive dominion over the planet, when in fact we have inherited a right to stewardship that we must pass on to future generations.

The other great challenge testing the international community's ability to respond and its solidarity is today's unprecedented level of migration. With regard to national sovereignty, the phenomenon requires the sharing of burdens and responsibilities among all countries, whether they be countries of origin, transit or destination. We are coming closer to meeting that goal today through the implementation of an automatic mechanism for redistributing migrants among the various European countries. We are on the verge of reaching a crossroads, moving from an emergency phase in managing the migratory phenomenon to a structural one based on partnership among States.

As we all know, migration is the result of deep-rooted causes that require immediate action, together with medium- to long-term perspectives. We must all work to eliminate those root causes. At the same time, we cannot compromise on ensuring a rigorous and effective system for repatriating illegal immigrants. Italy has never failed to do its part. We continue to be involved in resettlement programmes, humanitarian corridors and emergency evacuations, but Italy is no longer alone. Europe has finally seized the opportunity to do its part without being further urged to do so.

Italy is taking determined and decisive action at the international level to promote human rights, based on the principles of universality, indivisibility and interdependence of fundamental rights and freedoms, which must be recognized and guaranteed for all individuals without distinction or compromise. I very much appreciated the initiative promoted yesterday by President Trump on religious freedom — an issue to which Italy has always been deeply committed (see A/74/PV.3). As a member of the Human Rights Council for the three-year period from 2019 to 2021, Italy will work for the Council inspired by the motto "human rights for peace".

We proudly contribute to United Nations peacekeeping by providing our best forces and technology. Conflict and crisis prevention should be the political priority of every one of us, especially of the

United Nations, which was created expressly to save future generations from the scourge of war. At the first signs of a crisis, we must make more systematic use of the instruments for the peaceful settlement of disputes at our disposal, starting with mediation, and involve all segments of society, including women and young people. We also promote mediation initiatives through our support for the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, which we launched in 2017.

I am pleased to recall a totally Italian initiative, conceived in a small village in Tuscany called Rondine. But for more than 30 years, hundreds of young people who come from countries in conflict have been invited to live together and experience daily, facts-based dialogue bringing a message of peace day after day — a message, in the greater Mediterranean above all, that we support the need to work on political solutions. One of Italy's strategic priorities is its major contribution to United Nations stabilization efforts to ensure conditions favourable to the development of a region to which our own security and prosperity are closely tied.

Almost nine years since the fall of Muammar Al-Qaddafi, the Libyan nation has still not been able to live in peace and prosperity. For the international community, the moment has come to renew its commitment to a peaceful, united, independent and democratic Libya. We must all act in support of the United Nations Support Mission and the efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Libya Ghassan Salamé. Reaching a credible ceasefire is only a first urgent and necessary step to restart an inclusive political dialogue among all the Libyan parties — the only instrument for achieving a lasting solution. That is why it is crucial that all the States Members of the United Nations conform to the obligation to respect and implement the arms embargo on Libya, thereby preventing a future escalation of the conflict. A lasting solution will also entail a reasonable compromise that can guarantee the equitable distribution and use of the riches of Libya to the benefit of the whole Libyan nation.

Following the Palermo Conference, Italy has continued to push for cohesive action from the international community. That is the direction of the initiatives we are developing, together with France, Germany and other partners, in preparation for an international conference on Libya we will be hosting. I wish to express Italy's appreciation for the work done on Libya by all the branches of the United Nations and

in particular by the organizations that have worked to assist vulnerable migrants and refugees. Nevertheless, on the basis of our knowledge on the ground, I hope that they will have a greater and more incisive presence.

Italy is aware of the other challenges on the African continent. We wish to play a high-profile role at the bilateral level. That is also why the many visits I have made to Africa in recent months confirm our attention to that part of the world, with which we intend to foster greater involvement of the European Union. Aware of the importance of coordinated action between Europe and Africa, we would like to create a new partnership based upon equality. We are engaged in a pilot project to promote the social and economic development of the country, which will involve various European countries and an excellent Italian agency in the energy sector. Italy's focus on the Mediterranean entails, obviously, a strong commitment to addressing the crisis in the Sahel.

At the same time, we cannot forget the strategic importance of the Horn of Africa, where we have a new process of change that we must support. It is very important to note the reconciliation between Ethiopia and Eritrea in the promising birth of a transitional Government with civilian leadership in the Sudan.

As a founding member of the European Union and NATO, Italy is following with concern the gradual splintering of the instruments that for decades have contributed to strategic stability in Europe and the world. We have had various successes, but we must also pursue the fight against terrorism. We will work towards spreading a culture of respect for institutions and the other opinions, adopting all the instruments necessary to prevent the spread of hatred, and through words, which are not lost in a general commotion. They have weight — great weight.

Italy also intends to relaunch national and European action in the Western Balkans, consistent with a traditional role played in favour of the stabilization of the region. There are new, growing threats to international security that demand a multilateral commitment to disarmament and non-proliferation. Italy promotes universal adherence to and full implementation of the nuclear, biological and chemical non-proliferation regimes.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) with Iran continues to represent a key element of the global non-proliferation architecture. We appeal to Iran therefore to return to full compliance with its

obligations under the JCPOA. It is in the interest of the entire international community that this happen, also by keeping open the necessary channels of dialogue with Tehran.

Another common goal should be that of lowering tensions in the Gulf region, where there is a high risk of escalation. We believe that it is in the collective interest — not only Italian — to ensure freedom of navigation, considering its major impact on the global economy.

The United Nations and the principles that inspired the Charter are the only point of reference today that can lead humankind in responding to the new, more complex challenges that the international community faces. We must all commit to guaranteeing that the Organization can, to the best of its ability, fulfil its mandate. Among the plans for reform, we support with special conviction the Secretary-General's commitment to the empowerment of women and girls and the achievement of gender equality as instruments for strengthening the effectiveness of the Organization.

In the programme of my Government, we underline the clear goal of pursuing gender equality. We cannot allow the grave injustice of women doing the same work and being paid less than men. We must pool our efforts on the process of the reform of the Security Council, making it more democratic, effective and representative of the entire United Nations membership.

In conclusion, there are many challenges that we are called upon to respond to as political deciders. We can be successful if we act with determination, courage and vision and if we do not make the mistake of seeking short-term consensus. We must know how to imagine a future and know how to build it in order to leave it to our children and grandchildren. Their voice grows louder every day; the duty of leaders is that of listening to their voice and translating it into concrete actions.

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic for the statement she has just made.

*Mr. Giuseppe Conte, President of the Council of Ministers of the Italian Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.*

**Address by Mr. Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain**

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón.

*The President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, Mr. Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The Acting President** (*spoke in French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**Mr. Sánchez Pérez-Castejón** (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): Right at this very moment, as I begin my address here, a young pregnant woman from the Sahel is boarding an overcrowded plastic raft, risking her life to cross the sea in search of a better future. She knows that the end of the journey is not assured, because the Mediterranean has sadly become the world's largest watery grave. She is fleeing hunger and drought, but she has no other choice. On the other side of the Atlantic, a Central American family crosses northern Mexico on foot, because they are so desperate that no wall, however high, could stand in the way of their quest to find peace, food and shelter for their children.

Right at this very moment, even as I address the Assembly, a robot is operating with pinpoint accuracy on a patient in a Tokyo hospital, saving him from what years ago would have been a certain death. In the waiting room, on the other side of the operating theatre wall, the patient's loved ones are staring at the TV, watching a Wayapi family cry inconsolably because their homes and their villages, in the heart of the Amazon rainforest, are being consumed by flames.

At the same time, in the bustle of the city streets, one of the thousands of couriers working in Manhattan, London or Madrid is receiving an order that someone has just placed from their mobile phone. The courier will be paid mere pennies for each minute of the journey, but even so he will get on his bicycle, make the delivery and hope to receive another message soon and so continue his working day. He has no other choice.

What I am describing to the Assembly could easily be an excerpt from the screenplay of one of the many

dystopian series on television these days. But no: these are the real stories of real people who are crying out for us to take action. These are clear examples of the magnitude of the global challenges that we face today: the climate emergency, hunger, migratory pressure, the technological and digital revolution, social and gender inequality and hate speech, which is so prevalent today.

Gathered here today are representatives of the almost 200 countries that make up the United Nations. I want to take advantage of the privilege that it is for me to be standing here at this rostrum to send a simple but resounding message: we must act. We must act now because the Earth is bleeding. We must act now because the problems of our peoples simply cannot wait. We must act now because the challenges of this millennium are exceeding the limits and capacities of our nation States.

We must act so that the Assembly can make a real difference. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has asked of us that we make fewer speeches and offer more plans. We must replace grandiose speeches with clear commitments. What our citizens want from us is action. Never before in the history of humankind has the need to elaborate a shared world project been so critical and so urgent. It is our imperative responsibility to determine our vision for the future.

Allow me to ask a few questions: are we clear about the problems we are discussing here today? Have we all reached the same conclusion? Do we know the kind of world we want to leave our great-grandchildren? Have we decided what our role in this change is going to be? I would like to believe that we know the answers to these questions. In this spirit, allow me to answer them from Spain's perspective and describe the contribution of the country that I have the honour to lead.

First, it is abundantly clear to me, as the President of the Government of Spain, that the most urgent challenges are precisely those faced by the protagonists of the stories I have just told the Assembly: hunger, the climate emergency, the digital revolution, economic and social inequality, gender inequality, access for the disabled, the violence of war and, without a doubt, discrimination.

Secondly, Spain advocates concerted global action. That is why every time we come here we invoke the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. That is why we signed the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and

the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Thirdly, we know exactly what kind of world we want to leave our descendants. We want a world that is just, sustainable and egalitarian. We want an international community that is committed to a new global social contract, the 2030 Agenda. We want Governments that share a sense of responsibility and that are committed to the conservation of our planet, to sustainable development and to the expansion and reaffirmation of democratic values.

Lastly, we are very clear on the role that Spain wants to play: that of a committed, compassionate and conscious society — a society that takes the lead and wants to be at the forefront, along with other countries, of major transformations.

On the eve of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, in 2020, Spain, which was one of the world's first modern States, was not, however, one of the founding States of this great institution: the United Nations. Spain was not one of the founding States for one simple reason: Franco's dictatorship, which held our country hostage for 40 years and collaborated with the Nazi regime during the Second World War — a fact that was incompatible with our becoming part of an Organization that was created for the opposite reason: to promote peace and democratic values.

Spain later embraced democracy, emerging from that dark dictatorship 40 years ago, and has succeeded in building a prosperous and free country, a decentralized State committed to diversity. Spain has one of the best health-care systems in the world; it is also one of the world's safest countries; and it is internationally considered to be one of the world's strongest democracies, protected by robust safeguards. It is the world's preferred travel destination and one of the best countries in which to live.

Today, 24 September, is a very important day for Spain. Today an announcement has been made that is very important to Spanish society. We have symbolically closed the democratic circle, as the Spanish Supreme Court has authorized the exhumation of Franco the dictator's remains from the public mausoleum in which he was buried with State honours. This is a major victory for Spanish democracy. On this day, 24 September, we are therefore closing a dark chapter of our history, and work is beginning to remove Franco the dictator's remains from where they had lain — indefensibly — for

far too long, because no enemy of democracy deserves to lie in a place of worship or of institutional respect.

The Spanish people chose peace, freedom and democracy, and with these tools we are going to continue building the future. Today we want to share the achievements we have made in the past 40 years and our transformative spirit.

In our country, a great revolution is brewing that will forever change our vision of the world; I am speaking here of the fourth wave of feminism. I can say with pride that, in Spain, the momentum of equality is unstoppable. There are two dates on our calendar that exemplify this perfectly: 8 March, International Women's Day, and LGBTI Pride Day.

The strong voice of Spain's women can be heard loud and clear in every corner of the country and of the planet. Machismo is not just a Government concern but a daily concern shared by the general public. The LGBTI community has given us a true lesson on human rights, as there is no better flag than that which embraces diversity as a source of human wealth.

Spain is today a geostrategically significant power with an international vision, a committed democracy that has been actively participating for decades in United Nations peace missions and that is implementing at the national level policies to further democracy and expand the rights and freedoms promoted here at the United Nations.

As a full member of this Organization, Spain is also calling for a change. The historic contributions of the United Nations are many and undeniable, but our peoples expect even more from us. It would seem that our reflexes are slow and that our response capacity is at times sluggish, and we are not going to be able to rise to the challenges facing us if we are not able to give the best of ourselves. Now is the time for action.

We are living in paradoxical times, times of great contradictions, times in which poverty, hardship and social exclusion coexist with technological transformation and the digital revolution — times in which we are increasingly aware of what lies ahead of us and of how what happens on the other side of the world can have consequences in our own environment. Yet we do not seem to be able to summon up the courage required to sit down together and forge the agreements necessary to address our problems.

It is clear that global challenges call for coordinated actions at the international level. They are expressions of a true change in era and of a new stage in the history of humankind. Major transformations without a doubt represent threats, but they can also represent major opportunities. That is why all responses based on maintaining the status quo or on returning to a past that was idealized, if we look at it objectively, are doomed to failure. Those who shut themselves away behind protectionism or ultranationalism, that is, the narrative of fear, are profoundly mistaken. Looking back to the past will not make the future disappear; we will only succeed in erasing ourselves from the future. The changes I have mentioned are not going to stop, nor are they going to respect borders or any sort of wall, no matter how high that wall may be.

On the contrary, we must be aware that this future can be won only if we approach it with empathy, courage, cooperation and leadership, and only if we are ambitious and aware that multilateralism has no realistic alternative in today's world. The future will be what we want it to be. It is in our hands, and this Organization, the United Nations, has much to say about it. It is possible. Let us therefore act.

The Paris Climate Agreement and 2030 Agenda, *inter alia*, contain the diagnosis, the objectives and the road map. We have worked hard over the years to give them shape and to achieve consensus, and it has not been easy. But we did it, and we did so because we need a future that includes everyone, that leaves no one behind — no country, no region and no human being.

Our task now is not to continue reflecting or continue debating, but to turn the Sustainable Development Goals into reality. The decisions we take now will affect the future of the next generations. Consequently, not acting is no longer a matter of choice; it is in fact an enormous irresponsibility.

I have just referred to 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals, and I would like to underline the operative word, which is, in my opinion, essential for the world in which we live, namely, "sustainable". Nothing that is not sustainable is acceptable any more. And this, as the Assembly knows, is not an ideological opinion, but — even if some may find it hard to admit it — a forceful and obvious scientific fact. We need to save our planet, and no one is exempt from that responsibility. It has been said from this very rostrum — we are facing a climate emergency

that will not brook any kind of excuses. This emergency requires us to transform the way we think, produce, consume, in short, live.

Let us act now to respond to the climate emergency and let us do so from a multilateralist point of view. I say this because Hurricane Dorian in the United States, the cold drop in Spain a few weeks ago and the desertification of Senegal are the symptoms of the same evil. Much-needed local solutions and national solutions are not enough. Let us therefore act. Let us act, for example, to recognize some ecosystems as global public goods with their own special status.

Spain is making a great effort to be part of the group of countries driving the climate agenda. It is one of the central axes of my Government's programme, and we want to demonstrate our firm commitment with deeds. We have set out to decarbonize our economy by 2050 in a socially just, supportive and efficient manner, without leaving anyone behind. To this end, we have approved and presented an ambitious strategic framework for energy and climate.

We set ourselves the challenge of climate change as a great opportunity — and not as a great threat — to transform our economic model, modernize our labour market, create quality employment, gain in energy security and innovation, improve citizens' health and position our country, Spain, at the forefront of the technologies that will dominate the next century.

The climate emergency also requires the mobilization of financial resources at all levels. For this reason, I announced at the Climate Action Summit on Monday that Spain will contribute €150 million to the Green Climate Fund over the next four years. We will also ratify the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal, and we will contribute €2 million to the Adaptation Fund.

I think all of us in this Hall have seen the recent photo of dogs pulling a sled over the thawed waters of Greenland. It was not an edited photo; the temperature of the waters in that area has risen by five degrees in just one year. That is a real alarm, as is watching the Amazon burn before the impotent gaze of the indigenous populations.

Why have we not acted forcefully enough? We already have examples of good practices that I would like to champion: for example, decades-long joint efforts under the Montreal Protocol are bearing fruit — they have been effective — and we are regenerating our

ozone layer. We also have good ideas. Let us get the Green New Deal going. The climate emergency is the great threat of our age, but we have alternatives. What is important is that we take action.

In addition to sustainability, we need much more social justice. The so-called millennials and centennials today are 20 per cent less likely to be middle class than their parents. They also have fewer options to work at what they are qualified for. Online delivery companies, for example, are today full of university graduates.

The inequality gap does not stop growing: some recent reports point out that, in 2030, 1 per cent of the world's population will accumulate two thirds of our planet's total wealth. While being a dramatic figure, it is not the worst figure of all: according to data from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, more than 800 million human beings on our planet are suffering from hunger.

The concepts of sustainability, justice and human dignity cannot be understood without the necessary and tireless fight against hunger, poverty and precariousness. All these concepts are enshrined in the 2030 Agenda and require us to transform our societies in depth, in a structural way. But we will not really be able to talk about progress if we do not put the human being at the centre of our policies. I say this because the issue of progress must be met with a progressive response.

Globalization must be based on rights, freedoms and actions to curb inequality and environmental degradation. Everything is ultimately interconnected: industrial relocation generates unemployment in the departed region but also causes environmental impacts in the destination region. Global warming affects the livelihoods of the countries of the South and also provokes migratory movements towards the North. The rich countries of the North are seduced by racism and hate speech and blame the migrants for their so-called first-world problems. Inequalities in the welfare state are a breeding ground for illiteracy and pandemics in developing countries.

*The President took the Chair.*

Let us act. Spain assures the Assembly that it is doing so. Accordingly, I would like to make two important announcements. The first of them is that Spain will contribute €100 million over five years to the Joint Sustainable Development Goals Fund. The second announcement is that Spain will return to the

donor community of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria by making a contribution of €100 million over the next three years.

Let us also talk about technological transformation and changes in the world economic order. As the Assembly knows, the technological revolution has already profoundly transformed our societies, and it will continue to do so without us being able to see their limits, their potential and also the risks that they bring. Our systems of production, consumption, health, transport and even of socialization and security are changing radically. As just one example, the mobile technology we all have in our pocket is superior to that used to send us to the Moon for the first time. We are also seeing previously unimaginable new phenomena that could undermine States: cyberattacks and fake news are different manifestations of the use of technology as a transnational weapon of attrition.

Nevertheless, big data, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things are concepts — terms — that only a part of the world can experience. Not everyone can be operated on by a robot. Inequality includes technological inequality. Fighting technological inequality is also a Sustainable Development Goal.

Faced with the disruptive nature of this revolution, we in the public sphere must ensure that progress is at the service of human beings. The jobs of the future will be different. As is often said, we do not know exactly what the work of our children and grandchildren will be. But what we have to be very clear about is that, while these jobs may be different, they also have to be dignified.

The transport of the future will be faster, but it must be sustainable, affordable and accessible also for people with disabilities. The future we want must also be able to create wealth and distribute it fairly. However, trade tensions represent a major threat to prosperity. The stability of the world economy is ultimately at stake.

In the face of mistrust and dirty wars, bridges need to be built. An example of this is the new trade agreements reached recently by the Southern Common Market and the European Union, which are committed to opening up the economy to trade, while protecting labour, social and environmental rights.

The outbreak of a trade war with unpredictable consequences can and must be avoided. It is up to us to abandon unilateral actions and resolve our differences

in the framework of the rules-based multilateral trading system, centred on the World Trade Organization, which should of course be reformed.

Let me reiterate that my vision of a just world cannot be understood without a key basic principle — that of gender equality, equality between men and women. I have said it on more than one occasion and I reaffirm it today. I am a feminist President and I have the honour to be part of a feminist Government. My commitment in that area is absolute.

That is why Spain will promote the fight against male violence against women here at the United Nations and at the European Union, incorporating the recommendations of UN-Women and promoting the European Strategy on Gender Equality at the European Union. That Strategy must be binding for each and every country of the European Union. We will work towards a joint definition of femicide and homogeneous legislation on the subject.

We will continue to lead the women and peace and security agenda. Together with Finland, we promoted the initiative Commitment 2025 on Women's Inclusion in Peace Processes, including the ambitious commitment to ensure that in five years' time, the inclusion of women in peace processes will be the rule and not the exception.

During the current session, we will mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. We will firmly uphold the consensus forged for more than two decades. We cannot roll back progress in such areas as universal access to sexual and reproductive health services. We cannot stand by and allow women to be tricked into boarding small boats by sexual exploitation mafias. We cannot stand by and allow forced marriage or female genital mutilation to take place. We cannot stand by while the rights of half the human race continue to be violated in every corner of the planet. We must act.

Migration is part of the human condition and is an extraordinarily complex phenomenon in today's societies. That is why we have an obligation to regulate it. When migration is safe, orderly and addressed in a comprehensive manner, it enriches all those involved. Spain firmly supports close cooperation among countries of origin, transit and destination.

We must say no to crude and simplistic policies that are born of hatred and rejection. We must continue

working towards a joint and coordinated response to the humanitarian challenge of migration. We must fulfil our commitments under international humanitarian law and the Marrakech Compact on Migration and live up to our responsibility as countries of refuge. We must overcome the current dynamic of short-term solutions. We must wake up and seek a compassionate global response.

I am concerned about conflicts on the international stage and the consequences of war and geopolitical tensions that end up affecting, as always, the weakest and most vulnerable, in particular women and girls. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees continues providing alarming statistics: 70 million people are forcibly displaced, of whom nearly 26 million are refugees. That is unacceptable.

I am concerned about the regional impact of the crisis in Libya. The Sahel is also a source of instability. However, for a country like Spain, Africa is, first and foremost, synonymous with hope and opportunity. In spite of the major challenges faced by Africa, six out of every 10 countries with the highest rate of growth in the world are in that continent. That is why we will become directly involved in contributing to the full development of its capacities and transformation into a democratic and peaceful continent of opportunity.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains unfinished business for the international community. Spain firmly supports the two-State solution. We call for respect for and application of the gains made by the United Nations. Israelis and Palestinians have the right to live in peace and security in their own States and the international community must support them in the process of reaching an agreement.

The situation in Western Sahara is also on the agenda. The Government of Spain defends the central role of the United Nations and wishes to contribute to the Secretary-General's efforts to achieve, pursuant to Security Council resolutions, a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution, according to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

I am concerned about escalating tensions in the Gulf and the possibility that the wrong response could trigger a conflict with extremely serious consequences in the Near East. We call on parties and stakeholders in the region to act with restraint and we applaud the mediation efforts.

The dismantling of the nuclear deal with Iran would be a major international failure. It is a key element in the fight against nuclear proliferation and an essential milestone for the security of the region.

The situation in Syria is one of the most tragic and the Government of Spain is very concerned. Eight years of conflict have led to chilling statistics — more than 400,000 deaths, 5.6 million refugees, 80 per cent of the Syrian population below the poverty line and 11.7 million people with humanitarian needs. The United Nations can offer a way out of the civil and humanitarian conflict. The utmost pressure must be exerted and Spain pledges its full support to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General.

The global threat of terrorism still looms. Returning foreign terrorist fighters are a source of concern for Governments. It is essential to promote international judicial cooperation, control their movements, obtain evidence and ensure the proper treatment of prisoners — all without forgetting to show solidarity with the victims of terrorism.

I must also mention the situation in the brotherly country of Venezuela. Spain hopes that Venezuelans themselves will freely decide their country's future. We believe that it is essential to hold presidential elections, which must be free, democratic and transparent, with all the necessary safeguards. That is the only way to return to democratic and institutional normalcy in that country.

There is another international event which, although not violent in nature, concerns me. The United Kingdom has decided to withdraw from the European Union. I respect that decision, although as I have said publicly on many occasions, I regret it profoundly. I hope that the United Kingdom will withdraw in an orderly manner that benefits British and European citizens, as well as the economic stakeholders that require legal certainty. The deadline is looming large and we must spare no effort in attempting an orderly withdrawal.

The United Kingdom's departure from the European Union will of course have consequences for Gibraltar. I hope that, with respect to the United Nations position with which Spain aligns itself fully, we will be able to develop an area of prosperity that encompasses Gibraltar and the neighbouring Campo de Gibraltar and achieve social and economic convergence for the entire region.

I will end my statement by reiterating what I said at the start of it. To achieve the world we want, we need a method for action. We need to strengthen multilateralism. It is the only tool that offers a solution to the challenges we have listed — hunger, the climate emergency, the digital revolution, economic and social inequality, gender inequality, the violence of war and discrimination.

It troubles us to see certain parties questioning the most basic points of consensus in those areas. Retreating behind protectionism and ultranationalism threatens the norms that contribute to peaceful coexistence, progress and global prosperity. That is why we must equip multilateralism with the capabilities necessary to ensure that it is active, inclusive and effective. In that regard, we support the Secretary-General in his efforts to reform the Organization.

As I speak, some of the migrants who fled poverty will have realized their dream of achieving a better future. I hope that, thanks to the response we decide on today to address the climate emergency, the soil of their native lands will again become fertile so that no one else is forced to leave ever again. In the past few minutes, a patient has been cured thanks to artificial intelligence. I hope that technology continues progressing to improve the lives and well-being of all people — not only of some but of all people. In the past few minutes, many couriers have arrived on their bicycles at their destinations and have delivered their orders. I hope that in the future they will all again have decent working conditions.

We must ensure that the United Nations plays a lead role in the world we want. We, the representatives of 200 countries, must ensure that the United Nations acts now.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Pedro Sánchez Pérez-Castejón, President of the Government of the Kingdom of Spain, was escorted from the rostrum.*

**Address by Ms. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and National Security and Intelligence of New Zealand**

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister for Arts,

Culture and Heritage, and National Security and Intelligence of New Zealand.

*Ms. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and National Security and Intelligence of New Zealand, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President:** I have great pleasure in welcoming Her Excellency Ms. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and National Security and Intelligence of New Zealand, and inviting her to address the Assembly.

**Ms. Ardern (New Zealand):** *Ēi nga tangata katoa, e manaa kitia ana te whenua, o te Āi Whanui Ēi nga kaitiaki, e riterite ana, nga whenua, hurl rauna, i to Ao Īā tu tatou ki te wero hia I nga wero I te ingoa o te tika o nga mea katoa Tema koutou katoa.*

I greet the Assembly in Te Reo Maori, the language of the *tangata whenua*, or first people, of Aotearoa, New Zealand. I do so, not just because it is the same way I would begin an address if I were at home but because there are challenges that we face as a world that I know no better way to express. Maori concepts, like *kaitiakitanga*, represent the idea that all of us here today are guardians — guardians of the land, of our environment and of our people.

There is a simplicity to the notion of sovereign guardianship. For decades we have assembled here under the assumption that we narrowly cooperate only on the issues that overtly impact one another, issues like international trade rules, the law of the sea or humanitarian access to war zones. The space in-between has, essentially, been left to us.

We, the political leaders of the world, have been the authors of our own domestic politics and policies. Decisions have been our own and we have ultimately lived with the consequences — but the world has changed. Over time, we have become increasingly interdependent. We see more and more often domestic decisions that have global ramifications. Physical events have taught us that in obvious ways — oil spills that show no respect for maritime boundaries; nuclear accidents and testing, the impacts of which are never confined to the exact location in which they occur; and so on.

Yet our interdependence, our connection, runs so much deeper than that. Experiences in recent years should lead us to question whether any of us ever truly

operate in isolation anymore. That is a question that we, the remote but connected nation of New Zealand, have been grappling with this year. There are things that we are well known for in New Zealand — green rolling hills, perfect, you might say, for hobbits to hide in and for plenty of sheep to roam. We are known for *manaakitanga*, or the pride we take in caring for our guests, so much so, that it even extends to our most entrenched sporting rivals.

Now we are known for something else. On 15 March 2019, an alleged terrorist undertook the most horrific attack on a place of worship, taking the lives of 51 innocent people, devastating our Muslim community and challenging our sense of who we are as a country. There is no changing a nation's history, but we can choose how it defines us.

In Aotearoa, New Zealand, the people who lined up outside mosques with flowers, the young people who gathered spontaneously in parks and open spaces in a show of solidarity, the thousands who stopped in silence to acknowledge the call to prayer seven days later and the Muslim community who showed only love — those are the people who collectively decided that New Zealand would not be defined by an act of brutality and violence, but instead by compassion and empathy.

Make no mistake, we do not claim to be a perfect nation. While we are home to more than 200 ethnicities, that does not mean we are free from racism or discrimination. We have wounds from our own history that, 250 years on from the first encounters between Maori and Europeans, we continue to address. But since the terrorist attack in New Zealand, we have had to ask ourselves many hard and many difficult questions.

One example sticks in my mind. It was only days after the shooting that I visited a mosque in our capital city. After spending some time with community leaders, I exited and walked across the car park, where members of the Muslim community were gathered. Out of the corner of my eye I saw a young boy gesture to me. He was shy, almost retreating towards a barrier, but he also had something he clearly wanted to say. I quickly crouched down next to him. He did not say his name or even “Hello”, he simply whispered, “Will I be safe now?”

What does it take for a child to feel safe? As adults, we are quick to make the practical changes that will enable us to say that such a horrific act could never happen again — and we did that. Within 10 days of the

attack, we made a decision to change our guns laws and banned military style semi-automatic weapons and assault rifles in New Zealand. We have started on a second tranche of reforms to register weapons and to change our licensing regime. Those changes will help make us safer. But when you are a child, fear is not discrete and it cannot be removed through legislative acts or decrees of parliament. Feeling safe means the absence of fear; living free from racism, bullying and discrimination; feeling loved, included and able to be exactly who you are. To feel truly safe, those conditions need to be universal — no matter who you are, no matter where you come from, no matter where you live.

The young Muslim boy in Kilbirnie, New Zealand, wanted to know if I could grant him all of those things. My fear is, that as a leader of a proudly independent nation, that is one thing that I cannot achieve alone, not anymore. In our borderless and technologically connected world, commentary on race, acts of discrimination based on religion, gender, sexuality or ethnicity are not neatly confined behind boundaries — they are felt globally. The fact that I received so many letters from Muslim children from around the world in the weeks after 15 March speaks to the power of connection.

Those children had no sense of distance. They may have never heard of New Zealand before 15 March. They just saw an act of hatred against their community and it felt close to them. Whether it is acts of violence, language intended to incite fear of religious groups or assumptions about ethnicities that breed distrust and racism — those actions and utterances are as globalized as the movement of goods and services. Children hear them, women hear them, people of faith hear them and our rainbow communities hear them.

Now, it is our turn to stop and listen — to accept that our words and actions have immeasurable consequences and to speak not only like the whole world is listening but with the responsibility of someone who knows a small child somewhere might be listening too.

The spaces in which we communicate are part of the challenge too. In an increasingly online world, we need to create spaces for the exchange of ideas, the sharing of technology and the exercise of free speech, while also acknowledging the potential for that technology to be used to cause harm. The events of 15 March were a staggering example of such harm and a deliberate effort to broadcast terror on a massive, viral scale over the

Internet. The alleged terrorist did not just take the lives of 51 people, he did it live on Facebook. In the first 24 hours after the attack, Facebook took down 1.5 million copies of the live stream video. YouTube saw a copy of the video uploaded, at times, as fast as once every second during the same period.

The alleged terrorist used social media as a weapon. The attack demonstrated how the Internet — a global commons with extraordinary power to do good — can be perverted and used as a tool for terrorists. What happened in Christchurch, as well as being a profound tragedy, is also a complex and ongoing problem for the world. It is a problem we felt a sense of responsibility to do something about, so we sought to collaborate with the technology companies that are so integral to the solution.

Two months after the attacks, leaders gathered in Paris for the Christchurch Call to Action Summit, bringing together companies, countries and civil society, and committing to a range of actions to reduce the harm such content can cause. In so doing, we have kept our focus on the deeper aim we all aspire to — technology that unleashes human potential, not the worst in us.

Yesterday, I met with Call supporters to check on our collective progress. We announced that a key tech industry institution will be reshaped to give effect to those commitments and we launched a crisis response protocol to make sure that we can respond to such events, should they happen in the future. Neither New Zealand nor any other country could make those changes on their own, and neither could the technology companies. We are succeeding because we are working together and for that unprecedented and powerful act of unity, New Zealand says, “thank you”.

The centrality of technology in our lives is not the only example of our increasing interconnection and reliance on one another if we are to respond to the challenges we face. There is perhaps no better example of our absolute interdependence than the issue of climate change. When the Secretary-General visited the Pacific region this year, he saw at first-hand how countries that have produced the fewest greenhouse gas emissions are now facing the most catastrophic effects. In his words: “To save the Pacific is to save the whole planet.”

In fact, 7 of the 15 most climate-affected nations in the world sit within the Pacific region, including places like Tuvalu, with a population of just over 11,000

people, which barely contributes to global emissions but is paying the price for our collective inaction; atolls so low-lying that in weather events the water on either side of them can flow together and join at the narrowest points, engulfed by the sea; or Tokelau, a beautiful set of three atolls that can only be accessed by boat, where the children speak knowledgeably about climate change, knowing that unlike all the challenges their self-reliant forbears have ever faced, this one is completely and utterly in other people’s hands.

They have never met the world leaders represented here, nor have those leaders met them, but I can tell everyone that their expectations of all of us are high. Meeting those expectations will require us to use every policy lever available and, following the example of the Christchurch Call, we need to work with partners inside and outside Government to make change.

In New Zealand, we have plenty of work to do. We may produce only 0.17 per cent of global emissions, but like so many others, our gross emissions have been rising steadily since the 1990s. That is why we have coupled ambition with action. Over the past two years since my Government took office, New Zealand has produced our own zero carbon legislation, which puts our domestic economic transformation in line with the objective of a 1.5°C limit in global temperature increase.

We have continued towards our goal of planting 1 billion trees. We have created a \$100 million green investment fund. We have stopped issuing new offshore oil and gas exploration permits. We are creating a plan to achieve 100 per cent renewable electricity generation and to incentivize low emission transport options. We are also supporting our Pacific neighbours with projects to increase solar power, reduce the use of diesel generators, protect coastlines and stop seawater from entering water supplies.

Some answers to the climate challenge are easier than others. The vast bulk of our greenhouse gas emissions, for instance, do not come from transport, energy generation or waste but from one of the things that we pride ourselves on — our food production for the world. We know that requires us to adapt. In fact, our farming leaders have made their own commitment to cutting emissions from food production. Over the next five years, we will collaborate with farmers to build systems in New Zealand that every farmer will be able to use to measure, manage and reduce their own farm’s emissions.

We are doing that because we are unique. Agriculture makes up nearly half of our greenhouse gas emissions, setting us apart from our counterparts in the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, but we will not stay out there on our own for long. When other countries cut pollution from traditional sectors, like energy and transport, their profiles will start to look more and more like ours does today.

New Zealand will never produce all of the food that the world needs, no matter how many sheep the world may think we have, but we can produce the ideas and the technology that the world needs for everyone to farm and to grow in the most sustainable way possible. New Zealand is determined to do good and to be good for the world.

That is why we are also focused on tackling the billions of dollars that countries spend annually on fossil fuel subsidies — billions that could instead be spent on transitioning to new forms of clean energy generation. Despite commitments to phase out such subsidies by groups like the Group of 20 and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, we are still struggling to see concrete action. It is time to do things differently.

New Zealand will once more be calling on countries to support an end to fossil fuel subsidies at the Twelfth World Trade Organization Ministerial Conference, to be held in June 2020. This week, New Zealand and a group of like-minded countries will also announce the launch of a new initiative that applies trade levers to climate-related goods, services and technologies.

It is time for trade deals to become a force for good on climate action. They need to stop allowing perverse subsidies that incentivize pollution and finally remove tariffs on green technology. Fossil fuel companies should no longer reap the benefits of subsidies that many, like our farmers and others, have been asked to give up. Without the billions in subsidies that go into the fossil fuel industry, green energy can compete on an even footing. It is both the most fair and economically consistent thing to do. My question is — will our fellow members of the General Assembly join us?

That brings us back to the concept that challenges our modern political environment. We are being asked to make decisions that are local, but with consequences that are global. Yet that is what climate change requires us to do and it is what, historically, our commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal

Declaration of Human Rights, asks us to do. It is what standing up against acts of violence and discrimination asks us to do. Our globalized, borderless world asks us to be guardians not just for our people, but for all people.

There may have been a time when being unified under common challenges was an easier concept than it is today, but, undeniably, we are living at a time when our greater reliance on one another has collided with a period of greater tribalism. It would be wrong to assume that this is a new phenomenon. Research has, in fact, shown that humans are so inclined to form natural tribes, that if one were to put a completely unconnected diverse group of people into a room and flip a coin for each person, two groups will automatically form a suspicion of one another based on nothing more than heads versus tails.

Scientist and writer Robert Sapolsky recently reminded us that humans organize. Whether according to class, race, country or coin-flipping, there has always been a tendency to form “us” versus “other”. But he also asks the question: What if we change what “us” means? What if, instead of forming our tribes based on fierce nationalism or self-interest, we seek to form them based on concepts that can and should be universal? What if we no longer see ourselves based on what we look like, what religion we practice or where we live, but by what we value — humanity, kindness, an innate sense of connection to each other and a belief that we are guardians, not just of our home and our planet, but of one another?

We are borderless, but we are connected. We are inherently different, but we have more that we share. We may feel afraid, but as leaders we have the keys to create a sense of security and a sense of hope. We just need to choose.

*Tatou tatou. No reira, tena koutou, tena koutou, tena koutou katoa.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and National Security and Intelligence of New Zealand for the statement she has just made.

*Ms. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister and Minister for Arts, Culture and Heritage, and National Security and Intelligence of New Zealand, was escorted from the rostrum.*

### Address by Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Japan.

*Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President:** I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

**Mr. Abe (Japan)** (*spoke in Japanese; English text provided by the delegation*): Under your presidency, Mr. President, the United Nations will commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding. On this occasion, I ask everyone to recall, Sir, that my country, Japan, in upholding the principles of the United Nations, has walked a steadfast path, always intending to realize the goals of the Organization.

For the United Nations, which has now seen three quarters of a century since its founding, structural reform, especially of the Security Council, is absolutely imperative. We aim for the early realization of such reform. In addition, Japan is running in the 2022 election for a non-permanent seat in the Council. By once again receiving the support of numerous countries, we wish to serve as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and make our best efforts towards further realizing the principles of the United Nations. I ask the Member States for their ardent support to this end.

In Japan, a new Emperor has acceded to the imperial throne, and the ceremony at which His Majesty will declare this fact to both domestic and international audiences will soon take place, on 22 October. Heads of State and Government and major leaders from approximately 200 nations and international organizations will attend, and there is no greater joy than that of the well-wishing extended to us at the beginning of the Emperor's new era. The Japanese people consider this as an unparalleled opportunity, and they will once again turn their thoughts to the role that Japan is playing in the world.

In my country, the period during which a long-standing economic slump caused people to become inward-looking is now a thing of the past. Dates that are raising awareness of our strong bonds with the world and of our people's eyes turned outward and to the future — the Rugby World Cup, the fierce contests of which continue to be played out at this very moment;

the Olympic and Paralympic Games that will be held next year in Tokyo; and World Expo 2025 that Osaka and the surrounding region will host — are written large on Japan's calendar as landmark events. In this context, there is a new generation of Japanese, one that is reliable and willing to carry forth the United Nations ideals, we can safely say.

I would also like to remind the General Assembly of the meeting to be held in Japan in April 2020. The fourteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, commonly known as the United Nations Crime Congress, will convene in Kyoto. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime holds the meeting once every five years. Fifty years will have passed since 1970, when Japan hosted the same meeting, which was the first United Nations Crime Congress to be held outside Europe. At the peak of cherry blossom season, Kyoto will be welcoming visiting experts in law enforcement.

My remarks make it clear that the value Japan seeks to uphold in its engagement with the world is education, for the country's primary objective is to empower every single individual. To continue to do so has been and remains the very essence of what Japan can contribute to the rest of the world.

As for the gathering of law enforcement experts in Kyoto next spring, Japan has long sought to play a role in following up on thematic meetings. As early as 1962, with the expansion of knowledge in the area of crime prevention as its primary objective, Japan established in Tokyo the United Nations first specialized institute in that field, namely, the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. The Institute was founded by the late Norval Morris, a renowned criminologist, who was its first Director. By the end of September, it will have produced a large number of alumni, totalling more than 5,900 people, including 2,949 from Asia and 678 from Africa.

In March, Malala Yousafzai visited Tokyo. She looked me straight in the eye and said that as many as 100 million girls lack the skills they need to have a good command of modern technology, for they do not undergo a minimum education of 12 years. She said that if all girls completed secondary school, they could contribute up to \$30 trillion to the global economy. I had invited Malala to Japan before the Osaka summit of the Group of 20 (G-20), over which I would preside in

June, hoping to highlight policies that empower women and girls.

If women were able to demonstrate the potential they hold, the world would sparkle even more, but that is obvious, is it not? In Japan, where the labour-participation rate for women has seen a marked rise, we are witnessing that self-evident fact on a daily basis. I am delighted that we were able to include what Malala is advocating in both the G-20 Leaders' Declaration and another outcome document in its annex. We pledged to promote inclusive quality education for all girls and women. Japan wishes to run at all times at the very front of the pack with respect to such efforts.

Now, let me share an example from Tanzania. Around the time I was turning 30 years old, there was a Tanzanian marathon runner, Juma Ikangaa, who was often a front-runner in the Tokyo Marathon. After he returned to Tanzania, Mr. Ikangaa, who considers Japan to be his second home, became a goodwill public-relations ambassador for Japan through the local office of the Japan International Cooperation Agency. Also assigned to that office was an energetic Japanese national, Miwa Ito.

Ms. Ito and Mr. Ikingaa combined forces. She obtained sponsorship funding from 13 Japanese companies, and he searched for girls who could become future Olympians. Their efforts culminated in Tanzania's first-ever women's track meet, which was held in November 2017. A thousand elementary and junior high school-level girls living nearby were invited as spectators. However, they were not only there as onlookers; at the event educational materials on avoiding teenage pregnancy were distributed so that the girls could read them.

In Arusha, Tanzania, an area that the Maasai and others call home, where the high peak of Mount Kilimanjaro can be seen in the east and north-east, the Sakura All-Girls Secondary School opened in January 2016 through the efforts of a group of Japanese people. The school is entirely residential, in order to provide its students with absolute security and safety. The number of students has grown from 24 at the beginning to 162 this past spring. The Japanese Government supports the school financially, but it is run by non-governmental organizations, both Japanese and local. The school teaches science, technology, engineering and mathematics, as well as how to avoid unwanted pregnancies.

In Cambodia, a Japanese entrepreneur has been working to improve education there — a project that is entirely his own brainchild. His initiative is to send Japanese teachers — seasoned veterans in math and science — to Cambodia, where they coach young men and women who are on track to become teachers. The initiative is called Teachers Without Borders. I find it very heart-warming to see people in Japan's private sector devoting themselves voluntarily in this way to the education of young people, especially girls in Tanzania and Cambodia, purely on their own initiative, without seeking external validation.

Over the next three years, the Government of Japan will provide enriched education to a minimum of 9 million children and young people in sub-Saharan African and Asian nations. We plan to expand e-learning for primary school children in Sri Lanka, as well as Internet-based mathematics and science education in Rwanda. I must say, however, that these endeavours have largely been inspired by the efforts undertaken by individuals in the private sector.

This is my seventh consecutive year to deliver a statement in the general debate at the General Assembly. Over these years, I have consistently emphasized the importance of empowering women and girls and the value of making health care universally available. This year, too, I have addressed these two issues at separate meetings on the sidelines. At the same time, I wish to emphasize that the essence of Japan's international engagement lies in the fact that we earnestly value education, as evidenced in Japan's aforementioned contributions. Japan aspires to be a foster Power, that is, one that fosters human capacity.

As I near the end of my remarks, I will briefly address three points.

First, with regard to North Korea, Japan supports the approach President Trump has taken, which has allowed the two leaders to talk candidly with each other and try to work out the issues at hand, while looking ahead to a bright future. Such an approach has changed the dynamics with respect to North Korea. I myself am determined to meet Chairman Kim Jong-un face to face, without any conditions. Japan's steadfast objective is to normalize relations with North Korea by comprehensively resolving the outstanding issues of concern with the country, including abductions, nuclear and missile issues, and settling the unfortunate past.

Secondly, Japan shares the concerns regarding the situation in the Middle East. The attack on Saudi Arabia's crude-oil facilities was a contemptible crime that holds the international economic order hostage. I consider precious the pronouncement made to me directly by Supreme Leader Khamenei of Iran that he issued as a fatwa three repudiations regarding nuclear weapons, namely, not to possess, produce or use them, and has ensured the thorough implementation of that fatwa. This morning, too, I held a summit meeting with President Rouhani, our ninth in total. My own unchanging role is to call on Iran to take actions as a major Power that are grounded in the wisdom derived from its rich history.

Thirdly and finally, Japan will make use of multilateral frameworks and globalism to, inter alia, reduce disparities. On the heels of the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Japan-European Union Economic Partnership Agreement, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership is now poised to reach agreement, with Japan's contribution serving as its impetus. The world will become more connected, leading to more people being lifted from poverty.

In recent years, I have presided over summits of the Group of Seven and the G-20, and I have led the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) three times, demonstrating repeatedly that multilateral frameworks do indeed play a levelling role. As a result, the terms "quality infrastructure" and "a free and open Indo-Pacific" have entered the lexicon of the international community, of which I would like the Assembly to take note.

The seventh TICAD, held earlier this year, was reborn as the New TICAD, because the words used to talk about Africa should from now on, by all means, tell a story of investment and growth. In fact, the business forum held at the same time as TICAD was jam-packed with businessmen and women from Africa and Japan and electric with eager enthusiasm. I also left the forum with a sense that new investment proposals and new projects were quickly materializing.

Changes in Africa encourage us. The world does indeed change. We are able to change it through the efforts that we make. And that confidence will be reaffirmed right here in this great Hall. With that, I conclude my statement.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Japan for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted from the rostrum.*

**Address by Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

*Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President:** I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

**Mr. Johnson** (United Kingdom): It is customary for the British Prime Minister to come to the United Nations and pledge to advance our values and defend our rules, the rules of a peaceful world, from protecting freedom of navigation in the Gulf to persevering in the vital task of achieving a two-State solution to the conflict in the Middle East. And, of course, I am proud to do all of these things.

But no one can ignore a gathering force that is reshaping the future of every member of the General Assembly. There has been nothing like it in history. When I think of the great scientific revolutions of the past — print, the steam engine, aviation, the atomic age — I think of new tools that we acquired but over which we, the human race, had the advantage, which we controlled. That is not necessarily the case in the digital age.

You may keep secrets from your friends, from your parents, your children, your doctor, even your personal trainer, but it takes real effort to conceal your thoughts from Google. And if that is true today, in future there may be nowhere to hide. Smart cities will pullulate with sensors, all joined together by the Internet of Things, bollards communing invisibly with lampposts, so there is always a parking space for your electric car, so that no bin goes unemptied, no street unswept, and the urban environment is as antiseptic as a Zurich pharmacy.

But this technology could also be used to keep every citizen under round-the-clock surveillance. A future Alexa will pretend to take orders, but this Alexa will be watching you, clucking her tongue and stamping her foot. In future, voice connectivity will be in every room and almost every object; your mattress will monitor your nightmares; your fridge will beep for more cheese; your front door will sweep wide the moment you approach, like some silent butler; your smart meter will go hustling — of its own accord — for the cheapest electricity, and every one of them minutely transcribing your every habit in tiny electronic shorthand, stored not in their chips or their innards — nowhere you can find it, but in some great cloud of data that lowers ever more oppressively over the human race. A giant dark thundercloud is waiting to burst, and we have no control over how or when the precipitation will take place.

And every day that we tap on our phones or work on our iPads — as I see some of those present here are doing now — we not only leave our indelible spoor in the ether, but we are ourselves becoming a resource click by click, tap by tap. Just as the carboniferous period created the indescribable wealth, leaf by decaying leaf, of hydrocarbons, data is the crude oil of the modern economy.

We are now in an environment where we do not know who should own these new oil fields, we do not know who should have the rights or the title to these gushers of cash, and we do not know who decides how to use that data. Can these algorithms be trusted with our lives and hopes? Should the machines, and only the machines, decide whether or not we are eligible for a mortgage or insurance or what surgery or medicines we should receive? Are we doomed to a cold and heartless future in which computer says yes, or computer says no, with the grim finality of an emperor in the arena?

How does one plead with an algorithm? How does one get it to see extenuating circumstances? How do we know that the machines have not been insidiously programmed to fool us or even to cheat us? We are already using all kinds of messaging services that offer instant communication at minimal cost. These same programmes and platforms could also be designed for real-time censorship of every conversation, with offending words automatically deleted; indeed, in some countries, this is happening today.

Digital authoritarianism is not, alas, the stuff of dystopian fantasy but of an emerging reality. The reason

I am giving this speech today with its slightly gloomy proem is that the United Kingdom is one of the world's technology leaders, and I believe that Governments have been simply caught unawares by the unintended consequences of the Internet, a scientific breakthrough more far-reaching in its everyday psychological impact than any other invention since Gutenberg's. And when one considers how long it took for books to come into widespread circulation, the arrival of the Internet is far bigger than print. It is bigger than the atomic age, but it is like nuclear power in that it is capable of both good and harm. But of course it is not alone. As new technologies seem to race towards us from the far horizon, we strain our eyes as they come to make out whether they are for good or bad — friends or foes?

Artificial intelligence — what will it mean? Helpful robots washing and caring for an ageing population? Or pink-eyed terminators sent back from the future to cull the human race? What will synthetic biology stand for — restoring our livers and our eyes with miracle regeneration of the tissues, like some fantastic hangover cure? Or will it bring terrifying limbless chickens to our tables? Will nanotechnology help us to beat disease, or will it leave tiny robots to replicate in the crevices of our cells?

It is a trope as old as literature that any scientific advance is punished by the gods. When Prometheus brought fire to humankind in a tube of fennel, as you may remember, with his brother Epimetheus, Zeus punished him by chaining him to a Tartarean crag while his liver was pecked out — I did talk about a hangover cure — by an eagle. And every time his liver regrew, the eagle came back and pecked it again. This went on forever, a bit like the experience of Brexit in the United Kingdom, if some of our parliamentarians had their way.

In fact, it was a standard poetic practice to curse the *protos heurètes*, the person responsible for any scientific or technical breakthrough. If only they had never invented the ship, then Jason would never have sailed to Colchis, and all sorts of disasters would never have happened.

It is a deep human instinct to be wary of any kind of technical progress. In 1829, they thought the human frame would not withstand the speeds attained by Stephenson's rocket. And there are today people today who are actually anti-science — a whole movement called the anti-vaxxers, who refuse to acknowledge the

evidence that vaccinations have eradicated smallpox and who by their prejudices are actually endangering the very children they want to protect. I totally reject this anti-scientific pessimism.

I am profoundly optimistic about the ability of new technology to serve as a liberator and remake the world wondrously and benignly; indeed, in countless respects technology is already doing just that. Today, nanotechnology, as I mentioned earlier, is revolutionizing medicine by designing robots a fraction of the size of a red blood cell, capable of swimming through our bodies, dispensing medicine and attacking malignant cells like some Star Wars armada. Neural interface technology is producing a new generation of cochlear implants, allowing the gift of hearing to people who would not otherwise be able to hear the voices of their own children.

A London technology company has worked out how to help the blind to navigate more freely with nothing more than an app on their smartphones — new technologies, produced in Britain, helping the deaf to hear and the blind to see. We used to think that printing was something that you did to run off a boarding card; now a British company has used 3D printing to make an engine capable of blasting a rocket into space.

In African countries, millions of people without bank accounts can now transfer money using a simple app; they can buy solar energy and leap in one transaction from no electricity to green power. New advances are making renewable energy ever cheaper, aiding our common struggle against climate change. Our understanding of the natural world is being transformed by genome sequencing — the discovery of the very essence of life itself, the secret genetic code that animates the spirit of every living being and allows medical breakthroughs the likes of which we have never known. Treatments are tailored to the precise genetic makeup of the individual.

So far, we have discovered the secrets of less than 0.3 per cent of complex life on the planet. Think what we will achieve when — and it is a matter of when — we understand 1 or 2 per cent of it, let alone 5 or 10 per cent. But it is how we design the emerging technologies behind these breakthroughs and which values inform their design that will shape the future of humankind. That is the point I wish to make tonight.

At stake is whether we bequeath an Orwellian world, designed for censorship, repression and control,

or a world of emancipation, debate and learning, where technology threatens famine and disease but not our freedoms. Seven decades ago, the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with no dissenting voices, uniting humankind for the first and perhaps only time behind one set of principles. Our joint declaration upholds the freedom of opinion and expression, the privacy of home and correspondence, and the right to seek and impart information and ideas. Unless we ensure that new technology reflects this spirit, I fear that our declaration will mean nothing and no longer hold. The mission of the United Kingdom and all who share our values must therefore be to ensure that emerging technologies are designed from the outset for freedom, openness and pluralism, with the right safeguards in place to protect our peoples.

Month by month, vital decisions are being taken in academic committees, company boardrooms and industry standards groups. They are writing the rulebooks of the future, making ethical judgements and choosing what will or will not be rendered possible. Together, we need to ensure that new advances reflect our values by design.

There is excellent work being done by the European Union, the Commonwealth and, of course, the United Nations, which has a vital role in ensuring that no country is excluded from the wonderful benefits of this technology and the industrial revolution it is bringing about. But we must continue to be more ambitious: we need to find the right balance between freedom and control, between innovation and regulation, and between private enterprise and Government oversight. We must insist that the ethical judgments inherent in the design of new technology are transparent to all and we must make our voices heard more loudly in the standards bodies that write the rules. Above all, we need to agree a common set of global principles to shape the norms and standards that will guide the development of emerging technology.

Here is the good news. I invite all present to a summit next year in London — a wonderful city where, by the way, it is not raining 94 per cent of the time. At one stage, when I was Mayor of London, we discovered that we had even more Michelin-starred restaurants than Paris. The French somehow rapidly recovered by a process that I am not quite sure was entirely fair. But in the United Kingdom, in London, we still have by far the biggest technology sector anywhere in Europe. We have every kind of technology — financial

technology, biological technology, medical technology, nanotechnology, green technology — and perhaps half a million people working in technology alone. I hope to see everyone there as we seek to assemble the broadest possible coalition to take forward this vital task, building on all that the United Kingdom can contribute to this mission as a global leader in ethical and responsible technology.

If we master this challenge — and I have no doubt that we can — then we will not only safeguard our ideals, we will surmount the limits that once constrained humankind and conquer the perils that once ended so many lives. Together, we will vanquish killer diseases, eliminate famine, protect the environment and transform our cities. Success will depend, now as ever, on freedom, openness and pluralism, which is the formula that not only emancipates the human spirit, but also releases the boundless ingenuity and inventiveness of humankind, and which, above all, the United Kingdom will strive to preserve and advance.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Boris Johnson, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, was escorted from the rostrum.*

**Address by Mr. M. Saad-Eddine El Othmani,  
Head of Government of the Kingdom of  
Morocco**

*Mr. M. Saad-Eddine El Othmani, Head of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, was escorted to the rostrum.*

**The President:** I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. M. Saad-Eddine El Othmani, Head of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

**Mr. El Othmani (Morocco)** (*spoke in Arabic*): The Kingdom of Morocco serves as a link and a meeting point for cooperation between Africa and the countries of the Islamic world, between Europe and the rest of the globe. This is due in particular to its stability and security in a region in turmoil at the political, social and security levels, and owing to the fact that we have adopted policies of economic openness and democratic values, as well as to our willingness to engage practically in addressing international challenges.

We are aware that the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly is taking place in an international context marked by great challenges resulting from of ruthless competition and heavy-handed strategies that provoke retaliation, instead of creative, forward-looking responses. Nevertheless, despite today's difficulties and challenges, the current situation presents opportunities for cooperation and coordination.

We are convinced that multilateral action is the most effective means of addressing the challenges facing today's world, which no one country has the capacity to tackle alone. Combating climate change, achieving sustainable development, coping with migration flows, addressing security challenges, fighting terrorism, countering violent extremism and human trafficking are all challenges that require cooperation through a multilateral approach. We therefore hope for the creation of an innovative system that supports the work of the United Nations and regional organizations through greater harmony and coordination as a springboard for addressing these challenges and promising a better future for humankind.

The multilateral action that we aspire to must also guarantee to Africa the place it deserves on the international stage. His Majesty King Mohammed VI has called time and again from this rostrum for our Organization to make Africa a high priority so that it can realize its ambitions and benefit from available opportunities. Morocco's return to its institutional family, namely, the African Union, in January 2017, is a logical culmination of this conviction alongside bilateral and regional partnerships that Morocco has established through decades with its African environment in the context of productive, effective and solidary South-South cooperation. Those partnerships include various fields at the economic, development, culture, religion and environment levels as well as combating security challenges.

The Kingdom of Morocco allocates two thirds of its foreign direct investment for Africa itself. We are the second largest African investor in Africa. We encourage the private sector within Morocco to draw up projects in Africa to help with technology transfer and keep up with African economies. As a signatory member of the convention on establishing African free-trade zone, Morocco is convinced that such a convention will open up new promising horizons for the African economy, making the African continent the largest free-trade market in the world.

Multilateral action has the power to adapting to new developments and speeding up addressing challenges through first, combating security threats, including terrorism. We can do this by active and practical cooperation in a number of different ways. The action of the Global Counter-Terrorism Forum is important in this regard. My country jointly chairs the Forum together with the Netherlands since 2016. Co-chairing the Forum is a recognition of our efforts in this area.

We have developed a global multidimensional strategy that is in harmony with the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy while also including cultural, religious, social, human rights and security aspects. This national strategy extends across the continent as Morocco, with lofty instructions from His Majesty the Commander of the Faithful, has reached out to our brethren and friendly countries which expressed their desire to benefit from the Moroccan experience to help ensure the training of religious leaders to practice the principles of coexistence, openness and moderation.

Secondly, migration problems should be resolved through the interaction and coordination of various countries because no one country can face the challenges of migration alone. Morocco has been regionally a pioneer by adopting a national migration policy, which is humane, comprehensive, realistic and responsible.

In Marrakech, and for the first time in the history of the United Nations, the Global Compact for Migration was ratified in December 2018 as a founding document for organizing migration. The purpose was not to give lessons or level accusations, but rather to establish a pluralistic system based on joint vision where each party could find its interests represented without racism, stereotypes and narrow interests. A vision with more social governance, more humane and more just guided by a sense of joint responsibility. The Marrakech charter has therefore become an international reference for multilateral action on immigration, and we should all work together to implement this document.

Morocco has also been committed to migration as part of King Mohammed VI's vision as an African leader on issues of migration. Accordingly, in Rabat, the capital of the Kingdom of Morocco, an agreement was reached between Morocco and the Commission of the African Union to establish an African institute to follow up on the phenomenon of migration with objective analysis and to look into its future developments through scientific ways.

Thirdly, regarding climate change, Morocco hosted the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 22) in 2016. It is another example of our commitment to facing the impacts of this phenomenon that threatens the future of humankind. It is a commitment to mobilize the efforts of the international community to meet its great aspirations, especially in our African continent. In this regard, the first African Summit convened on the margin of the COP 22, under the royal presidency, led to establish and activate three climate initiatives in order to enable the African countries to coordinate among each other amid best circumstances and address climate challenges as serious and realistic challenges facing the world.

One of those initiatives is the sustainability, security and stability initiative (3S) headed by Morocco in partnership with Senegal, which brought together 14 African States in order to practically respond to three major challenges. That would be done through land reclamation of vast areas of 10 million hectares while providing 2 million work opportunities which ensure stability and good life for the inhabitants of these areas.

Fourthly, concerning human and sustainable development, the multilateral system which takes into consideration variations between countries and parties is in total harmony with the sustainable development goals (SDGs). The United Nations 2030 Agenda is an integrated approach that allows countries to achieve their development objectives thus strengthening effective cooperation among each other. Cognizant of the importance to achieve national objectives, His Majesty King Mohammed VI launched a new dynamic development model in Morocco with the aim to achieve social justice that leads to further reduce differences between various categories and regions while building more developed economy which ensures that Morocco joins the club of emerging States. Morocco has also made an appeal at the continental level to build capacity for sustainable development within Africa. We are stressing the effectiveness of South-South cooperation in favour of achieving joint development on our African continent.

The multilateral system that we aspire to is also represented by strengthening the maintenance of international peace and security which is the main task of the United Nations and which symbolizes the commitment of the international community to collective security. Maintaining peace and stability is

an established part of our Kingdom's vision embodied in supporting practical measures. Since Morocco became independent, it has been committed to support United Nations efforts for peacekeeping through participating in 15 peacekeeping operations around the world on four continents in difficult circumstances. In the last two decades, that participation was strengthened by contributing many units of the Royal armed forces to peacekeeping operations, especially in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Central African Republic. With the same zeal, Morocco supports the long-awaited transition from reaction to preventive action which requires more efforts to build the Organization's capacities in the areas of risk assessment and conflict prevention. This approach needs a comprehensive structural reform of the strategy and structures of the United Nations pertaining to international peace and security. Morocco has backed up this choice at the regulatory and financial levels. As Chairman of the African Union Peace and Security Council in September, Morocco will spare no effort in prioritizing African concerns at the United Nations.

The lack of promising avenues in the relaunching of the Palestinian-Israeli peace process is a major source of concern for the Kingdom of Morocco and another cause of instability and tension in the Middle East. The Kingdom of Morocco is honoured to stand side by side with the Palestinian people, especially given that His Majesty King Mohammed VI is chairing the Al-Quds Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Morocco rejects any changes to the nature or status of the holy city. We also reject the settlement policy, and we are convinced that there can be no just and lasting peace if the Palestinian people cannot realize their legitimate right to their own independent State, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Multilateral action is not just an organizational structure of international relations; it is also a state of mind. We therefore must use it to fight hate speech, racism and the rejection of others, which seriously run counter to established values, foremost among which are coexistence, respect for human dignity and pluralism.

Morocco values its deep-rooted identity, which has multiple tributaries. We do not hesitate to address hate speech and Islamophobia, the bases of violent extremism of all kinds. Ninety States Members of the United Nations sponsored a draft resolution submitted by Morocco and adopted unanimously by

the General Assembly at its seventy-third session entitled "Promoting interreligious and intercultural dialogue and tolerance in countering hate speech" (resolution 73/328). That initiative demonstrated the role of multilateral cooperation in building bridges of tolerance and dialogue among religions and cultures.

In this respect, I would recall the historic visit made by His Holiness Pope Francis to Morocco in March. It was strongly symbolic of Morocco's valued contribution in the area of promoting religious and cultural dialogue. On the occasion of that visit, His Majesty King Mohammed VI, as Chairman of the Al-Quds Committee of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, along with his Holiness the Pope, signed a joint appeal on Jerusalem confirming the special religious status of the city as a meeting place of the monotheistic religions and as a symbol of peaceful coexistence and harmony.

Morocco, having a deep-rooted belief in its historical, legal and sovereign rights, is working seriously on the issue of Moroccan Sahara, which is one of ensuring the territorial integrity of the Kingdom, which considers that its full sovereignty on its southern regions is absolutely non-negotiable. Every State has the right and duty to defend its citizens, sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity. Morocco is committed to this principle in its foreign policy

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates from this rostrum that the autonomy initiative that has been considered by the Security Council in all of its resolutions since 2007 is serious and credible and puts a definitive end to this contrived conflict. In this regard, we appreciate the efforts made by the Secretary-General to help make progress towards a political solution that is realistic, practical and sustainable based on consensus, as set out in Security Council resolution 2468 (2019), adopted in April.

The deplorable situation of the inhabitants of Tindouf camp is a source of constant concern for us. We once again call on the international community to encourage the host country to shoulder its legal and humanitarian responsibilities and to carry out a census in the camp and respect the basic rights of its inhabitants, which are systematically violated every day.

For seven decades now, the United Nations has been making progress in the areas of peace, development and human rights. Nonetheless, many serious challenges remain. It is the responsibility of all of us to provide our

Organization with the mechanisms necessary to ensure its continuous adaptation to a complex international reality and to mobilize our potential and capacities to reform and strengthen it. We cannot maintain an old system amid the realities of a new world. Instead of attacking the bases of the multilateral system in order to weaken it, there is a need to strengthen it by developing it further so as to move towards a world order that is more just, fair, human and characterized by greater solidarity, a world that is not based on a superficial understanding of reality and does not impose a unilateral vision of a normative authority. Rather, it should be a renewed world of multilateral action in which account is taken of the differences among actors and the multiplicity of challenges; a balanced world that enables Africa to take its rightful place in the international arena; a practical

world that adopts successful experiences of integration; and a realistic world that attaches importance to preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes. These are our ambitions and goals. The Kingdom of Morocco will continue, as always since its independence and joining the United Nations, to make efforts to achieve these noble objectives.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Head of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. M. Saad-Eddine El Othmani, Head of Government of the Kingdom of Morocco, was escorted from the rostrum.*

*The meeting rose at 10.30 p.m.*