



# General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

**5**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Tuesday, 22 September 2020, 3 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Bozkir ..... (Turkey)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Elsonni (Libya), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

## Address by Mr. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Colombia.

**Mr. Fernandez De Soto Valderrama** (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the great honour to introduce the pre-recorded video statement by His Excellency the President of the Republic of Colombia, Mr. Iván Duque Márquez, on the occasion of the general debate of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex I and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

## Address by Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Turkmenistan to introduce an address by the President of Turkmenistan.

**Mrs. Ataeva** (Turkmenistan) (*spoke in Russian*): It is my great honour to introduce the video statement

by His Excellency Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex II and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

## Address by Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt to introduce an address by the President of the Arab Republic of Egypt.

**Mr. Edrees** (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my honour to introduce the address by His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, at the general debate of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex III and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

## Address by Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Tajikistan to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

In accordance with decision 74/562, and without setting a precedent for mandated high-level meetings planned for future high-level weeks, the official records of the General Assembly will be supplemented by annexes containing pre-recorded statements submitted by Heads of State or other dignitaries, submitted to the President no later than the day on which such statements are delivered in the Assembly Hall. Submissions in this regard should be made to [estatements@un.org](mailto:estatements@un.org).



**Mr. Mahmaminov** (Tajikistan): It is my great honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex IV and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

**Address by Mr. Andrés Manuel López Obrador, President of the United Mexican States**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico to introduce an address by the President of the United Mexican States.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramirez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded message of the President of the United Mexican States, Mr. Andrés Manuel López Obrador.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United Mexican States.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex V and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

**Address by Mr. Luis Lacalle Pou, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Uruguay to introduce an address by the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

**Mr. Amorín** (Uruguay) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, Mr. Luis Lacalle Pou, to the general debate of the General Assembly in the year of its seventy-fifth anniversary.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex VI and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

*Mr. Osman (Somalia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

**Address by Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Seychelles to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Seychelles.

**Mr. Jumeau** (Seychelles): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex VII and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

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

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Rwanda to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Rwanda.

**Mrs. Rugwabiza** (Rwanda): It is my distinct honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Paul Kagame, President of the Republic of Rwanda, during the general debate of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex VIII and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

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

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Angola to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Angola.

**Ms. Ferreira** (Angola): I have the great honour and privilege to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency 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.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex IX and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

**Address by Mr. Alberto Fernández, President of the Argentine Republic**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina to introduce an address by the President of the Argentine Republic.

**Ms. Squeff** (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for me to introduce the video statement by the President of the Argentine Republic, Mr. Alberto Fernández.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex X and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

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

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Latvia to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Latvia.

**Mr. Pildegovičs** (Latvia): I have the distinct honour and pleasure to introduce the pre-recorded video statement by Mr. Egils Levits, President of the Republic of Latvia.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XI and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

**Address by Mr. Gitanas Nausėda, President of the Republic of Lithuania**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Lithuania to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Lithuania.

**Ms. Plepytė** (Lithuania): It is my distinct honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement of His Excellency Mr. Gitanas Nausėda, President of the Republic of Lithuania.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XII and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

**Address by Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Nigeria.

**Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria): It is my honour and privilege to introduce a pre-recorded statement by President Muhammadu Buhari of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XIII and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

**Address by Mr. Carlos Alvarado Quesada, President of the Republic of Costa Rica**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Costa Rica to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Costa Rica.

**Mr. Carazo** (Costa Rica): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded message of President Carlos Alvarado Quesada of the Republic of Costa Rica.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XIV and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

**Address by Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

**The Acting President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka to introduce an address by the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

**Mrs. Senewiratne** (Sri Lanka): I have the honour to introduce the recorded statement by His Excellency Gotabaya Rajapaksa, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, to the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. This is President

Rajapaksa's maiden speech to the Assembly, having been elected to office with a resounding mandate.

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XV and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

*The President took the Chair.*

#### **Address by Mr. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Indonesia.

**Mr. Djani** (Indonesia): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia, at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XVI and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

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

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of Peru to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Peru.

**Mr. Popolizio** (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Martín Vizcarra Cornejo, President of the Republic of Peru.

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

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XVII and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

#### **Address by Mr. Félix Antoine Tshilombo Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

**The President:** I now give the floor to the representative of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to introduce an address by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

**Mr. Empole** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (*spoke in French*): I have the great honour and privilege to introduce His Excellency Félix Antoine Tshilombo Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Head of State, to deliver his statement to the General Assembly on the occasion of its seventy-fifth session.

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

*A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex XVIII and see A/75/592/Add.1).*

*The meeting rose at 8.25 p.m.*

## Annex I

### Address by Mr. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia

[Original: Spanish]

President of the General Assembly, Volkan Bozkir,  
Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres,  
Excellencies, Heads of State and Permanent Representatives,

It is once again an honour for me to stand before the General Assembly on behalf of the People of Colombia, especially this year as we commemorate the United Nations seventy-fifth anniversary, which marks a milestone in the decision made by sisterly democratic nations to seek out and create space for common growth.

My country has understood the importance of dialogue to overcome obstacles and the urgent need for frank discussion to find common ground. That is why we exemplify a long tradition of participation in multilateral settings.

For example, we became the thirty-seventh member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and will become pro tempore President of the Forum for the Progress and Development of South America and the Pacific Alliance. That demonstrates our commitment to multilateralism and regional commitment to finding joint solutions that, in accordance with the United Nations call on us, will help us ensure that no one is left behind.

The increase in the loss of biodiversity is currently one of the major global issues. The current situation has shown us the close relationship between human health and that of ecosystems, the declining state of which is putting our survival as a species at risk.

Colombia stands out as the second most biodiverse country in the world with the greatest biodiversity per square kilometre. Colombia enjoys the fact that it accounts for 50 per cent of the world's *páramos* within a country that is 30 per cent Amazon rainforest.

Colombia has achieved an overall reduction of 30.9 million tons of carbon dioxide, while we have been waging an unprecedented battle against deforestation in our country's history. We therefore consider defending the environment as part of our national security.

That is how we have reduced deforestation by 19 per cent in the past two years and continue to do so. Through the Artemis project, we are making our decision to turn diversity into a strategic asset a reality, and, accordingly, we have recovered more than 6,000 hectares of our Parques Nacionales Naturales and prevented 23,000 hectares of forest from deforestation, while, at the same time, we are planting more than 35 million trees to bring us closer to our goal of planting 180 million by 2022.

We have also made progress in the area of capacity-building to produce renewable energy in the fight against climate change. Whereas in 2018 we had 30 megawatts of capacity connected to the national grid, today we have expanded that capacity almost five-fold, reaching an additional 140 megawatts, with the goal of

continuing to increasing it 20-fold, in contrast to 2018, so that in 2022, our country will exceed 2,200 megawatts.

We reaffirm our commitment to making the Minamata Convention on Mercury a reality, and we declare our progress as a nation in the adoption of a law banning the use of asbestos and in promoting the use of electric vehicles. Likewise, we are waiting for the Congress of the Republic to adopt the Regional Agreement on Access to Information, Public Participation and Justice in Environmental Matters in Latin America and the Caribbean, known as the Escazú Agreement, which we signed at the end of last year.

The Leticia Pact, which I announced a year ago within the context of the General Assembly, has seen the realization of part of the call made by the Colombian Government, around which we have united seven States to implement a concrete action plan, which currently involves 52 specific actions for the conservation and sustainable development of the Amazon, while recognizing its importance as a strategic ecosystem for the planet.

Colombia has succeeded in getting more than 2,800 families from the Amazon region to participate in livestock restructuring projects and the production of non-timber products. In addition, more than 17,000 indigenous families are benefiting from governance and sustainable economy projects, and 15,000 of them are beneficiaries of payment for environmental services mechanisms involving nearly 219,000 hectares. That demonstrates what we are achieving in imagining the future.

And just as we have led actions to protect the Amazon, the rainforests and the oceans, we call on all the nations of the planet to protect high-mountain ecosystems.

Colombia is home to half of the world's *páramos*, and today I call on the members of the General Assembly to join us in creating a global strategy for safeguarding the high-altitude ecosystems to ensure their survival and the sustainability of the communities that inhabit them. The *páramos* are veritable drinking-water factories and the source of the watersheds that irrigate much of our country.

Therefore, we also call on the nations of the world to contribute resources and understand that the protection of the *páramos* is a universal duty.

Colombia is a magnificent country inhabited by men and women as diverse as its nature. We have lived through the onslaught of violence and poverty and are therefore committed to building a sustainable future based on equity.

Achieving true peace is the social decision to build prosperity based on truth, solidarity, respect for law and the firm rejection of all forms of violence.

The Government has developed its Peace with Legality policy based on social stabilization and the institutional consolidation of the territories most historically affected by violence and poverty.

The Peace with Legality policy is benefiting more than 6 million fellow citizens in their territories, with an investment of more than \$780 million, supporting the more than 13,500 former combatants, as well as changing their lives — with a sense of legal purpose and guarantees of non-repetition for more than 9 million victims.

I would like to take the opportunity of being in this Hall to honour the victims of violence in my country. Likewise, I praise the work of those who every day make the million needed efforts into a reality — the social leaders who are building a

more dignified and generous society, and who, despite the difficulties, are ceaseless in their efforts to build a country for all. We recognize their and all Colombians' vocation to build a future by bridging and healing wounds, while, at the same time, ensuring that brotherhood under a reliable legal system gives us reason for pride.

Today in Colombia there are no conflicts between the friends and the enemies of peace. Today we are one country on the path moving forward regardless of whether the wind is with or against us.

Multilateral tools have been key to the international community's contribution to that end, especially in terms of reparations for victims, strengthening rural development and formalizing property ownership in the remote corners of our country. I underscore and am grateful for the support of the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, which can exceptionally attest to the Government's outstanding progress in achieving peace with legality, that is, real peace.

Unfortunately, all our efforts face a common threat — drug trafficking and the illicit economies it generates. For my country, the fight against drug trafficking is an ethical imperative, as it produces all forms of corruption, comprises a ubiquitous link in crime and is the source of social decay.

Drug trafficking fuels human trafficking, arms trafficking, illegal mining, deforestation and smuggling. Drug trafficking tears families apart, breaches social values, constantly puts at risk the lives of millions of people around the world and fosters inequality, sowing hatred, violence and death in peaceful areas.

Drug trafficking transcends borders, and my country has suffered as a victim because of this horrible fact. The transnational crime demands the joint action of all States, with a sense shared responsibility. In such shared challenges, we must act together, resolutely, energetically and unhesitatingly as a duty to future generations.

The situation caused by the coronavirus disease has also become a threat owing to the fissures caused by social inequalities.

The global crisis has highlighted both the strengths and weaknesses of multilateral tools. For instance, it showed that the need remains to define better cooperation mechanisms in circumstances of crisis, while those same tools have led to the search for joint solutions to overcome it, for example, in terms of finding a vaccine.

Working together with organizations such as the Pan-American Health Organization and the World Health Organization has been crucial throughout 2020 and will continue to be while we search for possible solutions to the crisis. Mechanisms, such as Vaccine Global Access, in which Colombia is actively participating, are essential to various nations' collaboration in the search for and distribution of an eventual vaccine. Solidarity and sustained cooperation among nations are essential if we are to successfully weather the storm of the pandemic.

The pandemic is proving to be a turning point in thinking about a sustainable and just future. Now that we are looking to revive our economies and restart leading productive lives, environmental sustainability needs to be the rallying point for building a more sustainable and responsible world.

Within that framework, the protection of regional democracy is a fundamental element. The threats to democracy we see today are putting at risk the freedom of

nations, as well as preventing regional integration and cooperation to overcome challenges like those currently facing humankind.

The Maduro regime is sustained by resources from drug trafficking, harbours terrorists and poses a constant threat to the democracies of the region and the world.

The constant violations of human rights by the Maduro dictatorship, which we have condemned in our country and in international forums, including the International Criminal Court, have recently been confirmed by the United Nations.

Why? The goal sought in Venezuela together with crimes against humanity is to perpetuate the tyranny. And the entire international community without exception must reject the situation, and we need to stridently call on all the nations of the world to raise their voices to demand truly free elections — not the staged electoral performance to which the Venezuelan people will be taken to in December only to perpetuate the dictatorship. We must, therefore, reject the process, which is seeking to legitimize Maduro's dictatorship.

Colombia says to the world today that it looks to the future with optimism, with its head held high, and calls on its leaders to unite more so than ever, since the founding of the Organization, so that together we can overcome the unprecedented difficulties that these times have placed before us.

I am certain that our greatest strength lies in our own humanity. I am convinced that when we look back on these months, we will see resilient peoples, who stood up to the challenges of their time and navigated the storms wisely.

Presidents and Permanent Representatives, the future is in our hands.

Many thanks.

## Annex II

### **Address by Mr. Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, President of Turkmenistan**

[Original: Russian; English translation provided by the delegation]

Dear Mr. President!

Dear Mr. Secretary General!

First of all, let me congratulate Mr. Volkan Bozkir on his election as President of the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly and wish him success in this responsible position.

I would like to ask Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande to accept our sincere gratitude for his able and effective work as President of the General Assembly at its 74th session.

Dear participants!

Ladies and gentlemen!

I want to start my speech with words of deep sorrow for the hundreds of thousands of people who did not survive the coronavirus pandemic.

I also express my admiration and gratitude to doctors, paramedics, nurses, technical staff, volunteers, all those who have been working selflessly for many months to save lives and health of people in different parts of the world.

Our eyes are focused with hope and faith on scientists and researchers who are working on vaccines and drugs to stop the pandemic. I address them with gratitude and willingness to provide all possible support in their most important mission.

Yes, today we have to speak first of all about the new danger faced by humanity in the twenty-first century. In a short time, COVID-19 has become a real and perhaps the most threatening challenge of our time. A global challenge that does not recognize borders, races, and nationalities, which has a detrimental effect on all spheres of civilizational development. Perhaps the whole world has felt its vulnerability to a common threat with such severity for the first time in many decades. And we hope and believe that only unity and solidarity can overcome and defeat it and allow mankind to become renewed, wiser, more responsible and farsighted after this battle. And even though the current period is difficult and controversial it gives us a chance to change for the better for the sake of the entire planet's destiny. It is our highest political and moral duty not to miss this chance, to show dignity, solidarity and true humanism.

Dear Mr. President!

Turkmenistan has actively began to take the necessary measures to counter this threat from the very beginning of the spread of the pandemic in the world. Effective protective measures were taken on time, a unified national strategy to combat coronavirus infection was formed, which consists of a set of measures of organizational, legal, financial, economic, medical and sanitary quarantine character.

Our country has established close international cooperation in bilateral format and through international organizations at the same time.

First of all, it should be noted that Turkmenistan closely cooperates with the United Nations. In this context, we fully support the calls and appeals of the UN Secretary-General made in his statements on March 23 and 30 of this year.

Taking into account the initiatives of the Secretary General, Turkmenistan has approved the National Plan of Preparedness for Prevention and Response to acute infectious diseases at the state level. A Plan of Operational Social and Economic Measures in Turkmenistan to counteract the coronavirus pandemic was also developed and adopted.

Turkmenistan continues its longstanding and effective partnership with the World Health Organization at the same time. We highly appreciate the role of the WHO in the fight against coronavirus. Their recommendations have shown their validity in our country and serve as important guidelines for the activities of medical and other institutions. We will continue to expand and concretize our cooperation with the World Health Organization and bring it to a systematic, long-term level.

Close professional coordination and joint efforts of medical and scientific communities around the world are more necessary than ever for a fast victory over the pandemic.

We are convinced that today we need comprehensive, systematic and purposeful multilateral cooperation on the problem of dangerous viral diseases, a full launch of scientific diplomacy channels. In this regard, Turkmenistan proposes to consider the development and establishment of appropriate international instruments.

In particular, under the aegis of WHO, we consider it appropriate:

- to establish a special programme of the World Health Organization to research the coronavirus genome;
- to develop a multilateral mechanism for pneumonia control;
- establish a Methodological Center for the Treatment and Prevention of Acute Infections.

We are ready for meaningful communication on implementation of these initiatives with all interested countries and international structures.

Dear participants!

The Coronavirus pandemic has a significant negative impact on the course and direction of the global economy and seriously undermines the global community's efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In this context, we look forward to intensifying cooperation aimed at restoring economic and trade relations. Today it is necessary to create platforms for putting the global economy on a sustainable growth trajectory. In our opinion, energy, transport, industry and trade should become key areas.

In this context, during the 75th session, Turkmenistan intends to intensify its work on the elaboration of international legal instruments of the UN in the field of stability and reliability of energy transit.

The issues of cooperation in transport sphere are no less urgent.

As one of the initiators of wide international communication on transport issues, Turkmenistan proposes to consider the issue of ensuring stable international

transportation during emergency situations. We have prepared the corresponding draft resolution of the General Assembly and submitted it for consideration of the UN member states.

We believe that the international conference of ministers of landlocked developing countries planned in Turkmenistan next year will be an effective platform for developing coordinated approaches to this problem.

The World Trade Organization should take a proactive role in the work to restore the world economy and promote trade and investment. Having recently obtained observer status in the WTO, Turkmenistan will actively use the opportunities opened in this regard to promote practical measures to overcome quickly the crisis phenomena in the world economy, its transition to positive dynamics.

Distinguished heads and members of delegations!

The coronavirus pandemic has affected to some extent many countries in the world. However, it is seriously dangerous for disadvantaged regions from the perspective of ecology. Unfortunately, there are plenty of such territories on the map and it is impossible to mention all of them in one speech. Therefore, I would like to touch upon the issue, which is highly relevant to the Central Asian states and nations. It is the Aral Sea disaster.

The situation is escalating amidst pandemic, it threatens life and health of people and the risk of epidemic outbreak has considerably risen. Under these circumstances we urge the world community to pay close attention to the problems of the Aral Sea and Aral Sea region.

Obviously, the work is under way, substantial work has been done by the UN, while other international organizations have provided assistance to the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. We thank them all and highly appreciate their work.

If I may speak plainly, it is insufficient today. It is necessary to have very detailed work to save the Aral Sea and concrete practical assistance and support should be provided to the people living there. Thus, we strongly believe that, the subject of Aral Sea needs systematic and comprehensive approach as well as relevant legal documents and this issue should be set as a separate direction of the UN activities. In this regard, Turkmenistan has put forward the initiative to create a Special Program for the Aral Sea Basin.

We would like to underline the importance of the UN General Assembly resolutions "On cooperation between the United Nations and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea" adopted at the initiative our country in April 2018 and May 2019. Today, those resolutions represent the platform for consolidating joint efforts in the Aral Sea area.

Turkmenistan will present initial draft of the concept and structure of a future special programme on the Aral Sea in the framework of ESCAP sessions in May 2021 as a means of developing international legal foundations to address the Aral Sea issue. We call upon all states and interested international organizations to discuss these documents.

Distinguished participants!

The current General Assembly session takes place amid complex and painful events related to the escalation of military and political rivalry and unfortunately

we are witnessing them today. Assessment of these events and their cause and effect relationship may differ. But what is certain is that, they negatively affect overall international situation, erode global security foundations and impede economic, trade and humanitarian relations.

We have a deep concern over the disregard for the international law that we witness lately. In view of the current situation it is necessary to consolidate efforts aimed at strengthening the role of international law, multilateral legal instruments in global security system, strict compliance by all states with generally accepted norms deriving from the UN Charter. This is the only way we could sustain stability and predictability in global politics and mitigate the risks of conflicts.

Restoring trust in international politics and establishing the culture of respectful dialogue are the ways to achieve this objective.

As is known, at the initiative of Turkmenistan the UN General Assembly adopted in September last year a resolution declaring the year 2021 as the year of international peace and trust. Turkmenistan puts forward an initiative to organize International forum on peace and trust next year to implement provisions of this resolution. We strongly believe that, this Forum will be able to give a strong impetus to constructive and respectful multilateral dialogue on pressing subjects of modern global agenda.

Dear Mr. President!

This year Turkmenistan will mark a significant date in its history. It is the 25th anniversary from the moment that our country institutionalized the status of permanent neutrality in the international community through the UN on December 12, 1995.

Neutrality has been one of the foundations of statehood, its internal and foreign policies for a quarter of a century. The principles of neutrality, its values and ideology have proven their full compliance with our national interests and the UN objectives and tasks.

And the UN General Assembly with a large number of member states that became co-authors of this initiative unanimously declared 12 December as the International Day of Neutrality.

The neutrality of Turkmenistan is an appeal and condition for equitable, respectful and mutually beneficial international partnership in politics, economy and environment protection, ensuring overall food security, fair and effective distribution of natural resources of the planet, supporting and assisting refugees, migrants and stateless people and addressing many other pressing issues of modern world.

Turkmenistan's neutrality is a lofty mission of peacemaking and our states' readiness to participate in solving all issues emerging in global and regional dimensions through peaceful, political, diplomatic tools and methods.

Preventive diplomacy is a significant function and integral part of Turkmenistan's neutrality. It is highly symbolic that the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia was established by the decision of the General Assembly with the support of neighboring states and Security Council members in Ashgabat, the capital city of neutral Turkmenistan in 2007.

Following the logic of neutrality policy Turkmenistan intends to submit the draft resolution "The role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy

for Central Asia” for the General Assembly’s consideration to ensure regional peace, security, development and unleashing potential of preventive diplomacy.

Peace, security and development in Central Asia directly depend on the settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. The position of Turkmenistan is principled and remains unchanged. There are no alternatives to the negotiation process. All previous experiences have shown that coercive approaches do not have prospects and fail to lead to agreement and reconciliation. Our country as Afghanistan’s neutral and immediate neighboring state is ready to provide necessary political and organizational conditions in our territory to establish peaceful dialogue between the Government of Afghanistan and all parties interested in political settlement of the situation in Afghanistan.

We think that the key condition for political stabilization, social and economic recovery of Afghanistan, its successful integration to global economy is to implement large infrastructure projects with Afghanistan’s involvement primarily in vital sectors such as energy, transport and communications.

As is known, our country consistently working in this direction has initiated the construction of a gas pipeline along Turkmenistan Afghanistan-Pakistan-India route, as well as railroads and fiber-optic communication lines with access to the territory of Afghanistan, which have already entered the stage of practical implementation. We call on the international community, business structures, and financial institutions to become more actively involved in this work.

Distinguished participants!

The UN has been and will remain the most important and priority partner for our country. We check all our steps in the international arena with the spirit and letter of the UN Charter. And today, Turkmenistan responsibly declares its unshakable adherence to the great ideals that lie at UN’s foundation in the year of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. We are convinced that the ideals, values and principles of the UN will remain relevant. The United Nations was and should remain the only international organization with universal legitimacy.

Turkmenistan strongly believes in the future of the UN and will continue to strengthen and build up strategic partnership with this organization, thereby making its contribution to unlocking its inexhaustible potential in the interests of global peace, security and progress.

Thank you for your attention!

### Annex III

#### **Address by Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt**

[Original: Arabic; English translation provided by the delegation]

Mr President,

Allow me at the outset to extend my thanks to Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for his distinguished efforts as President of the General assembly during its previous session. I would like to wish you, Mr. President, success in conducting the work of the current session objectively and wisely.

The convening of the high-level segment of the current session garners particular importance this year as it coincides with the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations. It also comes at a time when the world is facing the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the most profound crises of our times in terms of both its severity and impact. It has caused tragic human losses as well as had a profound economic and social impact that will affect the world for many years to come. These events come at a time when a number of other crises and conflicts continue to put an immense strain on states and deplete the resources of current and future generations. The critical juncture, which we now face forces upon us, more than any other time, to undertake an in-depth discussion on the situation of the current world order and how to improve the working methods of the multilateral system. This includes the need to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of how to implement the fundamentals and principles upon which the organization was founded. We should spare no effort to seize this critical moment, emanating from our sense of responsibility before history and in the eyes of the future generations.

More than 75 years have passed since the founding of the United Nations and the adoption of its Charter, which laid solid foundations to support and strengthen international cooperation in the three main areas of work of the organization. The Charter was not solely a legally binding international document but also the product of painful human experiences due to the ravages and horrors of war, from which the international community was able to derive a number of purposes, principles and fundamental rules that were enshrined in the Charter. These later evolved into preemptory norms that form the constitution that governs joint international interaction. Despite this the situation of the world today by no means comes close to what we had aspired to achieve. In spite of the large progress made with regards to laying the frameworks and norms governing the relations between states and confronting international crises, a number of obstacles stand in the way of their implementation.

Mr. President,

Egypt, by virtue of its geographic location, its African, Arab, Islamic, and Mediterranean affiliations, the pride it takes that its land extends into Asia and as a founding member of the United Nations, has a clear vision on the approach that should be adopted to improve the performance and enhance the effectiveness of the multilateral system in general and the United Nations in particular. I would like to seize this opportunity to present some of the concrete measures that need to be pursued in order to realize our objectives in the three pillars of work of the organization.

Firstly, with regards to the maintenance of international peace and security, it has become imperative to adopt an approach that guarantees the implementation of resolutions that are adopted within the multilateral system. Priority should be accorded to the implementation of the well established rules and principles of international law and which are enshrined in the Charter. This requires political will on behalf of member-states to respect and implement such resolutions and to enhance the United Nations on two main fronts. First there is a need to diligently monitor the implementation of what has been agreed upon and to take all necessary measures to assist states in implementing their obligations and building their capacities, taking into consideration the principle of national ownership. Second, there is a need to hold states that deliberately breach international law and United National resolutions accountable, and especially resolutions of the Security Council.

In this context, it is no longer acceptable for Security Council resolutions which deal with counter terrorism, and which provide a legal framework for combatting this deadly scourge, to remain without effective implementation and full commitment by some member-states which believe that they will not be held accountable for political reasons. It is regrettable that the international community continues to turn a blind eye towards a number of states to terrorists which extend material and financial support to terrorists, or provide safe heavens or political and media platforms as well as facilitating the transfer of terrorist fighters to areas of conflict, especially Libya and before it Syria. These deliberate violations indicate nothing other than a complete disregard for the Security Council, and the continuation of which will result in discrediting the Council's resolutions and diminishing the councils stature and credibility.

Egypt's interest in upholding international peace and security includes protecting people from, the scourge of armed conflict through launching comprehensive political processes based on relevant security council resolutions. In Libya, for example, Egypt continues to adhere to the political resolution process, led by the UN, based on the Skhirat Agreement, the outcomes of the Berlin Conference, and the Cairo Declaration subscribed to by both the Speaker of the Libyan House of Representatives and the Commander-in-chief of the Libyan National Army. To this effect, the Cairo Declaration serves as a joint comprehensive political initiative to end the conflict in Libya, including a set of precise steps and a clear schedule aiming at restoring the political system and instituting a consensual Libyan government that lives up the aspirations of the Libyan people. The ramifications of the ongoing crisis are not only confined to Libya, but also spill over to affect security in neighboring countries, as well as its negative effects on international stability. In that light, Egypt is bent on supporting Libyans to rid their Country of armed militias and terrorist organizations, and put an end to the blatant interference of some regional Parties that deliberately transported foreign fighters into Libya, in an effort to fulfill their well-known greed and long-standing colonial illusions. Hence, as we declared before, and reiterate today, any breach to the line extending between the towns of Sirte and Jufra, previously demarcated as a red line, will be fiercely faced by Egypt in defense of its People and its national security, and we also renew our call to all Parties to return to the political process aiming at restoring peace, security and stability deserved by the People of Libya.

If we are to rightly implement international resolutions aiming at achieving long-lasting peace and security in the Middle East, no issue would be more worthy of our attention than the issue of Palestine, whose People still strive to their most basic

human right and that is living in a free and independent State along with its neighbors in the region. Generations of Palestinians have strived to achieve this right, and a multitude of resolutions elapsed ever since, to no avail, putting a heavy strain on human conscience. The fulfillment of the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians in an independent state, with East Jerusalem as its capital, is imperative, if we are to open new horizons for peace, cooperation and coexistence, and for peace and security to prevail in the region. The international community has an obligation to honor its commitment to achieve the long-awaited peace, and to address any measures that eat up Palestinian lands and undermine the two-state solution as stipulated in international resolutions, and on which the peace process that Egypt has engaged on to achieve a just, comprehensive and durable peace is based.

In Syria, a comprehensive political solution has become a necessity in order to put off the raging war and implement all the components of the political settlement outlined in Security Council resolution 2254 (2015) in its entirety, in a manner that preserves the unity of Syria, its territorial integrity, the integrity of its institutions, fulfills the aspirations of its people, and terminates all forms of terrorism. In the same vein, it's about time for a firm stand in Yemen to put an end to the ongoing crisis there, in accordance with UNSC resolution 2216 (2015), the Gulf Countries initiative and the outcomes of the comprehensive national dialogue, and in a manner that upholds legitimacy, guarantees Yemen's unity and independence, and puts an end to using Yemen as a launching pad targeting its neighbors and obstructing the free navigation in the Strait of Bab al-Mandab.

Mr. President,

With regards to the Renaissance Dam matter, I wish to seize this opportunity to convey to you the mounting concerns of the Egyptian nation regarding this project, currently being constructed by a neighboring and friendly Country, which shares a river that has provided life to millions of people for thousands of years.

We have spent the better part of a decade in tiresome negotiations with our brothers in the Sudan and Ethiopia, through which our aim was to reach an agreement on the filling and operation of the dam. An agreement that strikes the requisite balance between the development needs of the friendly Ethiopian people, and the preservation of Egypt's water interests and its right to life. Throughout this year, we have undertaken successive rounds of intense negotiations, in which the United States Government exerted much appreciated efforts to bring the positions of the three Countries closer, through the talks it sponsored for several months with the World Bank. Moreover, Egypt engaged in good faith in the deliberations initiated by my brother the Prime Minister of the Sudan, and afterwards in the negotiations called for by the Republic of South Africa in its current capacity as Chairperson of the African Union. Unfortunately, none of these efforts resulted in any tangible outcome.

Indeed, the Nile River must not be monopolized by one state. For Egypt, the Nile water is an existential matter. This however does not mean that we want to undermine the rights of our brothers and sisters sharing with us the Nile Basin. In this vein, the convening of a Security Council consultative meeting, on 29 June this year, highlighted the importance of this issue and, its potential risks and its direct bearing on international peace and security. The convening of such a meeting places on the international community the responsibility to urge all parties to reach the desired agreement, which meets our mutual interests. Nevertheless, it is unacceptable for the negotiations to continue forever in an attempt to impose realities on the ground,

because our people yearn for stability and development towards a new promising era of cooperation.

Mr. President,

Regarding the second pillar of the United Nations, which is achieving sustainable development, Egypt firmly believes that fostering the developmental efforts is a fundamental precondition to enhance international peace & security and to establish a stable world order.

This is the paramount path to prevent extremism, as well as to prevent armed conflicts and humanitarian crises. Egypt has supported the adoption of 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and performed a vital role to support the efforts of the Secretary General to reform the United Nations developmental system, as we believe in the importance of bolstering the Organization's efforts in order to accomplish these optimistic objectives. While bearing in mind that these efforts are considered as an important initial step on the right path, these efforts have to be followed by additional steps that help the countries to lessen the socioeconomic gap between the developed and developing states, and to cure the problem of financing for development. Furthermore, the current profound crisis due to COVID-19 pandemic mandates the world to provide support for the developing countries through offering stimulating packages for their economies, reducing their accumulated debt liabilities, and utilizing the available instruments of the international financial institutions aiming at contributing to create favorable environment for them. This would help these developing countries to contain the impacts of the pandemic and to deal with their already-existing problems, such as terrorism, disorderly migration and treating the root-causes of conflicts.

In this context, we have to highlight the necessity of supporting Africa in specific, and to develop real and potent partnerships to support the Continent's capacities in order to face the political and economic problems, to obtain the required knowledge and technology, as well as to improve the African human resources and to provide the needed funding with the smoothest conditionality. The African continent, with its unique features, is able to become a new locomotive for the international economy, particularly with the historic steps taken by the African Union to launch the Continental Free Trade Zone, as well as enhancing the arrangements of regional integration, and formulating ambitious strategy for infrastructure, energy and transportation, in addition to other relevant initiatives.

Mr. President,

Regarding the third pillar of the United Nations, the international agenda of human rights garners increased importance for its direct impact on strengthening the human buildup, improving the level of services provided to people, and preserving one's rights. This guarantees decent life and the ability to deal with the challenges on all political, economic, social and cultural levels, which at the same time enhances the stability of the international system.

In light of the Egyptian Constitution and its amendments related to the basic rights and liberties as well as the rights of future generations, we have embarked on strengthening our endeavor in human rights field towards all political, economic and social perspectives, with a belief in the necessity of their integration. Egypt has also reestablished its Senate with its role in supporting the democratic system and Egypt is currently guaranteeing the suitable representation for women in the parliamentary

chambers, as at least one quarter of the Egyptian House of Representatives is allocated for women. We also seek organizing the work of the state institutions & national organs, separation of power, settling the concept of power transfer and limiting the Presidential terms to two. While we are currently finalizing the Senate elections, the first legislative term of the Egyptian House of Representatives is approaching its termination in light of the new constitution, during which the Parliament has accomplished several sets of legislations, which supplement the constitution in order to strengthen the basic rights and liberties, as well as all other important laws in the social and economic fields. Furthermore, the vitality of the previous parliamentary discussions is indicative to the hopes and aspirations of our citizens in continuing and enhancing the peaceful democratic practice, which is in the benefit of the Egyptian people who is the main stakeholder and the source of all authorities.

Based on the provisions of the constitution and inspired by the values and rich heritage of Egypt, many strides have been taken to strengthen citizenship and achieve justice, equality and equal opportunities, without discrimination on any grounds. Such words have turned into goals towards which we have made significant progress in a short time, be it in the fields of empowering Egyptian women and combating all forms of violence against them, calling for the reform of religious discourse, promoting citizenship as a principle that does not differentiate between Muslim and Christian compatriots, affirming freedom of belief or the state's undertaking of building worship places without discrimination. In addition to efforts to enable people with special needs, investing in youth especially by including them in the decisionmaking process, establishing direct dialogues with them through periodic youth forums, and implementing training and qualification initiatives for young people to participate effectively in public work.

At the economic level, it would not have been possible to overcome the difficult and painstaking stages of the structural reform programme without the legitimacy granted by the Egyptian people to state institutions by their direct and free will. The success of these reforms had a major contribution to fortifying the economy and limiting its losses due to the Corona virus pandemic, taking into consideration that Egypt is among the few countries that were able to achieve positive growth rates despite the pandemic, in addition to controlling inflation rates and the decline of unemployment to its lowest levels in twenty years.

If mere data and statistics do not depict the magnitude of what is being achieved in Egypt, then the best witness and evidence are the tangible and continuous achievements and major national projects in infrastructure, provision of decent housing and energy, especially the production of new and renewable energy, which directly contribute to safeguarding the citizen's right in a decent living.

Structural reform processes have always been precarious due to their negative repercussions on some groups of society. This called upon us to formulate social programmes targeting those on lower income to provide them with the necessary protection, and mitigate the effects of reforms on them in a framework of solidarity that preserves their dignity.

Concurrently, we were keen on prioritizing health care as a fundamental right, as Egypt has already started implementing the universal health coverage programme for all its citizens. In parallel, we succeeded in launching the largest medical survey campaign in history to detect and eliminate hepatitis C and non-communicable diseases and dispense treatment dispensed free of charge for discovered cases. In

addition, initiatives were launched to end the waiting lists for critical surgeries, support women's health, and treat various diseases that affect newborns and schoolchildren in particular.

In the midst of all of the above, and without propaganda or blackmail, I would like to point out that we have never failed in our humanitarian duty towards the nearly five million immigrants and refugees who were forced to leave their countries due to wars, political crises and difficult economic conditions. They are being hosted in Egypt among its people where they enjoy all services provided by the state to Egyptian citizens, without receiving any aid or significant support from our international partners, despite the importance they attach to the rights of those immigrants. Accordingly, we call for the adoption of a comprehensive approach to address the root causes of illegal immigration and asylum, by working to achieve sustainable development in the source and hosting countries and promoting the opening of legal migration channels, instead of security solutions and rhetoric of contempt, hate, discrimination and closing borders.

All of the aforementioned provides a clear indication of the importance Egypt attaches to protecting human rights, and its continued endeavor to upgrade its capabilities to fulfill the ambitions of its citizens and achieve their legitimate aspirations in line with the comprehensive perspective defined by Egypt's Vision 2030.

Mr. President

The United Nations was born from the suffering and plight that humanity went through and its Charter was inspired by accumulated and broad experiences, hoping to forge a better future for humanity. There is no doubt that we should not wait for decades and centuries to draw the lessons learned from the Organization's 75 years journey. Hence, it is imperative to address the issue of equitable geographical representation in the Security Council in order to better reflect of the realities today's world and the current balance of power, which is very different from what it was during the formulation of the international system. Egypt stresses the importance of expanding the Council in both its permanent and non-permanent categories, which will enhance its credibility and achieve a fair representation of Africa to correct the historical injustice inflicted on it, and address its legitimate demands enshrined in the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration.

In order to confront the grave challenges resulting from the outbreak of Coronavirus pandemic, as well as the existing regional and international problems, it is imperative for us to uphold the principle of international cooperation and solidarity to more than ever before and avoid rivalry and polarization.

If hope is born out of pain, then perhaps we will find in the current crises what motivates us to breathe new life into our relentless efforts to enhance international multilateral action and the role of the United Nations as its driving force.

Egypt, as a founding member of this organization, and in lieu of its contributions to human civilization since the dawn of history, will spare no effort to achieve the vision of renewal and reform. This is based on a firm conviction that "the world has room for us all," as long as the relations between countries and peoples are governed by abandonment of conflicts, peace-making and building, and international cooperation in order to achieve development and prosperity for both current and future generations.

## Annex IV

### Address by Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President of the Republic of Tajikistan

[Original: Tajik; English translation provided by the delegation]

Your Excellency Mr. President, Excellency Mr. Secretary-General, Ladies and Gentlemen!

At the outset I with great delight extend heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Volkan Bozkir on his election as the President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.

The current situation in the world has become complicated, volatile and turbulent at the background of growing geopolitical, geo-economic competition and extension of modern threats and challenges, particularly a spread of coronavirus disease.

COVID-19 has initially been appeared as a healthcare crisis and been gradually turned into a justifiable global socio-economic and financial crisis. The state of affairs at the current situation certainly requires our more active and coordinated actions.

We welcome the tireless efforts made by the UN Secretary-General, United Nations specialized agencies, foundations and programmes to provide immediate and long-term assistance to member states in tackling the humanitarian and socio-economic repercussion of COVID-19 pandemic.

We applaud the commitment and praise the efforts of states to develop anti-COVID vaccine.

We very much hope that it will be accessible to all states and the vaccine producer-countries will initiate a supply of certain amount of vaccine as a humanitarian aid to cover the vulnerable groups from other countries, while prioritizing women, children and elderly people.

The COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on the Republic of Tajikistan, which has become a matter of our deep concern.

With the view to preventing a spread of disease we today are exerting massive efforts to increase necessary volume of medication and medical equipment and to this end we for the time being are undertaking effectful measures in cooperation with the World Health Organization, countries and development partners.

Prestigious international organizations assess the consequences of coronavirus spread as an ongoing process, which would definitely adversely impact the global economy development.

This situation poses countless unprecedented challenges in front of Tajikistan's development.

The coronavirus outbreak has led to recession in all areas of the national economy, including obstructing investment operations, such as foreign direct investment inflow, domestic and foreign trade, tourism and services, particularly transport sector.

Tajikistan as a mountainous and landlocked country does not possess sufficient amount of oil and gas resources.

In the meantime, we are dependent on import of fuel almost in hundred percent, as well as import of other goods and products, including food and pharmaceutical by eighty and ninety per cent accordingly.

According to preliminary estimations, due to a negative impact of external economic factors, a total damage to Tajikistan's economy this year would amount to more than \$2 billion and most likely this number may increase in the future.

Taking into consideration an ongoing process of the pandemic impact, the Government of Tajikistan along with prevention of a spread of this infectious disease has been exerting efforts to undertake necessary measures aimed at ensuring consistent and sustainable operation of all socioeconomic sectors of the country.

Mr. President,

It is crystal clear that advancement of constructive processes is possible only when lasting stability and overall safety are secured.

In a par with an unprecedented wave of COVID-19 nowadays expansion of scale and intensity of terrorism and extremism, armed conflicts and wars, transnational organized crime, including trafficking in narcotics and other modern threats and challenges remain alarming.

Terrorist and extremist groups pose tremendous challenge on national security, seriously jeopardizing stability of the countries and different regions.

Elimination of the menace of terrorism necessitates a clear perception of its motives and the root causes promoting terrorism, as well as common global approach towards the definition of terrorism.

Along with this, in our view, it is of particular importance to elaborate new and effective means to a common fight against terrorism, including by the means of the state-of-the-art technology, cooperation and coordination among relevant security authorities of the member states.

Bold and drastic measures commonly undertaken within the international law and avoidance of double standard policy are recognized as yet another important factors in tackling challenges.

Tajikistan is convinced that response to the growing threat of terrorism must be all-embracing and the United Nations should play a key coordinating role in this process.

Tajikistan being located in the frontline of addressing security threats and challenges has made and is determined to continue making an invaluable contribution to countering terrorism and extremism, fighting transnational organized crime, including tackling drug trafficking.

To this end, we maintain and foster productive cooperation with our partners and international organizations, in particular with the relevant UN agencies.

We have developed and at present are implementing shared initiatives which have already yielded noticeable results.

Currently our two National Strategies — the first on Counter-Terrorism and Extremism and the second on Counter-Narcotics Trafficking are in the final phase of an implementation in our country.

The commencement of cooperation with international organizations and regional partner institutions in elaboration of these two Strategy papers for a new period is a clear evidence of our success we have achieved in this direction.

We do believe it is necessary to comply with the rules and implement the provisions of the relevant generally accepted treaties and conventions.

In this regard, Tajikistan sustains fruitful cooperation with the relevant United Nations agencies and regional organizations, such as the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

We have also established productive bilateral cooperative relationships with our partner countries.

Success in joint concerted actions aiming at prevention and resolution of conflicts, exploration of peaceful ways of addressing crises and confrontations, first and foremost depends on the effective use of preventive diplomacy and mediation.

Accordingly, it is necessary to strengthen the preventive activity's dimension of the UN, including to improve its Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia.

Tajikistan which has experienced all horrors of the imposed civil war, values and well perceps the importance of an overwhelming protection of peace.

This is why Tajikistan hails the United Nations peacekeeping operations and strives to contribute to promote this process at extent possible.

Our police forces are involved in the UN peacekeeping operations in Darfur, South Sudan and the city of Abyei in the Sudan.

We are committed to further continue our cooperation in this area with the relevant United Nations bodies.

Given the experience our country gained in countering terrorism, extremism and illegal drug trafficking and with the view to introducing the Tajik peace experience we are determined to nominate for the first time Tajikistan's candidacy for a non-permanent seat in the UN Security Council for 2028-2029.

We very much hope that Tajikistan's initiative will be encouraged by the member-states and they will give their support to our candidacy.

Tajikistan shares almost 1,400 km. of border with Afghanistan.

We therefore give an utmost attention to the military, political and socioeconomic situation in this close and extended neighboring country.

Escalation of alarming situation in this country urges the international community to undertake extra measures to coordinate actions in the fight against terrorism, coping with drug manufacturing and trafficking in narcotics, likewise deliver timely assistance to the Government and the people of Afghanistan.

As we stated time and again, the Afghan case has no military solution and Tajikistan indeed welcomes the peace-building negotiation processes and support any approach aimed at addressing political crisis in this country.

The destiny and the future of Afghanistan should be first and foremost led and owned by Afghan people and our belief is firm that stabilization of the situation in this country can be achieved only through Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled peacebuilding process.

Tajikistan this year is presiding over “The Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process” and during our presidency we will strive to increase a genuine efficiency of this platform.

To this day Tajikistan has contributed to the implementation of several joint regional projects on Afghanistan.

We built power transmission lines and constructed six transboundary bridges.

We stand ready to further advance cooperation which would help active involvement of Afghanistan into the regional integration processes and facilitate its socio-economic recovery.

Further implementation of projects on highway connectivity between the two countries’ and construction of power transmission lines, particularly CASA-1000 jointly with other countries of the region, professional training of Afghan specialists in different sectors are among the areas of cooperation that we sustain and are committed to promote.

Mr. President,

We have ten years left until the end of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals.

The international community has made a significant progress in this direction over the past five years.

However, the economic and financial indicators of the countries and severe negative consequences of COVID-19 call into question a timely implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in developing countries.

The repercussion of the COVID-19 will also negatively affect our country, which is one of the proactive members of the global community in an implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

I would like to recall that Tajikistan was one of the first countries to adopt its 2030 National Development Strategy in line with the 2030 Agenda.

Our country presented its National Voluntary Report back in 2017 and introduced its progress it has achieved towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

We are hopeful that the Decade of Action to deliver the Global Goals will help to seek ways of sustainable solutions to such pressing global challenges, as climate change, poverty, gender inequality and financing.

We should give an utmost importance to climate change challenges, which in this process pose serious hardships to all nations, including to Tajikistan.

Over the past sixty years, the average annual temperature in Tajikistan has increased by one degree.

It has resulted in increased number of days with heavy precipitations and intensity of natural hydro-meteorological phenomena, which have year after year been affecting all countries throughout the world.

Tajikistan with 93 per cent of its territory covered by mountains, bears losses equal to hundreds of millions of dollars annually as a result of water-related disasters.

Such natural disasters often cause casualties.

The areas of glaciers located in our country which are essential for all Central Asia have been noticeably reduced over the recent decades.

One thousand out of thirteen thousand glaciers located in Tajikistan mountains have melted away so far.

This happens although up to sixty percent of Central Asia's water resources is accumulated on the territory of Tajikistan.

This year, due to low precipitations in the winter we have seen a significant decline in water stock in the region's rivers, which in turn led to low-water season during the irrigation and caused a severe drought.

This situation causes a negative impact on the quantity and a quality of safe drinking water, as well as water-related sectors, particularly agriculture and energy.

In connection with this circumstance, the countries of the region are concerned with the shifts in the hydrological cycle.

We in this connection would like to call on the United Nations and other international and regional organizations to support Tajikistan with the expedition of glaciers in Central Asia.

Tajikistan generates ninety nine percent of its electricity in hydro-electric power stations, that is from renewable 'green' energy sources.

Our country is among the less carbon dioxide emitters in the world.

In this context, I wish to once again offer the following proposals towards seeking the ways of addressing the climate change, which I had previously introduced in other international fora:

1. Encouragement of a widespread use of renewable energy sources, which would facilitate a friendly environment for the "green" economy development.
2. Comprehensive support by donor countries and international and regional financial institutions in an implementation of national strategies and programs for adaptation to climate change.
3. Reinforce regular monitoring of the generation of water resources, especially glaciers.
4. Strengthen international cooperation on protection of water resources and implementation of Tajikistan's proposal to establish The International Glacier Preservation Fund.
5. The delivery of comprehensive financial and technical assistance by developed countries and international organizations to developing and least developed countries to monitor and preserve glaciers and other sources of water.

We hope that our international partners will support further steps Tajikistan undertakes forward in these areas.

Mr. President,

The United Nations acknowledged Tajikistan as an initiator and champion country in advancing water agenda.

Our country is the author of majority of the United Nations' initiatives and resolutions on water, including "The International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018 – 2028".

Owing to support of the UN member states we have been able to revive and strengthen the global water agenda over the past decades.

Tajikistan's Resolution entitled "Comprehensive Mid-Term Review of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018-2028 which had been adopted in 2018 had further enriched the global water agenda.

The Resolution along with other important goals and objectives, calls for convening the United

Nations Conference on a Comprehensive Mid-Term Review of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028 in New York on March 2023.

This event is valued as an important initiative in terms of support towards an implementation of the Decade and conduct of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

It is worth recalling that the last UN Conference on Water was held yet in 1977 in Mar de Plata, Argentina.

It means that the United Nations will host the Water Conference after 46 years.

We can confidently claim that the United Nations member states, UN specialized agencies and other organizations have been demonstrating a growing interest and utmost attention to the Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" while some nations have already expressed their willingness to host regional preparatory meetings.

Regretfully, spread of COVID-19 affected their plans and most of the scheduled events have been postponed.

I hope that after the victory over the coronavirus pandemic, the stakeholder countries, along with Tajikistan, will be able to take full advantage of the opportunities and convene events they have scheduled.

In conclusion, I would like to draw the attention of all United Nations member states to the draft Resolution proposed by Tajikistan on the UN Conference for a Comprehensive Mid-Term Review of the Implementation of the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018-2028.

It has been decided to review this Resolution at the UN General Assembly Session.

I would like to encourage all distinguished delegates to support our initiative, like they have been so generous in supporting our previous Resolutions.

Thank you for your kind attention!

**Annex V****Address by Mr. Manuel López Obrador, President of the United Mexican States**

[Original: Spanish]

Ladies and Gentlemen, Heads of State and Government of the world.

I am very pleased to speak with members of the General Assembly on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations.

I represent a great country — Mexico, which has a history and cultural tradition like those of other peoples of the world. I could tell members about the great civilizations that comprise the foundation of our country today and of the great cultures that flourished in what is now Mexico. I speak of civilization and cultures because those who conquer, dominate and colonize always try to justify their atrocities by disqualifying the original peoples by calling them barbarians and savages. This does not apply to Mexico, our people or other peoples of the world, who were dominated, conquered or colonized. We have an extraordinary history, which also involves the struggle for freedom, justice and equality in defending our national sovereignty. There are three great transformations in the history of Mexico.

First, with regard to independence, after 300 years of being a colony, we gained our independence. That was the first transformation at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Two rebel priests, Miguel Hidalgo y Costilla and José María Morelos y Pavón led a movement for Mexico's independence and a movement for justice, as they were the first to proclaim the abolition of slavery.

Later, in the mid-nineteenth century, we underwent a second transformation, which was very important and of global significance — the reform movement led by a great leader, a liberal and the best President in our history: a Zapotec Indian, Benito Juárez García. What did our hero do with regard to the reform at that time? He separated church from State before other countries did so and he applied the biblical principle of “Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's”.

A third transformation then took place at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century: the Mexican Revolution of 1910. Democracy was fought for as Mexico had suffered a 34-year dictatorship. The struggle was waged to guarantee freedoms and bring about justice. Two very important social leaders who preceded the Revolution were the Flores Magón brothers. An unquestionably good man and an apostle of democracy Francisco y Madero was murdered in cowardly fashion as were social leaders like Francisco Villa, who defended the peasants and was loyal to the people, and Emiliano Zapata.

With the third transformation, much progress was made in the social, but not the political, arena, as establishing a truly authentic democracy in the country was not possible. Following the Revolution, a party was created. It was a political party, which was to predominate for a long time, and only then did we take the first steps to make Mexico into a truly authentic democratic country. Possibly due to the lack of democracy, among other factors, the country's public life fell into disarray. Political corruption, which was for a long time Mexico's main problem, began to prevail. Our country enjoys many natural riches, including fertile land for agricultural production,

abundant water, oil, mines and a good, noble, working people with a cultural heritage spanning millennia, which is the source of the people's proclivity for work and creativity. We were unable, however, to move forward because of the corruption that prevailed. For a long time, we fought to achieve a real change in the country, and, after many years, what the people of Mexico decided to do was elect us. And we have proposed to carry out the fourth transformation of our country's public life.

I spoke earlier of independence, reform and revolution, and now we are committed to carrying out the fourth transformation of the country's public life, without violence in a peaceful manner. We are achieving that, despite the fact that we are facing two crises, as are other countries around the world. We are dealing with the terrible coronavirus disease pandemic. And, as in other countries, we are also facing what set of the pandemic — the economic crisis. We are facing two crises at the same time, but we are overcoming. We are moving forward and confronting the pandemic. We have acted responsibly, and we have been abundantly helped by the experts, the scientists, the doctors, the nurses and the health-care workers, who have dedicated themselves with their humanity to save lives. As we move forward, the harmful effects of the pandemic will diminish. What matters most to us is saving lives, and we are moving forward. With regard to the economic aspect, we are not applying the perennial strategy of placing the country into a state of indebtedness and rescuing those above with the sophist rational that, if it rains hard upstairs, the rain will drip down, as if wealth were somehow contagious.

What did we do? We are supporting the people directly from below, from the bottom up. We are allocating resources that are the product of savings, because we do not allow corruption. Those savings are also the fruits of the Republic's austerity, as luxuries in the Government are a thing of the past. I will tell the General Assembly that, although there is still a presidential plane, it is up for sale. We have offered it up for auction and intend to sell it. The plane is like a palace in the sky, which is insulting to our people — a luxury plane that was intended to seat 240 passengers and was adapted for 80. It has a meeting room and bedrooms, and, I repeat, that it is offensive. As of now as, the President of Mexico, who is speaking to the General Assembly, travels by car and commercial aeroplanes. Public officials and servants are no longer permitted to use private helicopters.

In addition, among other things, the elite corps that used to tend to the President has been eliminated. Do you know how many members of that elite corps took care of the President? There were 8,000 of them. It was a longstanding institution, known as the Presidential General Staff. And, like that, the luxury and the extravagance ended. The Government cannot be allowed to be rich if the people are poor. The solution is to forbid corruption and save — to eschew ostentation and luxuries in the Government and disburse funds for development.

We are allocating all that we are reaping from the solution, which precludes corruption and embraces an austere and sober Government, in order to support the humble people and the dispossessed. Every elderly person in Mexico enjoys the right to a pension, and all children with disabilities receive financial assistance. Eleven million poor students receive scholarships and benefit from many social programmes.

That is what is being invested, in addition to the support provided by fellow migrants, the now 38 million Mexicans who, out of necessity went to the United States to seek new lives and livelihoods. They include those born here and those born there of Mexican parentage. A total of 38 million assist us by providing economic support

to their relatives in Mexico with so-called remittances. Despite the pandemic, this year will be a record year for remittances. Approximately \$40 billion will be received. And, month after month, that money reaches 10 million poor families in our country. We boost consumption with Government investment and remittances. Despite the pandemic and the crisis, there is no hunger in our country. Basic consumption is being guaranteed to millions of Mexicans.

Little by little, the economy is recovering. Furthermore, we have just signed an agreement with the United States and Canada — a treaty that has already come into force. This means that investments are already being made in the country, companies are being established and jobs are being created, which will ensure the well-being of Mexicans.

I have considerable faith in the future of Mexico, but I also have faith in the future of the world. I am a believer and my creed is that of universal brotherhood. That is why I sent you all best wishes from Mexico City, the capital of our Republic.

## Annex VI

### Address by Mr. Luis Lacalle Pou, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]

President of the General Assembly, Ambassador Volkan Bozkir,  
Secretary-General of the United Nations, António Guterres,  
Heads of State and Government,  
National representatives and representatives of international organizations,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

The seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations finds us once again amid a crisis, which, undoubtedly, looks very different to the disaster caused by the Second World War, but also forces us to reimagine our future in order to build on achievements and prevent future crises, be they economic, health, climate or all of them together.

The scale of the current pandemic and its distressing consequences — loss of life and its impact on the health of many people — are the focus of our attention because we must seek solutions for our peoples, in particular those who are most vulnerable and most at risk of being affected by the pandemic as a result of its impact on their health, as well as on their way and means of life.

But the commemoration of this anniversary should also challenge us about the future we want for our countries and societies beyond this crisis.

It is here before the General Assembly, Mr. President, that Uruguay wishes to emphasize once again that the road to be travelled, both for a way out of the pandemic and for the next 75 years, will always find us on the same side — that of multilateralism — supporting the quest for solutions that are protected by multilateral legal frameworks in all aspects of international life — health, environment, trade and migration.

Uruguay's accession to membership a few months ago in the Alliance for Multilateralism, an initiative, launched by Germany and France, seeking to uphold multilateral order, is another sign of our country's commitment to this cause.

Mr. President,

Uruguay supports the role of the World Health Organization and the role of the United Nations system in coordinating the global response to the pandemic, as we understand that international organizations play a fundamental role in coordinating and guiding the best possible solutions to the current critical situation and in the coordinated management of its medium- and long-term impacts.

My country, Mr. President, has adhered to the calls to achieve global and equitable access to health technologies, medicines and vaccines through the sharing of knowledge, intellectual property and data necessary for the detection, prevention, treatment and response to COVID-19.

Our country's response to the pandemic has focused on a multidisciplinary approach that covers its social, economic and epidemiological aspects and is monitored by an Honorary Scientific Advisory Group of which we are very proud. Our approach is based on our citizens' responsible use of their freedom, with solidarity and generosity, which, together with a strong and resilient health system, has allowed us to resume work and educational and cultural activities.

We would also like to call on the international community to ensure that the current pandemic does not result in our failing to fully honour the commitments made at the multilateral level. We must avoid falling prey to nationalism and protectionism, which would in any way harm international relations in international trade or disrupt supply chains and the distribution of the medical supplies that are so necessary for emerging from this health crisis.

At the beginning of the Decade of Action to deliver on the Sustainable Development Goals, moving from words to action will be essential for ending poverty, protecting the environment and improving the living conditions of the world's population.

The United Nations has promoted Agenda 2030 and, despite the considerable current challenges, it should remain the main guide to achieving sustainable development.

Uruguay has worked hard since its recognition for effective compliance. Our country continues to honour its history of reducing inequalities, as well as its commitment to decent work based on investment and growth.

Our Government has also made the necessary commitment to education at all levels, as education is essential for the full actualization of human beings and for ensuring that all citizens have equal opportunities.

This global pandemic has shown that in the face of ever-changing challenges, it is important to maintain the necessary environment and support for international cooperation, so that all States, and in particular developing countries, can move towards sustainable development.

In this scenario, it is paradoxical that countries classified as high-income developing countries, such as Uruguay, do not have access to the majority of sources of international cooperation or more favourable lines of credit. That is why we will continue to promote the revision of that classification or graduation, which is based solely on per capita income.

For these categories to be truly adequate and equitable, a multidimensional criterion should be considered to define classifications of development and the international support needs of each country based on its specific situation.

In this regard, I wish to underscore the support of ECLAC for the development of a multi-factor approach. Sustainable development will not be such if we are not concerned about caring for the environment. That, too, as with the pandemic, is a challenge that countries cannot face alone, but requires collective will to meet the challenges facing humankind.

Uruguay continues to take steps in this direction with its recently established Ministry of Environment to demonstrate that this issue is a priority for the Government.

Mr. President, Uruguay wishes to reiterate its support for the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and its firm commitment to objectives in that area.

Uruguay has developed a National Climate Change Response Plan, which addresses risk prevention, mitigation and adaptation.

We understand that productive efforts, good experiences and effective and efficient management, subject to accountability in the light of current challenges, should receive greater attention and recognition.

We also welcome the holding of the Summit on Biodiversity, which will take place next week. We express our commitment to promoting strategies and practices for the sustainable use of biological diversity and natural resources, while developing mechanisms to improve their management and use.

My country would like to reaffirm here at the Assembly its support for the Secretary-General's Road Map for Digital Cooperation. Uruguay understands that for these initiatives to prosper and contribute effectively to the fulfilment of the SDGs, digital technologies must enable us to bridge the digital and connectivity divide, among countries and within each country alike.

It is also essential to promote respect for human rights in such networks, the protection of privacy and personal data, as well as access to information and freedom of expression, both public and private.

Lastly, it is necessary to work on digital security, with the broad participation of State actors, the private sector and civil society.

With regard to the Secretary-General's initiatives, I would like to focus for a moment on his call for a ceasefire — a global ceasefire — which was endorsed by my country.

A peaceful environment is indispensable for addressing the pandemic, which is why we must now recommit to dialogue, peaceful dispute resolution and the rule of law in order to alleviate suffering and bring hope to the most vulnerable populations.

My country is strongly committed to United Nations peacekeeping forces, as it is a main contributor of troops per capita worldwide. A clear demonstration of this national commitment is the offer made by our Government to establish a laboratory to increase medical diagnostic capabilities within United Nations peace operations in response to the pandemic.

In this context, it is worth recalling Uruguay's calls to protect hospitals and schools under attack in conflict zones and the need to support Security Council resolutions on this matter.

Uruguay reiterates its national commitment to the human rights agenda and will continue to actively uphold human rights, including the protection and rights of children, the plight of civilians in conflict situations and women's rights, and promote respect for such rights among actors in the international community. In this regard, we will continue to ensure the effective implementation of advocacy mechanisms by the United Nations.

We would like to make special mention of the vulnerable sections of the population, who are particularly affected by the pandemic, such as women who are victims of domestic violence, which is of particular concern for Uruguay. It has

prompted us to develop specific policies to respond to this situation. We cannot forget migrants and internally displaced persons, who are also doubly vulnerable to this pandemic.

We again underscore the open policy of our country, which welcomes voluntary migration, based on the values of democracy and equality before the law and respect for the rights of all people, regardless of their origin.

Mr. President, by strengthening human rights, not only will protection be advanced, but those called to be key actors in building peace and promoting development will be empowered, more specifically women and young people.

Lastly, I would like to underscore the role of the International Criminal Court and the importance of its deterrent effect on mass genocides and atrocities and their perpetrators. Uruguay reiterates its commitment to the international justice system and, in particular, its support for the International Criminal Court as an independent and impartial judicial institution with a central role in the fight against impunity and in the pursuit of justice.

In this forum, where peace was sealed 75 years ago, I would like to express my concern about the threats posed by non-compliance with or the withdrawal of some parties from disarmament agreements, which may lead to the resumption of an arms race that will take us back to a time when the world lived in the spectre a possible nuclear conflict. Global peace cannot be achieved without serious commitments by the international community on disarmament and non-proliferation.

The region and my country are concerned about the proliferation and illicit trafficking of small arms and light weapons, which pose a threat to the stability of regions and global security, incite crime and insecurity and affect peaceful coexistence in society.

Our Government is committed to combating insecurity and crime and we will work hard to do so. We will also continue to cooperate with the United Nations in the fight against terrorism, transnational organized crime and the links between the two.

Mr. President, the future we want for our peoples is one in which we can move ahead with common and supportive solutions to challenges that emerge, in order to achieve sustainable and inclusive development, where the rights of all are respected and opportunities are offered for the development of each and every citizen of this world, leaving no one behind.

We want a peaceful future in a world where States are committed to dialogue and negotiation; where we find a way to emerge from today's conflicts that considers the rights of all parties. We therefore need to redouble our commitment to preventive diplomacy and mediation, as well as to conflict prevention. To this end, we need a United Nations that focuses more on coordination, both in word and in deed. We need an Organization that actively cooperates with other international organizations, including financial institutions, to implement a variety of mechanisms that enable countries to overcome external and internal obstacles to development, given its multidimensional nature.

Uruguay is particularly interested in increasing the relevance of the overall efforts of the United Nations, and in particular the General Assembly, as well as its Member States to ensure the potential for effective participation.

Uruguay has always sought to contribute to the overall transparency of the functioning of the United Nations and all its organs, including the work of the United Nations Security Council.

In today's world, the possibility for increasing the efficiency and efficiency of the Organization will be appreciated, while cutting operating costs and increasing transparency and accountability with regard to its spending.

We particularly appreciate the Organization's efforts to include civil society and the private sector, as part of the solution to the economic, social and environmental issues that arise, as inclusive and sustainable development requires the participation of the entire society.

The leaders of the world must rise to the level of the circumstances and of our peoples and be capable, just as our leaders were 75 years ago, of thinking beyond the current crisis and consolidating the multilateral mechanisms and instruments that enable our societies to achieve sustainable and inclusive development, respecting democracy, freedoms and the rights of all human beings.

We world leaders must take charge.

Thank you very much.

## Annex VII

### Address by Mr. Danny Faure, President of the Republic of Seychelles

Your Excellency, President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,

Your Excellency, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Distinguished Heads of State and Government,

Esteemed Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Rarely have the United Nations and multilateralism been tested as they are being tested during this year of the UN's 75th anniversary, the year where the world is grappling with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Rarely, has there been a more pressing time for creative thinking and innovation to respond to modern challenges.

The painful lessons learned since the outbreak of the pandemic underscores the urgent need for continued collective approaches.

To be effective, our joint efforts need to be coordinated and delivered through a revitalised and more inclusive multilateral system, comprising of the voices of all stakeholders, including the youth, civil society and the private sector to ensure a global all-of-society approach.

I say revitalised because the existing set-up has, despite the lessons of past outbreaks of viruses, failed to respond adequately to COVID-19 with devastating consequences.

Seychelles stepped up to the challenge despite being faced with an economy crippled by the collapse of tourism, our primary industry.

We introduced a series of unprecedented measures to save the lives of our people and mitigate the economic destruction, minimising unemployment and securing workers' incomes. To ensure an inclusive approach that factors in the specific needs of different stakeholders in Seychelles, we consulted with the private sector, trade unions, civil society and inter-faith organisations as required.

We were joined in this undertaking by the tourism businesses, a key driver of Seychelles' economy and who continue to play an instrumental role in drafting Seychelles' tourism comeback together with Government. However, everything Seychelles has done to date to minimise the impact of COVID-19 will not be sustainable in the longterm because of the depletion in our foreign exchange reserves.

It took us 44 years since Seychelles' independence to attain the quality of life we enjoyed before COVID-19, and just 4 months for COVID-19 to paralyse our tourism industry and with it much of our economy.

We foresee a 14 per cent budgetary deficit for this year instead of the 4 per cent surplus we projected before COVID-19. The Seychelles economy was set to grow by 3.9 per cent this year but will now end 2020 at -15.2 per cent.

We estimate it will take at least five years for Seychelles to return to where we were before COVID-19, assuming the world gets a vaccine that ensures the novel coronavirus is no longer a global public health threat.

I turn to the multilateralism theme for this debate; a multilateralism which we recognise as crucial to a globally-coordinated response to COVID-19 and to us emerging from the pandemic more resilient, and hopefully, more compassionate.

SIDS have made heroic efforts to shore up jobs as unemployment grows and provide social safety nets for our people in response to COVID-19 with the limited capacity and resources that we have.

However, we cannot maintain these in the long term, often at the cost of worsening our debt burdens as part of a looming global debt crisis.

The shortage of effective global solutions for SIDS as the United Nations celebrates its 75th anniversary is alarming. The ultimate test of multilateralism lies in the way we assist vulnerable economies today, for it ultimately decides whether we attain the future we want.

We call on all relevant stakeholders to take immediate, substantial and tailored actions to allow us to manage the crisis and address its grave socio-economic impacts while preserving our development achievements and reinforcing our resilience to future shocks.

Such actions should include building capacity for small island developing states to cope with and recover from external shocks such as pandemics like COVID-19, other forms of disasters, and impacts of climate change.

International financial institutions should re-examine their eligibility criteria to tailor SIDS' access to concessional financing to take into account our extreme vulnerability to economic, climate and now public health shocks that put us at particular risk and disadvantage.

Seychelles backs AOSIS, the Alliance of Small Island States, in its call for a SIDS Compact, which caters for our specific and persistent constraints and vulnerabilities.

Such a compact will require the design of new, and enhancement of existing financial instruments to guide SIDS economies through the current crisis, create a responsive system where we maintain our gains, reinforce resilience to climate change and achieve sustainable development.

The massive global economic restructuring now underway presents the world with a unique opportunity to pursue a holistic and transformational approach to address the numerous escalating global crises we face while making the most efficient use of our resources.

Our recovery efforts should aim to take us to a more sustainable and resilient future which requires a recognition that economic recovery depends on ecological health. Reviving economic activity should not be at the expense of environmental sustainability.

One of the jobs Seychelles has offered workers made redundant by COVID-19, for example, is the planting of hundreds of thousands of trees across our islands. This measure is in keeping with the call by the world's scientists to protect our natural

environment at all costs. This is how we can restore planetary health and the balance between human and ecological wellbeing.

We cannot have a healthy recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic if we do not heal our poor relationship with our natural environment. As the saying goes human health depends on nature's health.

We understand this well in Seychelles where the two main pillars of our economy, tourism and fishing, depend on the state of our natural, and especially our ocean, environment.

So, on March 26 this year as the pandemic raged across the world, Seychelles went ahead and delivered on our 2012 Rio+20 commitment to protect 30 per cent of our giant exclusive economic zone of 1.34 million square kilometres by 2020.

It was a recognition that even while we dealt with a public health emergency, we cherished the importance of nature to our people's physical, economic and social wellbeing.

We should adopt a similar approach to climate action to maintain and increase climate ambition in the context of the pandemic and prevent a post-COVID rebound in greenhouse gas emissions.

While the effects of climate breakdown will continue to impact us long after we've dealt with the pandemic, COVID-19 presents a new opportunity to take action on climate change as countries make drastic changes to infrastructure, jobs and investment.

Achieving the 1.5-degree Celsius goal remains critical if we are to leave no country behind. The drop in greenhouse gas emissions and improvement in air quality during the pandemic is only temporary, and research shows it will have a negligible impact on the climate crisis.

We do not know how long the COVID-19 pandemic will last, but we know we are heading towards a temperature increase of approximately 3 degrees Celsius if business continues as usual. This will have devastating consequences for us all, especially SIDS and other vulnerable countries.

COVID-19 is not the biggest global challenge of our time. Climate change is the number one threat to humanity.

The postponement of COP26 to November 2021 does not mean a postponement of climate action and of urgently-needed efforts to raise climate ambitions.

Seychelles' updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) or climate pledge to the Paris Agreement will accordingly have a whole chapter on harnessing the ocean that surrounds our islands for nature-based climate action.

Seychelles' NDC will champion blue carbon ecosystems such as mangroves and the vast expanses of seagrass meadows, which form part of our new marine protected areas.

It will enable us as a big ocean state to contribute to the global fight against climate change far more than when we relied solely on land-based actions.

Seychelles' protection of nearly a third of our EEZ for ocean conservation, sustainability and climate action shows that countries' responses to the health and

financial crisis caused by COVID19 do not need to be at the expense of nature and climate.

Seychelles agrees that we need international solidarity and cooperation more than ever in the face of the worst human and economic crisis of our lifetime, a multilateralism that works for both developed and developing countries.

Many argue that society is unwilling to make the behavioural changes necessary to address climate change effectively. Countries' responses to COVID-19 show otherwise; we have changed in previously unthinkable ways.

We must not lose sight of the fact that the stimulus packages aimed at rescuing economies from the coronavirus crisis will determine the shape of the global economy — a more financially stable, socially inclusive and low-carbon economy — for years to come.

If we are going to talk about a multilateralism that counts for everyone, it must deliver an equitable recovery that prioritises innovation, science, health, wellbeing, opportunity and a liveable environment for all countries and societies.

The future of multilateralism depends on a transformative global response to the COVID 19 pandemic.

A transformation which will take us all, the most vulnerable countries and fragile economies included, into a more sustainable and resilient post-COVID world better equipped to meet the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement on climate change, and for small island developing states.

I thank you all.

## Annex VIII

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

- Excellency, Volkan Bozkir, President of the General Assembly
- Excellency, António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations
- Excellencies, Heads of State and Government
- Distinguished Delegates

The 75th anniversary of the United Nations falls at a moment of uncommon peril for our people and our planet. The Covid pandemic has claimed nearly one million lives and pushed hundreds of millions into unexpected hardship. It is not a time for doubt or hesitation. We have the tools to meet this test and prevail. We mark other important anniversaries this year.

Twenty-five years ago, the World Conference on Women in Beijing charted a transformative agenda on gender equality, which continues to guide us. The empowerment of women has made all of us safer and wealthier. But true gender equality has still not been attained in any country.

Five years ago, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change was signed. Implementing this framework will slow the pace of global warming and give our economies time to adapt to new technologies.

The Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol, adopted four years ago, will play a major role by reducing the consumption of hydrofluorocarbons. Just over half of Member States have ratified the Kigali Amendment, which is now in force, and I call upon the remainder to ratify as soon as possible.

Five years ago, the Sustainable Development Goals were adopted, to define our ambitions for integrated global development. Ten years remain before 2030, but let's not deceive ourselves about how difficult it will be to meet the targets on time. Most countries, especially in Africa, were already off-track before 2020. The pandemic has disrupted growth and revenue collection around the world, most likely for several years to come.

These milestones on gender, climate, and development demonstrate the achievements of multilateral action, while also reminding us how much remains to be done.

I commend the exceptional work being done by the World Health Organization, led by Dr Tedros Adhanom. We will continue to work to reinforce the W.H.O. and make it more effective.

The creation of the Access to Covid Tools Accelerator, including the COVAX Global Vaccines Facility, is of critical importance for Africa. Ensuring equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics, and diagnostics will speed up the end of the pandemic for everyone.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of resilient national health systems and strong domestic health financing. The African Union is championing this agenda among its Member States, with emphasis on not just spending more, but spending better. The goal is for Africa to leverage its own resources to reinforce the impact of global health partnerships, such as the Global Fund and Gavi.

In the coming decades, prosperity will be closely linked to digital literacy and access to high-speed connectivity. The Secretary-General's roadmap for digital cooperation is compelling and farsighted, building on the work of the Broadband Commission and other initiatives.

The global movement for racial justice and equality is not a passing phenomenon. What is required is action that builds public trust in the equal dignity of all citizens, as demonstrated in the treatment of those who have historically been most marginalised, and who continue to suffer mistreatment disproportionately.

Success depends on strengthening institutions, both national and international, including the work of scientists, innovators, and creators. That is not just a question of funding. It is about the positive human values that citizens and governments invest in those institutions, and for which they must be accountable.

Our descendants will look back and judge how this generation responded to these challenges, especially the leaders.

Did the collective accomplishment of three generations over 75 years in building a stronger international order disintegrate into recrimination and resentment? Or did we come together to once again secure global progress on a foundation of cooperation and mutual respect?

The choice is ours. I thank you.

## Annex IX

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

[Original: Portuguese; English translation provided by the delegation]

His Excellency Antonio Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations.

His Excellency Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen.

There is no memory since the Organization's establishment of a situation in which the Heads of State and/or Government of the UN Member States, for reasons beyond their schedule, could not personally attend the General Assembly of the organization, which discusses the great topics about international relations and seeks to outline solutions aimed to resolve the main concerns of the mankind by ensuring peace, security and stability of our continent — our common home.

Today, despite the current circumstances arising from the COVID-19 pandemic, which imposes on all of us restrictions in movements and all other procedures that are appropriate for this juncture, it has been possible to communicate amongst ourselves with a virtual feeling of being together thanks to the almost unlimited possibilities brought about by new technologies to the service of mankind.

Mr. Secretary General, please allow me to congratulate you on having taken the opportune decision to maintain the dynamics of the functioning of the United Nations with the technological resources at our disposal.

I also would like to highlight the exemplary manner how you have been tackling the problems resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, whose effects and consequences would have taken more dramatic proportions than those we are experiencing now, if the World Health Organization and other specialized agencies of the United Nations system did not act quickly and pass recommendations that have greatly helped control the spread of the disease.

Excellencies,

This pandemic has come to show at global level the weakness of our health structure in responding to a problem of so high magnitude and severity.

Despite this obvious evidence, through joint efforts, collaboration and cooperation amongst nations and exchanges among specialized scientific institutions we have managed to face the problem that was previously fully unknown, and that has obliged us to seek prompt response in order to alleviate the effects of the disease.

This global health problem has paralyzed all momentum that was built for the recovery of the world economy, which after the economic crisis that started in 2008, was already sending out encouraging signals for recovery and very specially in the developing countries, such as the case of Angola.

Our hopes of starting to yield positive results following our endeavour for domestic economy reform, conducted in a context where we had to apply harsh measures, with very tough impact on the lives of people, will not come true soon due to the current constraints that have disrupted the production chain, affecting the prices of the main export commodities, and paralysed services and other vital sectors of the economy, giving rise to very high unemployment rates and an alarming social situation.

One should single out that the resources we had for the financing of the productive sectors for its recovery had to be diverted, given the current context, to serve the needs of biosafety and other necessities of urgent epidemiological nature brought about by the pandemic.

In this regard, we were obliged to rapidly build throughout the national territory centres to host people under the situation of official quarantine, to equip the country's hospitals with basic equipment for COVID-19-related medical emergencies and so on, to build hospital centres with capacity to treat possible outbreak of the pandemic and other related facilities.

I should acknowledge that apart from our own efforts, we have also benefited the solidarity of other countries, international organization, companies, and local and international nongovernment organizations as well as individual citizens who have helped mitigate somehow the pandemic impact in Angola, to whom we would like to thank.

Excellencies,

This human virtue that has always been useful at so critical moments such as the one that we are going through, helps immensely but it is not always enough to solve at grassroot the problems we are to face as a consequence of the very complex situations such as the one we are currently experiencing.

I therefore would like to express my appreciation for the G-20 initiative which has demonstrated the great sensitivity to the need for a collective action with a view relieving the debt of the developing countries as means to cushion the burden or liability that fall upon this group of countries.

We think that it is fundamental to view direct investment in the economies of developing countries as a great equation for their economic growth and development.

This goal may be achieved if developed countries mobilize themselves to establish funds for investments aid in Africa to be used by those investors interested in doing business in the African continent, where they may produce goods and services for local consumption and export.

Excellencies,

The COVID-19 pandemic has come to prove that when we act in coordination, responsibility is shared in a more efficient manner and thus more satisfactory results are achieved.

This vision supports the idea that multilateralism should always be present in any approach to be taken regarding the most pressing international issues facing the world.

For this reason, along its journey the United Nations has always advocated for multilateralism in resolving the intricate problems of Humanity.

Thus, we think within this spirit we should focus our endeavours in the search for fair and long lasting solutions to the problems of the Middle East, that have to do with Security Council pertinent resolutions on the matter, as well as those that are afflicting the African continent, where conflicts and instability still prevail, such as the case of Libya, the Sahel Region and others conflicts of minor scale in other regions of the continent.

It is worth to recognize that the nature of security problems in Africa, in many cases, is associated with the phenomenon of international terrorism, expansion of religious fundamentalism and post-election conflicts that require redoubled surveillance and attention by the United Nations, without forgetting the support to be rendered to those countries faced with these circumstances.

In light of the foregoing, the United Nations should seek to interpret with impartiality the underlying factors of the domestic political tensions arising from election processes and assume a position that does not ignore the legitimately established Government, while strengthening their capacity to intervene in resolving the problems to ensure the normal functioning of institutions.

Excellencies,

The United Nations, within the current world context, which portrays a reality totally different from the one that was on the basis of its establishment, should seek to reflect within its internal structures the characteristics of the geopolitical reality of nowadays in order to render it into an organization that is able to safeguard the balance of global interests.

In this regard, we once more reiterate the urgent need for reform of the organization so as to achieve a UN Security Council that attends better to representation of the peoples, nations and continents.

Excellencies,

I thank you for your attention and wish that this 75th Session of the United Nations may attain its goals.

Thank you very much

**Annex X****Address by Mr. Alberto Fernández, President of the Argentine Republic**

[Original: Spanish]

Mr. Secretary-General, Mr. President, members of this honourable Assembly:

Argentina was one of the founding States of the United Nations 75 years ago. Today, we are experiencing a health crisis of planetary dimensions that invites us to a new beginning.

Pope Francis calls on all of us, especially the leaders gathered on this occasion, to think about how to emerge better and not worse from this crisis.

Inspired by his preaching and his example, I come to ratify a call on the whole world to recreate a multilateralism based on our solidarity.

This is a time not to globalize indifference but to globalize solidarity in multiple dimensions.

This pandemic has revealed us to be fragile and has recreated the need to build bridges between people, between nations and between regions.

If we are able to manufacture artificial respirators by combining components and knowledge from different regions of the planet, we have to be able to dream and build “non-artificial respirators” for the time of the post-pandemic.

If we are pooling the efforts of doctors, researchers, investors and scientific systems from around the planet to discover a vaccine that prevents COVID-19, we have to be able to dream and build a vaccine against social injustice, environmental predation and discrimination in all its forms.

This spirit of solidarity is what my Government has prioritized since its arrival and because of the pandemic and poverty, no one is safe, until everyone is safe.

That is why, from the start of the pandemic, Argentina focused primarily on protecting lives and caring for the most vulnerable, while implementing a series of emergency measures that prevented the collapse of the health system and mitigated the immediate impact of the pandemic.

Immediate relief was provided to families and businesses through multiple measures, by a State that is present and active.

In the same spirit of solidarity, we argue that the vaccine produced to prevent the disease must be a global public good, accessible to all nations in an equitable manner.

We support the resolutions adopted to that end by the General Assembly and have made our capacities available for vaccine research and production.

I set a goal for the Government to put Argentina back on its feet. Together, we can put the world back on its feet.

This requires us to recognize the importance of balance.

Balance is restoring the priorities of the multilateral system, starting with those at the bottom and reaching everyone.

We must be architects of a new common house.

Before the pandemic, we raised the issue of the need to reform the United Nations Security Council. There are agreements to revitalize the World Trade Organization. We raised the issue of the crisis of the Bretton Woods Institutions, which had demonstrated shortcomings in responding to the 2008-2009 financial crisis. They are all part of the multilateral post-war architecture.

The pandemic also put traditional metrics in crisis with regard to determining access to development resources. Indicators commonly used to classify the needs of countries, such as per capita income, do not account for the diverse inequalities and specificities that exist within the same country.

The work of millions of domestic workers and unpaid caregivers, the majority of them women, has been made invisible.

It is also essential to consider how we conduct cooperation, while adopting a multidimensional approach that goes beyond per capita income to determine the eligibility criteria for official development assistance (ODA). More than 60 per cent of the poor live in middle-income countries. If we do not serve these countries, demonstrate solidarity and understand that real progress is built when everyone is involved, we will make very little steady progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

All the aforementioned indicates that it is essential to revitalize the United Nations to enable it to respond to the mandate for which it was created.

We need a United Nations 4.0, with its foundational values intact and with the vision to incorporate the immense technological changes under way, to make them more human, more democratic and more socially inclusive.

This all points to the need for deep reflection, which goes above and beyond a response to the pandemic.

Overcoming the pandemic and achieving the Goals of the 2030 Agenda requires economic, industrial and social policies aimed at bringing about structural change in our economies.

Commitment to the environmental agenda requires the provision of considerable financial resources, capacity-building and technology transfer by developed countries, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Our country is committed to a fair transition towards comprehensive and sustainable development. A fair transition entails a gradual approach, strengthening the productivity and competitiveness of the economy and job creation.

We firmly believe that a collective commitment is needed to achieve the swift and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.

No one is safe on a planet that is on fire, flooded or poisoned.

In this turbulent global environment, assuming toxic and irresponsible external debt for speculative purposes means another wave of delays and underdevelopment.

Argentina managed to seal a major deal with almost all of its private external creditors, becoming one of the first countries to meet the challenge of debt restructuring during the pandemic.

The support of the international community, which includes several of the countries represented here, the private sector, civil society and the international academic community, has been key to restoring public debt sustainability.

Negotiations with the IMF will be addressed in a similarly responsible manner, by respecting commitments and not jeopardizing the conditions that enable economic recovery and the construction of a path to inclusive and sustainable development.

Just over 5 years ago, on 10 September 2015, the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/319, entitled “Basic Principles on Sovereign Debt Restructuring Processes”.

The position of the General Assembly on the matter set a precedent for governing international finance and recognizing sovereign economic rights in the face of abusive and extortionist behaviour.

It is all with the aim of ensuring that debt restructuring processes are reasonable and predictable, based on good faith, transparency, fair treatment, sovereign immunity from jurisdiction and execution, legitimacy, sustainability and majority restructuring.

We urge the international community to continue to seek new multilateral approaches to facilitate orderly debt restructuring and ensure increased access to public policy, while addressing the pandemic and sustaining inclusive growth.

No country can service its debt while its people are left without health, education, safety or the capacity to grow.

There is also balance in prioritizing human rights over everything else.

The promotion and protection of human rights has been a core policy of the Argentine State since 1983. This decision has resulted in the ratification and granting of constitutional status to all existing international human rights instruments, as well as our active participation at the regional and international levels.

Memory, truth and justice guide the institutions of our democracy, as well as our respect for diversity and inclusion.

The post-pandemic world can exacerbate the severe refugee and displaced persons crisis facing the planet and our region. The answer should be the promotion and guarantee of the human rights of migrants.

As never before, our human condition demands solidarity from us. We cannot remain passive in the face of sanctions that include economic blockades that serve only to oppress people amid this humanitarian crisis.

The fight against all forms of discrimination and the consequent commitment to the rights of the vulnerable and persons and groups who have suffered long-term discrimination is part of Argentine State policy and is included in the many initiatives that Argentina supports and leads.

The global crisis caused by COVID-19 has also highlighted severe gender inequality.

For our society, achieving substantive equality between men and women is a priority and central pillar of Argentine democracy.

My Government is committed to the issue and that is why, for the first time in history, we have created the Ministry of Women, Genders and Diversity, as well as a National Cabinet, to ensure that gender policies are cross-cutting.

Our Government decided to strengthen national actions and mechanisms for the care of women victims of violence, in addition to implementing a gender approach to social and labour protection measures and promoting co-responsibility and a fairer distribution of unpaid domestic work.

That commitment is already evident. Argentina was recognized by the United Nations in its ranking as the country that implemented the highest number of measures with a gender perspective during the pandemic.

I wish to reaffirm that Argentina condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and is in favour of addressing it within the framework of multilateral forums and always in accordance with the rule of law and respect for human rights.

Twenty-six years after the bombing of the Argentine Israelite Mutual Association headquarters, I wish to maintain the policy initiated in 2003 and continued thereafter. I call on the authorities of the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate with the Argentine judicial authorities in order to make progress in the investigation on that attack.

We also ask the international community to comply with the requests contained in INTERPOL Red Notices in the event of the presence of an accused person in its territories — something Argentina has never ceased to demand.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the legitimate and imprescriptible sovereignty rights of the Argentine Republic over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia Islands and South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime areas, which are an integral part of Argentina's national territory but have been illegally occupied by the United Kingdom for over 187 years.

This year will mark the fifty-fifth anniversary of resolution 2065 (XX), the first adopted by the Organization on the question of the Malvinas Islands, which called on Argentina and the United Kingdom to hold negotiations in order to reach a peaceful and definitive solution to that sovereignty dispute.

That request has remained in force and has been renewed on multiple occasions, most recently with the adoption by consensus of a new resolution on the matter by the Special Committee on Decolonization on 5 August.

The United Kingdom persists in its attitude by ignoring calls to resume negotiations on the territorial dispute and has aggravated the dispute by calling for the illegal and unilateral exploitation of renewable and non-renewable natural resources in the area, which runs counter to General Assembly resolution 31/49.

The United Kingdom also insists on an unjustified and excessive military presence in the Islands, which brings only tension to a region characterized by peace and international cooperation.

We have asked the Secretary-General to renew his efforts in the mission of good offices entrusted to him by the Organization. We are confident that the mission will be of great assistance to us in fulfilling the requirements of the international community.

I wish to bid farewell to this honourable Assembly by urging all of us to seize this historic opportunity to unite as a society to address an unprecedented crisis.

The coronavirus pandemic has taken the lives of more than one million people and its painful aftermath is marked by increased poverty, hunger and inequality, which are putting us all to the test once again.

I hope that solidarity, dialogue and cooperation between nations, as we were once able to achieve, will continue to be the way to respond to the challenges facing humankind.

Thank you very much.

## Annex XI

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

#### I Introduction

Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

I congratulate you, Mr. Bozkir, on assuming the post of President of the current session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I assure you of Latvia's cooperation as you guide the work of this essential body in the coming year.

#### II Multilateral response to Covid19 pandemic

Mr. President,

We meet in virtual form because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has caused unprecedented global upheaval in our generation.

While each country has taken measures to prevent and control the spread of the pandemic at home, no country can overcome it on its own.

The United Nations and its agencies, notably the World Health Organization, are crucial in coordinating and providing a global response. This role should be fulfilled effectively, and lessons must be learned to be better prepared for future challenges.

Latvia quickly responded to the global appeal of the UN Secretary-General by contributing to the Global Humanitarian Response Plan for COVID-19 through the World Health Organization.

Furthermore, Latvian scientists participate in the global efforts to develop an effective vaccine against the virus, so that we can return to normality.

#### III Global security

Mr President,

Effective multilateralism remains the most essential tool for maintaining the international rules-based order and security.

The rules-based order is the foundation for global justice and peace. The main purpose of international law is to ensure respect for fundamental human rights and state sovereignty. The world will see fewer conflicts and threats to peace if people sense they are treated justly. Every state is responsible for respecting this order.

The United Nations, too, must make every effort to ensure that this order is respected, both by large and small states — nowadays not only in the analogue world, but also the virtual world created by modern technologies.

Therefore, the United Nations should actively use all instruments, including diplomatic efforts and peace-keeping missions, to find just political solutions to today's complex and protracted conflicts throughout the world.

Concerning one important aspect of justice, Latvia remains strong in its support of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, in recognition of the close link between global security and equal participation of women.

The substantial contribution of smaller countries to international peace and security is currently being demonstrated by our northern neighbour Estonia, as it holds a non-permanent seat on the UN Security Council. Latvia, too, hopes to assume this honour and responsibility for the term 2026-2027.

#### IV Recovery from the pandemic

Mr President,

Latvia supports the UN Secretary-General's call to "build back better" from the pandemic. As a member of the UN Economic and Social Affairs Council (ECOSOC) Latvia will continue to advance the "recover better" agenda.

The implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement must remain at the centre of our recovery efforts. Faster recovery will require good governance and respect for human rights and gender equality.

I am convinced that to "recover better" means a green, digital and inclusive recovery. We urgently need to strengthen our efforts to address climate change, to tackle the loss of biodiversity and to protect the environment. We should promote more sustainable consumption and production patterns. Latvia has joined the Group of Friends to combat marine plastic pollution. We stand ready to work together to address this challenge and to share the Baltic Sea region perspective.

During the pandemic Latvia quickly introduced digital solutions and tools in order to continue education and all democratic processes remotely. Latvia was amongst the first countries to develop a national mobile application "StopCovid", successfully balancing effectiveness of contact tracing with respect for privacy. Latvia was also among the first to introduce e-parliament, where a Parliament can fully function remotely — propose new legislation, debate and vote on laws — relying on the secure digital identity of every member of Parliament.

Mr President,

"Recover better" also means that in going digital, we must take even greater care with data collection and use, especially in regard to privacy. When governments, international companies and other entities digitally collect more information about a person than he or she is aware, this creates a considerable threat to personal freedom. It also makes a person much more vulnerable to manipulation.

To be more concrete and direct — digital tracing and profiling, which are very difficult to evade, endanger a person's fundamental freedom. This is a serious challenge for society. By resolving the legal framework and investing in technologies that factor in respect for privacy, I believe we can create human-centred technologies with much bigger potential. We all need to address this challenge together, at the national, regional and global level, with full respect for fundamental human rights and freedoms.

I want Latvia to be a global role model for a human-centred multilingual digital economy, to support developing economies in going digital, and at the same time to elaborate digital standards for the respect of privacy and to promote them internationally.

#### V Infodemic

Mr President,

Latvia is concerned that among other negative consequences, COVID-19 has created a breeding ground for misinformation, disinformation, fake news and hate speech. It is critical that states counter misinformation and provide access to free, reliable and science-based information through free media. This is a universal human right that we must respect and help each other to exercise.

Latvia has credible expertise and can contribute to this end. In June at the United Nations, Latvia together with a cross-regional group of 130 countries called for action to fight misinformation and disinformation, or the so-called “infodemic”, in the context of COVID-19.

The statement complements the “Verified” campaign announced by the UN Secretary-General, as well as the UNESCO response to this negative trend.

Free, objective and pluralistic media play an indispensable role in informing the public during the ongoing pandemic.

Technology companies and social media platforms need to be more accountable for addressing online disinformation. Social media is not merely a platform where people and diverse information meets. The technology, the algorithms, the business models that drive the advertising market and attention economy all play a large part in the distribution of disinformation. Our priority must be to protect both privacy and freedom of expression in the digital domain.

The exponential increase of misinformation, disinformation, fake news and hate speech in recent years is dangerous not only in the context of the pandemic. It is a general threat to world peace, it is a general threat to efforts to solve global issues such as climate change and environmental pollution. In short — it is a general problem of humankind to find rational solutions to the challenges of our time. These threats should be taken seriously both on the national and international level.

#### VI Distortion of history

Mr President,

Concerning the wider phenomenon of disinformation, I would like to address one example. Russia’s increasingly revisionist approach, especially in the context of World War II events, is unacceptable. Russia makes continuous attempts to turn history into a disinformation tool. This goes hand in hand with continuing restrictions on democracy and free speech. We call for an independent, international investigation into the recent poisoning of opposition leader Alexey Navalny. The perpetrators of this crime must be held accountable.

#### VII Belarus

We also follow with great concern the events in Belarus, especially in view of the brutal repressions that followed the presidential elections on 9 August. We call for new, democratic and transparent elections and an end to the repression of peaceful demonstrators. Latvia is currently providing medical treatment to several victims of the repressions. We also call on Russia to desist from any further interference in Belarus, so that its people can decide for themselves the future of their state.

The women of Belarus especially have shown great strength and courage. Svetlana Alexievich, laureate of the 2015 Nobel Prize for literature, speaks of “thirst for changes, thirst for new life, thirst for honesty”. In Latvia we still remember such

thirst 30 years ago. We are always ready to share our rich experience of regaining democracy and freedom.

#### VIII Conclusion

Mr President,

I sincerely hope that this time next year we can all meet again in person. Until then, let us use this unusual time wisely. Mobilized by the shared suffering during this pandemic, let us make renewed efforts to forge peace and a sustainable way of life, for the good of all humanity.

Thank you!

## Annex XII

### **Address by Mr. Gitanas Nausėda, President of the Republic of Lithuania**

Mr. President,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to address the seventy-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly.

One year ago, nobody could have imagined that this anniversary would be marked by a global challenge unseen since the very foundation of this Organization. But here we are, unable to meet face to face, and yet ready to make our contributions to solving the most pressing global issues.

The COVID-19 pandemic has swept through every part of the world, leaving a devastating cost. We have paid not only in human lives, but also in a deepened social inequality.

That was a colossal wake-up call for multilateralism. No country can tackle the pandemic and overcome the profound economic and social impact alone. Our fight against COVID-19 requires better international cooperation and solidarity. Multilateral institutions are crucial to our peace, security and well-being.

As I offer condolences to all those who have lost their loved ones, I reiterate Lithuania's commitment to help others. My country has already assisted the countries most affected by the coronavirus pandemic in Africa, Central and East Asia, Europe and the Middle East. We will continue to do so in the nearest future!

Mr. President,

At the time when global insecurity is rapidly growing, peace should remain our top priority. We must show respect to the international law, effectively protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, and promote economic and social cohesion on a global scale.

Without security there can be no better future for all. My country, Lithuania, knows this perfectly well. Together with two other Baltic States we have experienced the worst terrors of the 20th century. The end of the Second World War did not bring us freedom. The very moment one totalitarian regime fell, it was replaced by another — all three Baltic States were forcefully annexed by the Soviet Union.

This experience helped to create our special relationship with the Charter of the United Nations. We have learned to cherish and respect the fundamental principles of the international order. We learned to dream about freedom, democracy, the rule of law, human rights, the rules-based international order, and multilateral cooperation. This is what we value up to this day. This is who we are. This is what we offer to the world.

The century-old mistakes must not be repeated. Our security and stability depend on a proper assessment of the troublesome past. We must defend objective historical narratives that are increasingly under attack by the revisionist forces. History should not be a tool for manipulation, disinformation and propaganda. It shall not be used to whitewash the past crimes or to serve the current political agenda.

Therefore, we reject the outdated worldview that the powerful can divide the world into spheres of interests. Secret agreements like those in Moscow in 1939 or in Yalta in 1945 must never be signed again. It should be clear to everyone that all countries are full members of the international community — with equal rights and obligations!

Mr. President,

It is highly unfortunate that today we witness attempts to undermine the values of the United Nations. The ongoing violations of the international law and human rights, as well as the abuse of power against own citizens, sadly, remain part of our collective reality.

The ongoing crisis in Belarus is a prime example of this worrying trend. The fraudulent presidential elections on 9 August led to massive unprecedented protests of the peaceful and brave Belarusian people who flooded the country's streets. The illegitimate regime willfully uses brutal force against the participants of peaceful protests. The released detainees report inhumane conditions in the detention facilities. There are clear indications that individuals are beaten and tortured in cold blood by special police teams.

All this is happening in Europe at the time when we all mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations and its founding document. We should treat this offense against justice and the rule of law with aversion and contempt. Allowing it to go unnoticed and without response would only foster a climate of impunity and undermine the rule of law on a global scale.

The very fundamentals of democratic societies — the basic freedoms of speech and expression, as well as the right for self-determination — are under attack in Belarus. The time has clearly come to defend the values of the international community. The United Nations and its institutions should closely monitor the situation in Belarus and insistently call on its authorities to refrain from the use of force, to ensure adherence to the principles of international law and human rights and to finally start a peaceful transition of power.

I believe the international community must send a strong message to the current authorities of Belarus. All unlawfully detained people and political prisoners must be released, and those responsible for the use of force and tortures must be held accountable. It is imperative that the Human Rights Council monitors and evaluates the human rights situation in Belarus on a permanent basis. All crimes against humanity and massive violations of human rights must be investigated without delay! Mr. President, the true power of the United Nations Charter relies on our readiness to defend its core principles, including the firm faith in fundamental human rights.

My country remains committed to upholding human rights at home and abroad. We will not stand aside while witnessing rising global challenges to fundamental freedoms. We are deeply worried that the deteriorating security situation, worsening media climate and the shrinking space for civil society and human rights defenders might slowly become a new norm.

Seeking to make a lasting contribution and support human rights, Lithuania for the first time presented its candidacy for membership in the United Nations Human Rights Council.

If elected for the term starting in 2022, Lithuania would pay close attention to the safety of journalists and the protection of human rights defenders, as well as the rights of women and girls, the rights of the child, the rights of persons with disabilities, freedoms of expression, assembly and association.

Mr. President,

These are the troubled times. The ongoing conflicts continue to devastate many regions around the world. Millions of people are still suffering, some of them — in Lithuania's immediate neighborhood. As the recent case of Alexey Navalny's poisoning shows, in some countries the pressure directed against opposition voices quickly turns into a deadly physical action.

If we honestly seek to maintain international order, we must be prepared to investigate the crimes against humanity and punish the perpetrators by all the available means.

This principle should also apply to those who intentionally break the international norms. More than a decade has passed since Russia invaded Georgia. One fifth of Georgian territory remains occupied by Russian forces in an evident violation of the international law. The situation in the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia is worsening due to renewed 'borderization' activities, restricted movement and illegal detentions of local people.

Furthermore, for the sixth-year Russian forces are occupying Ukrainian Crimea and continuing military actions in Eastern Ukraine. Lithuania welcomes Ukraine's efforts to negotiate an end to the war and calls on Russia to move closer to a sustainable political resolution. Any future agreement should fully respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity — no other solution is possible.

My country continues to support Georgian and Ukrainian independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within the internationally recognized borders. No occupation, be it Crimea and Sevastopol, or Abkhazia and South Ossetia, will be forgotten or forgiven! Restoring justice is the only way forward.

At the same time, we are witnessing a deteriorating security situation in the Middle East and Africa. It comes with lower respect for human rights and democratic standards, loss of life, social unrest and largescale migration flows. Despite all the efforts of the United Nations Secretary-General, including his global ceasefire call, no major war or conflict has seen a credible halt in fighting. Libya suffers upticks in violence; Yemen, as well as parts of Syria, rebel-held areas and camps for the displaced, face the worst humanitarian disaster; in Sahel, people encounter the many dangers of terrorism. It is our common responsibility to stop this worrying trend!

Mr. President,

As a responsible member of the international community, Lithuania remains loyal to the commitments of the United Nations Goals for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. In the face of accelerating climate change and biodiversity loss, driven in large part by unsustainable production and consumption, urgent action is needed. We need to preserve the Planet Earth for our children and grandchildren.

Green energy is one of the measures that need to be developed globally. I am proud to say that Lithuania is firmly on the green course since 2010. My country is

among the leaders in the development of renewable energy and is among five most ambitious countries in the European Union in terms of renewable energy targets for 2030. Those will be achieved by building interconnections with the Western European electricity system, converting district heating systems to use biomass, approving additional auctions for solar and wind generated electricity, and promoting prosumer policy.

Unfortunately, safe and secure energy is not everyone's goal. In Lithuania's immediate neighborhood, unsafe nuclear energy has been chosen as a way forward without much thought about a clean and sustainable future. We see the new nuclear power plant in Belarus as a geopolitical project aimed at maintaining Russian sphere of influence. Built without proper risk assessment and necessary consultations just 40 kilometers from our capital city, it challenges regional nuclear and environmental safety, as well as the functioning of the Baltic States electricity systems and the overall security of whole Europe.

Nuclear accidents respect no borders. Even the best technology can fail, if an unsuitable location is chosen or the basic construction and operational requirements are not followed. Any irresponsible cost cutting might have disastrous effects.

Therefore, Lithuania urges the international community to seek the implementation of the highest nuclear and environmental standards for all nuclear objects around the world. The global security depends on our efforts to ensure nuclear safety.

Mr. President,

Let me stress that nothing in the global world comes without effort and difficulty. Be it a resolution of conflicts, ensuring peace and security, fight against poverty or climate change, securing education, social inclusion for all, or fighting global pandemics — in all cases we need reliable tools.

We need the eyes that see and the hearts that dare. We need to defend the powerless and to fight the impunity of the powerful. We need to uphold multilateralism and the rules-based international order at any cost.

There are no alternatives. There is no other way but to work together with ever stronger resolve. Let the renewed sense of international community guide us!

Thank you.

## Annex XIII

### Address by Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

Mr. President,  
Heads of State and Government,  
Secretary-General,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me on behalf of the Government and good people of Nigeria, congratulate you on your well-deserved election as President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). I would like to assure you of Nigeria's readiness to avail the United Nations all necessary cooperation needed for the fulfillment of your mandate.

I wish to also thank the General Assembly for the support accorded His Excellency, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande during his tenure as President of the 74th Session of the General Assembly.

We acknowledge the accomplishments of the Assembly under his able leadership, particularly his efforts on attacking global poverty through the Global Coalition on Poverty Eradication.

We also commend the tremendous efforts of His Excellency, Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, in steering the affairs of the organization during this challenging period of the Coronavirus pandemic, as well as his strong commitment to making the UN more efficient and responsive in its international responsibility.

Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

It is my privilege to use this opportunity to congratulate Member States on the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations. Over the past seven decades, the United Nations, as the People's Assembly, has helped to stabilize the global community.

In addition to international peace and security, the UN has undertaken programmes on poverty eradication, women's empowerment, youth development and humanitarian emergencies.

The theme of this year's General Assembly — "The Future We Want, The United Nations We Need: Reaffirming Our Collective Commitment To Multilateralism — Confronting Coronavirus Through Effective Multilateral Action", is indeed most appropriate and timely, as it captures our common desire for a renewed and revitalized organization in need of multilateral approaches to the many challenges facing the world.

#### THE FUTURE WE WANT

As we reflect on the future we want and the United Nations we need, we must realize that the peoples of the world not only look up to us: they count on us. If the United Nations system cannot mobilize the world to marshal out a truly effective and inclusive response to the Coronavirus pandemic, then the United Nations would have

failed in its core mission of giving expression, direction and solution to the yearnings of the international community.

Excellencies,

The future we want must guarantee human rights, human dignity, human prospects and prosperity. The principles of “Leaving No One Behind and Doing No Harm” must be expressed through accountability, strategic growth initiatives and elimination of threats of all kinds.

In our quest to provide a future of hope and prosperity for Nigerians, our administration has embarked on measures to ensure enhanced national resilience. We intend to achieve this through the implementation of the Economic Sustainability Plan and the Medium Term National Development Plans for the period 2020-2025 and 2026-2030. We expect that these ambitious initiatives will deliver sustainable economic growth and development to Nigeria.

#### THE UNITED NATIONS WE NEED

Predicated on the values that inspired its creation, the United Nations we need has to remain an agent of progress, by giving expression to the tenets of multilateralism, solidarity and international cooperation. It is within the context of this rules-based multilateral order that the world can find solutions to its many problems.

#### CONFRONTING COVID-19 THROUGH EFFECTIVE MULTILATERAL ACTIONS

The world is currently in the grips of the coronavirus pandemic. Regrettably, our communities and countries are losing lives. The coronavirus pandemic has devastated the world economy and strained the capabilities of the health system of many countries, including our own country.

In the aftermath of coronavirus outbreak in Nigeria, we prioritized vulnerable groups, including women, children, older persons and the unemployed, in our efforts to provide medical and social assistance to cushion the socioeconomic effects of the disease.

Accordingly, we have expanded our National Social Register, to include an additional 1 million Nigerians. Our National Social Investment Programme (NSIP) has been the vehicle for reaching out to the poor and vulnerable members of the Nigerian population, as well as providing cover for over 22 million households.

I use this opportunity to commend the efforts of the United Nations and the World Health Organization in combating the Coronavirus pandemic.

I note, with appreciation, the \$2-billion Global Humanitarian Response Plan launched by the UN Secretary-General to fund the Coronavirus response in the poorest countries of the world.

I also commend his call for ceasefire in conflict areas, to enable humanitarian assistance reach groups vulnerable to coronavirus .

Excellencies,

I should also state that Nigeria is committed to working with other Member States in the spirit of global cooperation and solidarity to promote human health and general well-being. Nigeria will continue to partner with the WHO and some countries

to ensure accelerated development and manufacturing, as well as uninhibited supply of safe and effective coronavirus vaccines to all.

#### POVERTY ERADICATION

In order to mitigate its impact on Nigerians, our administration has commenced the disbursement of the sum of N10.9 billion to households and Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises as palliatives.

In addition, we have established a five hundred billion (N500 billion) fiscal stimulus package and sustained delivery of humanitarian and social interventions to poor and vulnerable households, while our Central Bank has launched a N3.5 trillion-stimulus package to boost manufacturing and facilitate import substitution.

The international community will need to cooperate in addressing the scourge of poverty, particularly in developing countries. It is in this regard, that we commend the President of the 74th General Assembly for launching an Alliance for Poverty Eradication in June.

We encourage global leaders, particularly leaders from the global North, to support the Alliance at this time when the COVID-19 pandemic is reversing gains made in the achievement of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals and is pushing an additional half a billion people into extreme poverty.

#### SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Mr. President,

As we mark the beginning of the UN Decade of Action for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, Nigeria has made significant strides in domesticating the SDGs.

There is an ongoing re-alignment of the National Statistical System (NSS) with the requirements and indicators of the SDGs. This is expected to ensure effective tracking and monitoring of the SDGs and guide SDG interventions across the country.

Nigeria has also developed its home-grown Integrated Sustainable Development Goals model (iSDG Model) — an analytical framework for assessing how policymaking can better address the indivisible nature of the SDGs.

#### DISARMAMENT, INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

Excellencies,

Nigeria remains deeply concerned over the illicit trade, transfer, and circulation of small arms and light weapons, particularly on the continent of Africa.

We urge the international community to renew efforts to stem this traffic and promote the Arms Trade Treaty in order to codify accountability in the ongoing battle against trans-border crimes, including terrorism and acts of piracy.

#### TERRORISM/COUNTER-TERRORISM

Excellencies,

The litany of sophisticated terrorist attacks across the globe is a harsh reality of the challenges the world is facing today. We must therefore redouble our efforts to ensure collective security.

In Nigeria, we are still facing violent extremism from the insurgency of Boko Haram and bandits. We continue to count on our strong cooperation with UN Counter-Terrorism bodies and neighbouring countries to overcome the terrorists in the Lake Chad Basin and the wider Sahel Region.

We will vigorously sustain the rehabilitation, reconstruction and resettlement of victims of terrorism and insurgency in the North-East. The North-East Development Commission has been established for that purpose.

#### NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT

Mr. President,

Nigeria is committed to universal nuclear non-proliferation. In this connection, we recall the adoption of the landmark Treaty on The Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which opened for signature on 20 September 2017. Nigeria participated actively in the processes leading to its adoption and was an early signatory and ratifier.

With less than ten ratifications needed for the TPNW's entry into force, we urge other member states who have not done so to quickly ratify the Treaty for the actualization of its important objective.

#### CLIMATE CHANGE

Excellencies,

Climate Change is an environmental crisis which requires urgent action. Our Administration is conscious of the fact that the attainment of national development targets would be greatly impeded unless the consequences of climate change are addressed holistically in line with the Paris Agreement.

To this end, Nigeria has intensified climate action through the upward review of reduction in greenhouse gas emission under the Nationally Determined Contributions, which are climate change targets under the Paris Agreement.

Nigeria remains steadfast in our commitment to the revitalization of Lake Chad. We are convinced that recharging the Lake will improve the living conditions of our people in the area, promote inter-state cooperation, strengthen community resilience, and assist in addressing environmental and security challenges threatening the region and its resources.

Let me, therefore, reiterate the call for international support for the sub-regional efforts to raise the \$50 billion required to actualize this initiative.

#### MIGRATION

Excellencies,

Nigeria experiences high internal and external migration due to the size of its population, economic situation and climate. We are therefore fully committed to migration management and prevention of irregular migration and human trafficking.

I enjoin the international community to also communicate the positive contributions of migrants, particularly in countries of destination, in order to combat racial discrimination and xenophobic attacks, and facilitate the social integration and protection of migrants.

#### ILLICIT FINANCIAL FLOWS

Mr. President,

The global aspiration to recover from the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic will not be fully met without addressing existing structures that make it more difficult for countries to generate and retain their financial resources.

It is in this regard that I thank the immediate past Presidents of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Tijjani Muhammad-Bande and Ambassador Mona Jul, respectively, for jointly launching the High-Level Panel on International Financial Accountability, Transparency and Integrity for Achieving the 2030 Agenda.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

Mr. President,

In the area of human rights, Nigeria has passed a number of human rights-related bills into law. The bills include: the Anti-Torture Act, the Comprehensive Treatment and Care for Victims of Gun-Shot Act, as well as the National Senior Citizens Centre Act. In addition, Nigeria has launched a National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism.

This measure is designed to strengthen institutions, coordinate the prevention of violent extremism, enhance the rule of law, access to justice and human rights as well as engaging communities and building resilience and integrated strategic communication.

#### WOMEN EMPOWERMENT/GENDER PARITY

Mr. President,

The United Nations has made progress in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment through initiatives such as the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. The creation of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), in July 2010, was an important milestone.

Nigeria acknowledges the importance of gender equality and recognizes the critical role that women play in development. We also recognize that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and other International-Agreed Development Agenda depend largely on the empowerment of women. Nigeria will sustain its affirmative stance through women empowerment initiatives.

#### QUALITY EDUCATION

Mr. President,

Quality education for all is the cornerstone of sustainable development.

In this connection, I am happy to announce that the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria will be hosting the 4th International Conference on Safe Schools in 2021.

I invite You all to Nigeria to participate in the Conference which aims to advocate for the protection of education from attack as we work together towards the future we want.

## UNITED NATIONS REFORM

Mr. President,

As we urge and strive for inclusion within our societies, we must also ensure inclusion prevails in our collective action as members of the International Community. Nigeria supports the expansion of the UN Security Council to reflect the diversity and dynamics of the 21st Century. Africa deserves permanent seats in the United Nations Security Council.

## CONCLUSION

Mr. President

I will conclude by reaffirming Nigeria's commitment to promoting international peace and security and sustainable development, as well as strengthening partnerships and cooperation with international and regional organisations.

I thank you.

**Annex XIV****Address by Mr. Carlos Alvarado Quesada, President of the Republic of Costa Rica**

[Original: Spanish]

Mr. President:

Costa Rica congratulates you on your election as President of the General Assembly of the United Nations at its seventy-fifth session. We reiterate our commitment to working with you, the Secretary-General and all the Member States to achieve the objectives of this session, which is of an urgent nature today at what may be the turning point for all humankind and for the destiny of planet Earth.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought pain, death and unemployment in one way or another to the entire family of humankind.

And as powerful as the COVID-19 pandemic is, having caused serious damage to health, economy, society, development and security, the virus appears to be just an early warning.

It is an early warning of what humankind must face in the immediate term and in the coming decades. We are still at the beginning of this path, which, as a planet, we must travel together and overcome.

Solidarity and multilateralism take on greater meaning today. Altruism and supreme values must guide us, not only because they are correct, but because today altruistic and selfish interests alike come together in the understanding that there can be no individual or national welfare if there is no shared and global welfare.

This is true for combating COVID-19, addressing migration, fighting the illegal trafficking of people, weapons or drugs, fighting poverty, promoting development, human security and women's rights, and overcoming the threat of the climate crisis. We must ensure that even the most selfish understand this and that we all work as a team.

Skin; hope; roots; tenderness; dinner; silence; bread; house; words — those are the words that the poet Jorge Debravo used to define us in our common and basic desires.

But in my statement, in such a privileged space, I do not want rhetoric to be what allows me to capture your attention. I want that as a result of the concrete proposals that Costa Rica and its partners are making to the Assembly, for which we are asking for your consideration, hard work and support.

From the outset, Costa Rica has insisted that health is a global public good and that the World Health Organization (WHO) be called upon to lead the multilateral response to the pandemic. On 29 May, Costa Rica, the WHO and 40 other States launched a platform for the exchange of information, knowledge and intellectual property to make COVID-19 tests, treatments and technologies accessible to everyone, everywhere.

For Costa Rica, it is essential that the vaccines reach — first and foremost — those who are most vulnerable, such as the elderly, people with risk factors, women and girls, indigenous peoples and people of African descent, people deprived of their

liberty and, of course, health workers and staff who are on the front lines of response throughout the world.

Participation in the proposed exchange platform is voluntary, hence I invite more States to join. From our side, we have added the equine plasma treatment developed by the Clodomiro Picado Institute of the University of Costa Rica to the platform. The treatment involves a novel development of antiviral plasma that fights the virus in the early stages of its development and seeks to prevent the patient requiring intensive care.

A second proposal that Costa Rica is promoting is the Fund to Alleviate COVID-19 Economics, also known by the English acronym FACE. FACE would be an extraordinary support fund of half a trillion dollars, financed with 0.7 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the world's biggest and strongest economies — those that account for 80 per cent of global GDP — to be intermediated by one or several multilateral development banks as concessional loans to developing countries. The funds would be lent on a long-term basis and at fixed rates.

Those figures are modest compared to the amounts that high-income economies have made available to deal with the internal consequences of COVID-19, whether by increasing monetary flows, fiscal deficits, support for domestic businesses and jobs or their own public debt.

That amount represents the equivalent of more than 3 per cent of the average GDP of emerging and poor economies like ours. Acting in a decisive, innovative and organized way is our only option to avoid the economic destabilization of our countries and the global financial system. Acting in a decisive, innovative and organized way is how we can fulfil our commitment leave no one behind.

FACE serves to protect every country and the global community.

Ladies and gentlemen of the global community, if there is one thing we have learned from the pandemic, it is that we cannot talk about security without considering human security.

Nevertheless, global military spending continues to rise worldwide and reached the absurd sum of 1.9 trillion dollars in 2019, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI.

The rise in military spending in 2019 was the largest annual increase in the past decade and the highest level since the end of the Cold War. The International Peace Bureau estimates that the cost of one tank could treat 26,000 people for malaria and the cost of a single aircraft carrier could reforest an area larger than the state of Florida. That is equivalent in size to Switzerland, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium combined.

If at least a fraction of all those resources were used to combat the pandemic, as well as the climate crisis, our generation could proudly say that we were able to redefine our priorities when the circumstances required it.

The permanent members of the Security Council, themselves the world's largest arms producers, should help redirect those priorities in line with Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations. The Security Council should then also change its name, and become the Human Security Council.

Our resources and our priorities must converge in the realization of the most ambitious and comprehensive human development programme ever conceived: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Those Goals are more relevant today than ever before. They provide us with a model for overcoming the crisis and prepare us for future ones. Fairer, more equitable and more sustainable societies will be more resilient to the inequalities that this terrible pandemic has revealed and magnified.

Today, we must prioritize less armament; more resources for development; more resources to combat the pandemic; more resources to counter climate change; more resources for the SDGs; less militarization and less death. That represents true human security for all peoples.

The reform of our collective security architecture can no longer be deferred. The main body responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security must become more democratic, representative, accountable and transparent.

We need a Council that looks at the root causes of conflicts, not just their symptoms. We need a Human Security Council that creates incentives to shift the world's human and economic resources towards development and peace rather than towards the war industry. We need a Council capable of overcoming its deep internal divisions in order to work in unity, with a single voice.

Costa Rica supports the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency Group Code of Conduct regarding Security Council action against genocide, crimes against humanity or war crimes, and supports the convening of the General Assembly to consider the issue whenever a veto is issued in the Security Council.

Impunity is unacceptable. A renewed commitment to multilateralism requires ensuring that those responsible for gross human rights violations and abuses are held accountable for their actions.

Costa Rica reiterates its firm commitment to the principles and values enshrined in the Rome Statute and calls for its universal ratification, as well as to preserve the integrity and independence of the International Criminal Court. Of course, significant changes are required in the face of any unilateral sanctions against the Court's institutions or staff, as such acts are an affront to multilateralism.

A renewed commitment to multilateralism requires respect for the Charter of the United Nations and international law without exception.

A selective approach also weakens our collective security system. Such an approach has led the nuclear-weapon States to disregard or threaten to disregard their obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, while demanding that others comply. I invite all States that have not yet done so to sign and ratify that historic instrument.

In that regard, Costa Rica advocates for a Korean peninsula free of nuclear weapons, with peace, stability and security. We therefore call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to respect and implement the relevant Security Council resolutions.

Costa Rica calls for a just solution to the Palestinian question, for which the parties must resume peace talks. We are convinced that the conflict can be resolved only by the creation of two States, in line with the relevant Security Council resolutions,

to coexist side by side in democracy, justice and peace. Furthermore, we welcome the peace agreements between Israel, the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain.

In our America, we wish to draw attention to the economic blockade against Cuba, which is affecting its population. We reiterate that the situation must cease. We also believe that a peaceful, expeditious and democratic solution, under the auspices of the other States of the region, is needed to address the grave political and humanitarian situation in Venezuela and the violations of human rights that its people are experiencing.

Costa Rica joins the concerns expressed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, in her recent report to the Human Rights Council on the situation in Nicaragua. We strongly urge the Government of this sister country to constructively address its internal tensions and structural problems and to orient its actions towards the well-being of its citizens. Ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is the only path that leads to peace, inclusion and development.

The tragedy that Haiti is experiencing calls for joint action. Caravans of Haitian men, women and children are travelling across the Americas in search of better conditions, and it is high time that we worked together to help to resolve this grave humanitarian situation.

Many violations of international law are committed every day through disinformation, cyberattacks, cybercrime and interference in electoral processes.

In that connection, Costa Rica welcomes the General Assembly resolutions calling on all Member States to heed the reports of the Group of Governmental Experts, which confirm the applicability of existing international law, including the Charter of the United Nations in its entirety, to that new area. However, the task of seeking greater guarantees for individuals and institutions in such matters must befall the international community.

Mr. President,

If COVID-19 is an early warning for humankind, the climate crisis and inequality are the greatest threats to human security for our generation and the next. We must embrace the complexity of our tasks, rather than shy away from them. Reason, empathy, science, fraternity and speaking the truth — however hard it may be — must triumph over simplistic, hateful or polarizing discourse which, in its simplicity and superficiality, hinders the progress required by action and dampens the human spirit.

Those complex tasks involve ensuring the implementation of the most relevant sustainable development instrument, namely the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030. They also require the necessary fiscal space, debt relief measures, official development assistance and international cooperation to close the gap between development goals and the actions it calls for.

We cannot speak about sustainability without taking the necessary action for the effective protection of our oceans and their biodiversity. For that reason, Costa Rica is actively participating in the negotiations on the new agreement for the protection of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction and the negotiations on mining code regulations within the framework of the International Seabed Authority. We are

raising our voice so that no mining contract will be considered insofar as the effective protection and preservation of the marine environment cannot be guaranteed.

Together with France, we are also promoting the High Ambition Coalition to ensure that 30 per cent of the world's land and sea territories are protected by 2030, as a nature-based solution to the climate crisis.

Every pandemic that has affected humankind throughout its history has come and gone. The question is: how well will we tackle our pandemic, and how well will we emerge from it? We will overcome this crisis, but how do we envision our new beginning? We must build inclusive, sustainable, carbon-free economies that respect human rights.

Mr. President:

Costa Rica renews its commitment to a multilateralism focused on the dignity of people, especially those who are most vulnerable. Our multilateralism must be agile and action-oriented. We firmly believe that international security, national security and human security are not separate concepts, but go hand in hand. Our multilateralism must be entrepreneurial and resilient, promoting inclusive, sustainable and carbon-free economies.

As we commemorate this anniversary, Costa Rica renews its commitment to the hope that allows us to continue our mission — even under the most adverse conditions. We hope that the United Nations will fulfil the duty it has undertaken to all humankind and contribute to fostering peace not through words, but through actions.

May the world end this chapter with the same words as this poet:

“I have returned to my country. That part of me, at least, that was far away, shrouded in the fog of not knowing, of not believing, has returned. Today I see those who fill the streets, the squares, the parks, in their everyday clothes; I see those who tie their shoes, early in the morning, as if they were attached to the weight of the world; in all of them, there is a light that is not just the reflection of the red taxis, or the sound of the newspaper hitting the door like a gunshot, or the flash of the ticket you show on the train which accounts for your payment only of the kilometres you're travelling that day.

I see the light of another time.

It is ours.”

Thank you very much.

**Annex XV****Address by Mr. Gotabaya Rajapaksa, President of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka**

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary-General,  
Your Majesties,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,  
*Ayubowan!*

At the outset, I congratulate Your Excellency Volkan Bozkir on being elected as the President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. We wish you success and assure you of our fullest cooperation.

I take this opportunity to extend our appreciation to His Excellency Prof. Tijani Muhammad-Bande, for his effective stewardship of the last General Assembly.

I wish to extend Sri Lanka's appreciation to the Secretary-General His Excellency António Guterres for his dynamic leadership and untiring efforts in pursuing the objectives of the United Nations, even amidst unprecedented conditions brought about by the pandemic.

The effort taken to hold the UN General Assembly in a modified format, in keeping with the current constraints is commendable.

I extend my deepest condolences to all those who have lost loved ones due to the pandemic and express deep appreciation to the frontline healthcare and essential workers, both in Sri Lanka and globally, for their dedication and selfless commitment.

The theme of this year's General Debate is timely, and echoes the importance of solidarity across national borders in alleviating the effects of COVID-19.

We commend the efforts taken by the UN to respond to this challenge, including the COVID 19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan and the establishment of the United Nations COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund.

Sri Lanka supports the extensive work being carried out by the WHO, which has played a critical role in shaping the global response to the pandemic. The WHO now must seek to facilitate universal access to a COVID-19 vaccine, once developed, which should be designated as a basic public good and be affordable and obtainable by all.

As a country proud of her long-standing democratic traditions, the Government of Sri Lanka has witnessed two free and fair elections, where I as the President and my Government were elected with overwhelming majorities.

The resounding mandates received at both the Presidential and Parliamentary elections have enabled the formation of a strong Government, dedicated to building a prosperous nation.

At a time when even the most powerful countries in the world were facing substantial challenges in the wake of COVID-19 pandemic, Sri Lanka was able to successfully face the challenge.

Thanks to a well-coordinated and synchronized mechanism of preventive measures at the national level, assisted by a robust local healthcare system, we managed to contain its spread. I must thank the people of my country for the cooperation they extended in this monumental task.

Sri Lanka's sustenance during this calamity was due to the series of inclusive, non-discriminatory and holistic measures taken by the Government, prioritizing the health and safety of her people.

These measures include, financially supporting low income families, pensioners, differently-abled, day-income earners, farmers, and disadvantaged groups and managing the repatriation of Sri Lankans in a coordinated manner.

Sri Lanka also explored avenues of business to create new economic trends. This included the use of digital technology to connect the farmer, supplier and consumer; to deliver essential items and services; and to provide on line education.

These measures ensured the 'right to life' of all Sri Lankans and all foreign nationals who were trapped during restrictions on air travel, regardless of their ethnic, religious or social background.

The WHO has commended Sri Lanka's efforts to control COVID-19 more effectively even with modest means, than more resourced countries.

Sri Lanka was among the first countries in South Asia to open schools to bring children back in safety, as commended by UNICEF. The World Travel and Tourism Council has recently stamped Sri Lanka as a safe destination for tourists.

Sri Lanka notes with deep concern that developing countries are facing an unprecedented economic and debt crisis due to the pandemic, and the need for debt relief and financial stimulus for such countries must be duly recognized.

Sri Lanka is committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Moreover, we, as a country, are extremely serious about protecting our environment. With a bio-diversity that is unique to us, we are ensuring that our environmental assets are not only duly preserved but also prudently used. My government is taking all measures to strike the right balance between preserving the environment and taking development forward.

The recent debacle involving an oil tanker in our seas was carefully managed ensuring that our marine resources are in no way compromised. As a small country with limited resources to handle disasters of this magnitude, we, with the help of the neighbouring countries, minimized the damage caused by the oil tanker to the marine habitat.

Sri Lanka welcomes the initiative of the President of the 74th General Assembly for launching the Alliance for Poverty Eradication, which will mobilize action on this issue.

Based on the vision of my policy statement "Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour", a Presidential Task Force in charge of Economic Revival and Poverty

Eradication was established to create a production economy. The Task Force is focusing on creating a unique economic structure based on novel initiatives.

This complements my country's long and consistent history of protecting our society from extreme poverty. Our government is taking a bold and creative initiative to reduce poverty in the country by targeting poor families and providing a member of each such family wage employment that will help the family to come out of poverty and look to the future with hope.

We are convinced that education is an important tool for emerging out of poverty.

In Sri Lanka, the National Education System is being restructured according to the theme, "Equal learning opportunity for every child" envisaged in the national policy framework. Many rural schools are being upgraded and others modernized to equip children with knowledge and skills that would help them to contribute to the development of the country.

A cost-free official "e-learning portal" for school children, with the support of all telecommunication operators, has successfully contributed towards home learning during the pandemic.

State Ministries have been established recently, covering all areas of education for women, children and youth of the country, placing emphasis on vocational and technical education and training.

Sri Lanka remains deeply committed to addressing drug-related socio economic issues. There is a need to enhance efforts to strengthen the prevention of drug abuse among children and youth, and ensure that educational settings are free of any harmful and addictive drugs.

Sri Lanka is extremely concerned about the increasing sophistication of the transnational criminal groups engaged in illicit manufacture and trafficking of drugs.

In order to address this, a Presidential Task Force was appointed to eradicate the drug menace, and to create a safer and a more secure country. Since its establishment, it has produced commendable results.

Sri Lanka, having experienced separatism and terrorism for near three decades, condemns all terrorist acts in the strongest possible terms, be it domestic or international.

In spite of its elimination from the Sri Lankan soil, the international network of this terrorist outfit remains, pushing its ruthless ideology and influencing certain Capitals to spread its baseless lies and propaganda.

We are hopeful that no State will tolerate activities of this international network which continues to espouse and propagate violent ideology under different guises and manifestations.

The global community must stand in solidarity with Sri Lanka, notwithstanding narrow domestic political compulsions, to counter terrorism. This ideology that introduced suicide bombings to the world has set precedents for acts of violent extremism across the world. This is evident by the growing recruitment drive of the extremist outfits.

It is the hope of my people that the world community will not seek to forget or rewrite the violent past of this terrorist organization and allow the propagation of the group's propaganda, which aimed at indoctrination and radicalization of another generation of youth.

As a nation that has witnessed the bitterness of war, Sri Lanka is committed to promoting peace across the world. We remain fully committed to UN Peacekeeping.

We are proud to have a long association with United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, with over 20,000 Sri Lankan Peacekeepers having served in UN Peace Missions across the world. They are providing critical services to conflict affected communities in most difficult and dangerous terrains.

As a Nation, we are keen to contribute to the common goal of global peace and security.

At a time when the United Nations reaches its 75th year, it is a great opportunity to self-assess the approach and success towards maintaining international peace, security and development.

The UN system needs to ensure equity, inclusivity and transparency, while being more responsive to the ever-changing global environment.

In order to ensure the sustainability and the credibility of the Organization, political witch hunts through questionable motives against Member States, need to be halted.

Democratically elected governments of nations understand the pulse and needs of their people the best. It is the responsibility of the UN to assist and support processes of such elected Governments to bring about sustainable solutions for needs of their people.

Sri Lanka is committed to follow a neutral foreign policy with no affiliations to any particular country or power bloc.

As a strategically placed country in the Indian Ocean, it is our priority to ensure that the Indian Ocean is maintained as a zone of peace where no country could gain advantage over any other.

Moreover, the Indian Ocean has many international sea lanes that are economically important to a large number of nations and therefore, should remain accessible to global trade and commerce.

Geopolitically, too, the Indian Ocean receives the focus of the entire world. Given this situation, powerful countries and nations should provide their support and assistance to maintain the neutrality of the Indian Ocean and to protect its valuable marine resources.

In conclusion, I wish to re-iterate the importance of the UN charter which enshrines the protection of sovereignty, territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their domestic affairs.

Thank you.

**Annex XVI****Address by Mr. Joko Widodo, President of the Republic of Indonesia**

His Excellency President of the UN General Assembly,

His Excellency UN Secretary General,

Distinguished Leaders of the Member Countries of the United Nations,

This year...marks the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations.

75 years ago...the UN was born so that a great war ... the Second World War ... will not happen again.

75 years ago ... the UN was also established to create a world that is more peaceful, stable, and prosperous.

Because war will benefit no one.

There is no point of celebrating victory among ruins.

There is no point of becoming the largest economic power in the midst of a sinking world.

Mr. President,

In this 75th anniversary of the UN ... We must ask ourselves ... have we succeeded in creating the world that we dreamed of?

I believe all of us will have the same answer ... not yet.. Conflicts are still happening all over the world.

Poverty and even hunger are still suffered by many.

The principles of the UN Charter and international law are often neglected... including the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity.

All of us are concerned with this situation ...

Our concern grew even deeper...in the midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

At a time when we ought to unite... and work together to tackle the pandemic... what we see, instead, is one of deep division....and growing rivalries.

Whereas in fact...we must unite and always promote a win-win approach in building relations among state that is mutually beneficial.

We all understand the negative impacts of the pandemic are tremendous... both on health ... and the social economy.

We are also aware that... the virus knows no boundaries across nations...

No one is safe until everyone is...

If division and rivalries continue to persist... then I am concerned that the pillars of stability and sustainable peace will crumble... or even destroyed.

A world of peace...stable and prosperous becomes more and more difficult to attain.

Excellencies,

This year, Indonesia also celebrates the 75th anniversary of its independence.

It has always been our commitment... Indonesia will continuously contribute to world peace...as mandated by our constitution.

Indonesia will continue to play a role as bridgebuilder... as part of the solution...

Consistently, this commitment is continuously upheld... including throughout Indonesia's membership at the UN Security Council.

The spirit of cooperation will continue to be promoted by Indonesia ... the spirit which provides mutual benefits to all parties...and leave no country behind.

No one...no country should be left behind.

The respect for equality... was also emphasized by Indonesia's founding father... Soekarno... Bung Karno during the Asia-Africa Conference in Bandung in 1955... that gave birth to the Bandung Principles.

Until now...the Bandung Principles are still relevant... including in peaceful settlement of disputes... promotion of cooperation... and respect for international law.

Palestine becomes the only country... attending the Bandung Conference... that until present has not enjoyed its independence.

Indonesia consistently supports Palestine... to gain its rights.

In our region, along with other ASEAN member countries, Indonesia continues to maintain South East Asia... as a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region.

On its 53rd anniversary... on 8th of August 2020, ASEAN reaffirmed its commitment to continue maintaining peace and stability in the region.

The same spirit of cooperation and peace was put forward by Indonesia to a wider region... the Indo-Pacific region...through the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific.

Excellencies,

Against this current global situation...allow me to convey a few thoughts.

First... the UN should continue to improve itself... through reforms, revitalization...and efficiency.

The UN needs to prove that multilateralism delivers...especially during the time of crisis...

The UN needs to be more responsive and effective... in tackling global challenges.

And all of us bear the responsibility to further strengthen the UN...

So that the UN remains relevant and contributive... in keeping with the challenges of time.

The UN is not a mere building in the city of New York... rather it represents an ideal and shared commitment of all nations... to realize world peace and prosperity for our future generations.

Indonesia has an unwavering faith in the United Nations and multilateralism.

Multilateralism is the only way that could guarantee equality. Second... collective global leadership has to be strengthened.

We are all aware...that when it comes to relations among countries... in international relations... every country always protects their national interests.

However, we must not forget ... that all of us have the responsibility to contribute... to be part of the solution...for peace, stability, and prosperity of the world..

This is where the UN should play a role... to strengthen collective global leadership.

The world needs the spirit of collaboration and a stronger global leadership... to create a better world.

Third, cooperation in tackling COVID-19 must be strengthened...in terms of the health aspects...as well as the socio economic effects...

Vaccine will be the game changer in the war against pandemic.

We need to work together to ensure... that all countries have equal access to a safe vaccine...with affordable price...

In the long term...the management of resilient global health system needs to be further improved.

The resilience of global health system... which is based on the national health resilience...will determine the future of our world.

From the economic perspective.... revitalization of economic activities gradually needs to start ...by tackling the limits of our global supply chain today.

Revitalization of the economy must prioritize the health of all citizens of the world...

A healthy world...A productive world...needs to be our priority.

All of these will only be achieved if all of us continue.. to work together...work together...and work together.

Let us solidify our commitment and consistently carry out our commitment to work together.

That is all from me.

I thank you.

## Annex XVII

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

[Original: Spanish]

President of the General Assembly,  
Secretary-General,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, Mr. President, we wish you every success at the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. You can count on Peru's firm support of the General Assembly in fulfilling your tasks in such a noble leadership role.

In such difficult times for humankind, on behalf of the Government and the people of Peru, let me convey our unequivocal solidarity and sympathy to the people who, owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, have lost loved ones, relatives, friends and co-workers, and the front-line actors — doctors, nurses and police and military personnel — who have sacrificed everything, including their own lives. I also pay tribute to and am grateful for those who, far from their families, continue to fight every day to save lives at the risk of losing their own. And we reaffirm our commitment to continue in the joint and unrelenting effort to combat this unprecedented health crisis.

The severity and magnitude of the pandemic and the highly contagious and unknown nature of COVID-10 will not allow for anyone to be safe until we are all safe. I therefore encourage all of us to join the struggle in a concerted and effective manner by recognizing the vaccine and treatment against this virus as global public goods and ensuring timely and equitable access to the medicines and equipment needed to address the pandemic.

It is therefore urgent to reach global agreements on those basic goals. That will strengthen the foundation of the multilateral system and ensure that the commitment we made in 2015 to leave no one behind is fulfilled.

Mr. President,

Two and a half years ago I assumed the Presidency of Peru in accordance the Constitution after my predecessor submitted his resignation before the Congress of the Republic.

Since then, the Peruvian people and my Government have faced together various crises. We have had to combat organized corruption to safeguard democratic governance, and now we are combating the unforeseen and devastating COVID-19 pandemic.

In addressing the latter, our responses have been based on constitutional principles in strict respect for the law and fundamental rights, while taking into account the sense of urgency and the determination of the people.

We have been fighting the scourge of corruption head-on with a set of national reforms to transform the institutions in need of them. In order to support that effort and owing to the transnational nature of the scourge of corruption, together with the Heads of State and Government of countries in the hemisphere at the 2018 Summit of the Americas, we resolutely adopted the declaration, entitled "Lima Commitment:

democratic governance against corruption” to expand our obligations and strengthen cooperation on our continent.

Likewise we have promoted together with Colombia and other friendly countries, the convening of a special session of the General Assembly against corruption to be held in June 2021. We advocate the adoption at that session of a clear and action-oriented political declaration that will make international judicial cooperation and assistance more effective, especially with regard to corruption involving large assets, which, among other measures, will encourage the criminalization of corruption in the private sector and among legal entities, among others.

Mr. President,

Any serious governance crisis could be overcome within the constitutional framework by dissolving Congress and calling for elections within the time limits established by law so that citizens could renew their congressional representation in a democratic and transparent manner. Democracy and the separation of powers have been preserved and strengthened through this mechanism in my country.

With the same commitment to the rule of law, national general elections have been called for in April 2021. I will therefore complete my term within the time frame provided for in the Constitution and will hand over my Office to my successor on 28 July 2021 — the date on which Peru will celebrate the bicentennial of its independence.

The lessons learned from this crisis have led my Government to commit to dialogue under the Peru Pact — a democratic space for reflection within the National Agreement forum — to reach consensus among political actors and citizens on five specific issues that will promote a renewed governance agenda in view of our bicentennial of republican life: establishing a unified health system; guaranteeing quality education; promoting economic growth; reforming the justice administration systems; and combating poverty and extreme poverty.

Mr. President,

As it is aware of the historical social gaps and weaknesses in the health-care system, my Government was one of the first in the region to take robust measures to contain the spread of COVID-19. They have saved thousands of lives despite elevated and distressing rates of death and contagion, while allowing for reversing decades of shortfalls with regard to infrastructure and investment in public health. We have fought to contain the disease while, at the same time, strengthening our response capacity.

Six months after the struggle began, the number of people who have been infected with and died from COVID-19 is beginning to drop sharply in Peru, and we are firmly committed to stay the course until the end.

Despite Peru’s macroeconomic strength, the pandemic has deepened inequalities and exposed structural weaknesses caused by the disruption. We are therefore implementing the largest economic containment and recovery plan in our Republic’s history, as well as one of the largest in the region, with an investment equivalent to 20 per cent of the country’s gross domestic product (GDP).

The plan includes bonds, subsidies, liquidity and tax relief measures to sustain family spending, as well as to safeguard employment and the payments chain, thereby

benefiting 8.5 million homes and more than 700,000 businesses, 98 per cent of which are micro-, small- and medium-sized businesses.

We have also developed public spending measures to create work to produce and restore 1 million jobs. In addition, we are stepping up various infrastructure projects through Government-to-Government contracting.

Those measures have been decisive in addressing COVID-19 and will support a rapid and safe recovery, with GDP growth estimated at 10 per cent in 2021 and a return to prepandemic levels in 2022.

Mr. President,

In addressing this multidimensional crisis, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains the road map, which guides our decisions to overcome challenges made more complex by the pandemic. Such is the case with regard to increasing levels of poverty.

Peru maintains its commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, as stated in the second Voluntary National Review presented here in July, in which we reported on the progress and difficulties in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. President,

The COVID-19 pandemic is the greatest global challenge that humankind has faced since the end of the Second World War. I am convinced that we must strengthen multilateralism through the United Nations (UN) and WHO, based on lessons learned. That will benefit global health governance and international cooperation to make universal health coverage a reality, as an objective of sustainable development.

In keeping with that commitment, Peru supports the COVAX Facility initiative, the Access to COVID-19 Tools (ACT) Accelerator Facilitation Council, the Vaccine Alliance (GAVI) and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). We encourage competition in the areas of vaccine and treatment discovery, which will involve researchers, academics, Governments, the pharmaceutical industry, philanthropists, and volunteers, to yield results that will collectively benefit us as global public goods serving all of humankind.

As it is committed to democracy and respect for human rights, Peru will continue to make regional diplomatic efforts with other stakeholders to support the peaceful restoration of democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela, as the first step to overcoming the multidimensional crisis affecting the country. Through its political mechanisms, the United Nations can provide its extremely valuable humanitarian support to contribute to the political resolution of the regional crisis before it becomes a chronic issue, which no one wants to see, especially the Venezuelan people who are suffering from the crisis.

Mr. President,

Peru is particularly vulnerable to climate change. That is why my Government adopted the Framework Law on Climate Change in 2018 and is committed to the national implementation of the Paris Agreement, establishing road maps for 91 adaptation measures and 62 mitigation measures.

The conservation and sustainable use of the Amazon is another priority for my country, including strengthening its resilience and adaptive capacity in addressing climate change and safeguarding the country's vast biological diversity.

Accordingly, in December 2019, we promoted the presidential summit at which the Leticia Pact was signed, and, a few weeks ago, together with leaders of the Amazon, we adopted the regional plan of action, with an integral vision for combating deforestation and illegal activities, strengthening capacities and including indigenous peoples and local communities in its development.

Mr. President,

As a founding member of the United Nations, Peru has an unwavering commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security, which guided its recent and constructive membership in the Security Council for the period from 2018 to 2019. Accordingly, we support the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative and his call for a global ceasefire.

Our commitment to the general and complete disarmament of weapons of mass destruction is equally strong. We are part of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons regime and a member of the major international regimes on conventional arms control and nuclear non-proliferation. We are in the process of ratifying the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, as we are convinced that the prohibition of nuclear weapons and tests remains a moral imperative for the planet and humankind.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations by remembering Ambassador Javier Pérez de Cuéllar, an illustrious Peruvian, who left us in March. We are filled with pride that this emblem of international diplomacy served as Secretary-General of the Organization for two consecutive terms, which were characterized by a constructive thaw in bipolarity and the resolution of numerous conflicts.

We remember his calls for us to fulfil our obligations based on the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and work collectively for the resolution of our differences. His *Pilgrimage For Peace*, the title of his memoirs of his leadership in the House, will continue to inspire all to promote peace, sustainable development, protection of the environment, safeguarding human rights and the international rules-based system.

Strengthened multilateralism aimed at sustainable development — as we agreed in the 2030 Agenda — aimed at giving future generations a better world for all will certainly be the best tribute we will be able to pay him.

Many thanks.

## Annex XVIII

### **Address by Mr. Félix Antoine Tshilombo Tshisekedi, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo**

[Original: French]

I add my voice to that of the speakers who have preceded me in congratulating you on your election as President of the 75th regular session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. While assuring you of the support of my country, I express for you and for your Office my best wishes for success in the accomplishment of your mandate.

I would also like to salute the remarkable work accomplished by Ambassador Tidjani Mohamed-BANDE, your predecessor, who, despite a difficult environment, was able, with skill, to carry through to its conclusion the examination of files as complex as they are varied.

I would like to reiterate the confidence of my country in the action and the efforts which the Secretary General, Mr. António Guterres, has deployed since his assumption of the leadership of our Organization.

Mister President,

We are holding this 75th session of the General Assembly in an exceptional and particularly difficult context marked by the coronavirus disease, a pandemic that has caused countless loss of human life, disrupted our economies and hampered the achievement of our efforts to reduce poverty, maintain international peace and security, guarantee justice and human rights, promote social progress, while protecting the environment.

Faced with this global threat, each country has shown a strong capacity for resilience and found within itself the most inventive ways to raise awareness and protect its population, while cooperating with the rest of the world, that is to say by drawing lessons from experience of others or by sharing with them the progress made in their own country with regard to this disease.

As soon as the first case of Covid-19 was detected in Kinshasa on 10 March 2020. My Government immediately took swift and decisive measures to contain the spread of the virus. And, given the severity and the highly contagious and deadly nature of the pandemic, I declared a state of health emergency throughout the national territory after having created a presidential task force and a multisectoral response unit against Covid-19. We have thus succeeded in capitalizing on the achievements of the management of the Ebola epidemic to improve our response capabilities to the overlapping COVID-19 pandemic.

In this dynamic, the Government has set up a multisectoral committee and a technical secretariat that has drawn up a structural plan for the response to Covid-19. In order to meet the varied and complex challenges that have been raised by the pandemic in the health, economic and security sectors, I have instructed my Task Force and the Government to work closely together to coordinate the development of the Emergency Multisectoral Pandemic Impact Mitigation Programme, which I personally launched on 18 June 2020.

I take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the assistance provided to my country by our partners at this particularly difficult time and for their reiterated support for the efforts and coordinated measures taken to date by my Government to combat COVID-19 and beyond. This is how my country, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was able to reduce the case fatality rate of the pandemic from 10% in the first days, to less than 2.5% today.

The coherent multilateral coordination provided by the United Nations in general, and the World Health Organization in particular, has succeeded in particular in guaranteeing genuine, efficient and effective international solidarity, and has made it possible to promote greater interaction with our development partners and international financial and economic institutions with a view to mobilizing the resources necessary to fight the pandemic and to help developing countries strengthen their national health systems.

The pandemic has shown us that there is only one planet and only one health and that our spells are linked.

For the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in order to help developing countries to effectively emerge from the crisis and better ensure post-COVID-19, the efforts of the international community should include the cancellation and other reductions of their debt burden in order to allow them to rebuild better. We welcome the efforts and measures taken by the Group of 20 and the international financial institutions in postponing debt payment deadlines and invite them to take further decisions with a view to its total cancellation. Any such support measures or additional financing for developing countries should not be tied to any conditionality or require certain economic policy reforms, such as austerity measures.

Also, I appeal to the international community to strengthen international solidarity, joint efforts, multilateral cooperation and partnership with all developing countries, including in the area of capacity-building and technical assistance, to fight and stop a disease that is our common enemy and demonstrate our ability to work together in solidarity.

I therefore recognize the leading role of the United Nations in these efforts, including the World Health Organization.

This is the main lesson the Covid-19 has tragically taught us. It is true profession of faith in favour of multilateralism with regard to the level of international cooperation in the fight against this pandemic.

Mister President,

Climate change poses a threat to humans and their fundamental rights, particularly for vulnerable populations. The effects of global warming and the climatic disturbances that accompany it are more and more acutely felt around the world. They are dangerous and accelerating.

Faced with these threats posed by climate change and environmental degradation, our action in favour of the climate and the green economy as the basis of our future and our development is not simply a necessity but an urgent obligation if we wish to see a peaceful and sustainable future.

For its part, the Democratic Republic of the Congo has made binding commitments to reducing its carbon dioxide emissions and mitigating the effects of

climate change. We are determined to do everything to achieve the implementation of our commitments in favour of the climate by preserving our forests.

In accordance with my promise and the commitment made at the 74th session of the General Assembly, “School gardens: a billion trees by 2023” has been established in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. This programme, which was adopted by my Government, will begin its activities in the last quarter of this year 2020. It is aimed at achieving a major community and eco-civic project of ecological restoration with strong socioeconomic benefits for the benefit of urban and rural populations. We therefore expect our partners to also respect their financial commitments within the framework of the preservation of tropical forests, in particular that of the green climate fund created in favour of the least developed countries.

Mister President,

At the national level, I have engaged the country in reforms at several levels, including that of public finances and the improvement of good governance and poverty reduction.

Economically, the Democratic Republic of Congo has made the African Union’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Agenda 2063 the pivot on which its development policy is based. Since 2016, the country has been implementing the Sustainable Development Goals aimed at inclusion, social equity and transparency at all levels.

To that end, my Government has put in place the National Strategic Development Plan, which constitutes the unifying framework of all national, provincial and sectoral policies and strategies on the Sustainable Development Goals in order to enable the Democratic Republic of the Congo to diversify its economy, which remains based on the exploitation of natural resources, and to accelerate investment in infrastructure and human capital, while promoting investment in social sectors.

However, it is true that the current context marked by COVID-19 represents a real challenge that is slowing the pace of the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Also, my Government has developed, as I mentioned at the beginning of my remarks, an emergency multisectoral programme to mitigate the impacts of Covid-19 in order to cushion the shock associated with the health crisis on the socioeconomic environment and support the revival of economic activity.

Mister President,

The prevailing security situation in the eastern part of the country remains worrying. Peace is not yet fully established there. Some residual elements of armed groups, nationals and foreigners alike, are still active there and continue to sow death and desolation. They attack not only elements of our armed forces, but also the MONUSCO peacekeepers who provide us with their logistical support, as well as the civilian population, all this with the aim of undermining the efforts made by the Government for the stability of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region.

These armed groups engage in unconventional and asymmetric warfare. They act in total ignorance of human values and commit massive abuses and violations of human rights, in particular through repeated rapes and massacres of civilian populations in isolated corners of certain well-known territories in the east of the country, such as of the Beni region and its surroundings, Djugu in Ituri and Rutshuru.

The findings show in general that these groups have the means to enable them to pursue their activities. These means often come from the illicit exploitation of natural resources sold outside the Democratic Republic of the Congo through well-established networks and, without a doubt, with the help of certain sponsors. We cannot, in fact, succeed in neutralizing the armed groups without eradicating their sources of supply and support, which are these networks and other sponsors. I appeal to the international community to apply appropriate, targeted and effective sanctions.

Mr. President, it is in this general context that the strategic review and dialogue for the transformation of the UN presence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is taking place.

Until we can agree on the final contours of the future of MONUSCO on the national territory, the wish of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is to see, during this period of preparation for withdrawal, the strengthening of collaboration on the field within MONUSCO units and with the FARDC in order to ensure that the expected firepower to protect the population and restore peace, security and the full authority of the State throughout the national territory, including in localities where the presence of armed groups is still visible, can be effective.

I am resolved to restore a smile as soon as possible to the populations of the east of my country, who have been living in insecurity for more than two decades. To that end, the Democratic Republic of the Congo is in favour of the principle of increasing the operational capacity of the Intervention Brigade, in particular by providing it with special units adapted to the asymmetric warfare imposed on us by armed groups in the east of the country.

Mister President,

The agenda in favour of improving the human rights situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is one of the priorities of my Government which, since my inauguration, has been engaged in the fight against counter-values and human rights abuses, in particular through the fight against impunity and sexual violence, access to justice for victims, the improvement of prison conditions, and the resolution of intercommunity violence, in particular through the creation and implementation of transitional justice mechanisms.

Always in the quest to improve the situation of human rights and social justice in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, on 22 April 2019 I established the Agency for the Prevention and Fight against Trafficking in Persons and the National Committee for the Prevention of Torture.

To put an end to certain bad practices in the management of public affairs and to fight effectively against corruption, fraud and counter-values, I created an agency for the prevention and fight against corruption that will make it possible to strengthen corruption prevention policy with regard to those in charge of both the executive and the private sector.

Mister President,

Since the beginning of my mandate, I have continuously ramped up the efforts of my Government in favour of the promotion and protection of the rights of women and young girls. I realize how much this category of the Congolese population has particularly suffered from the horrors of the troubled years that my country has

gone through. It is to combat all forms of sexual and gender-based violence that my country has taken and implemented several legal and administrative texts and taken important initiatives.

I am aware that, notwithstanding these countless efforts, there is still a lot of work to do in this area. My determination to fight for the rights of women, girls and children remains strong.

This is why my country warmly welcomed the creation, on 30 October 2019, of the Global Fund for the reparation of victims of sexual crimes committed during the time of conflict. My Government is prepared, on the one hand, to work in close collaboration with this Global Fund, and, on the other hand, to use the experience of this collaboration to create a national fund for the reparation of victims, which will, I am sure, complete the work of alleviating the suffering of the many Congolese victims.

Mister President,

The United Nations should continue to ensure multilateral coordination, consistency and accountability within the system to entrench international solidarity.

This is why I reiterate my urgent call for the reform of the United Nations Security Council, in order to make that body more transparent, more democratic and more representative of the composition of our Organization. For more than a decade, we have each year recalled the glaring injustice suffered by the African continent in its representation both within the Security Council and in the various international organizations that make up the United Nations system. The feeling of frustration in the face of this near indifference to this obvious injustice contributes to the accentuation of social and popular frustrations, which sometimes lead to episodes of violence in many countries. The reform of the United Nations must, moreover, draw the lessons of experience in matters of international cooperation in order to ensure the greater efficiency of the agencies and funds engaged in the basics of economic and social development.

We must commit to applying concrete measures to make both the eradication of poverty and the reduction of inequalities truly irreversible, promote social inclusion and the environment in a holistic way, strengthen economic and technical cooperation, move forward on the path of solidarity and development and to preserve international peace and security.

Thus, the global village in which we live will be able to reflect international solidarity, respect for human rights and the environment, these values that characterize us.

Thank you.

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