



# General Assembly

Seventy-fourth session

**3**<sup>rd</sup> plenary meeting  
Tuesday, 24 September 2019, 9 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

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

*The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.*

## Agenda item 110

### Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/74/1)

**The President:** The General Assembly will hear a presentation by the Secretary-General of his annual report (A/74/1) on the work of the Organization, under agenda item 110.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

**The Secretary-General:** The Charter of the United Nations sends a clear message to us all: put people first. The first words of the Charter, “We the peoples”, are a summons to place people at the centre of our work — every day, everywhere. People with anxieties and aspirations, people with heartbreaks and hopes and, above all, people with rights. Those rights are not a favour to be rewarded or withheld; they are an endowment for simply being human.

Throughout the first half of my mandate, I have had the good fortune to meet people around the world, not in gilded meeting rooms but where they live, work and dream. And I have listened. I have heard families in the South Pacific who fear their lives being swept away by rising seas; young refugees in the Middle East yearning for a return to school and home; Ebola survivors in North Kivu struggling to rebuild their lives; women demanding equality and opportunity; people of all

beliefs and traditions who suffer simply because of who they are; and so many others.

We are living in a world of disquiet. A great many people fear getting trampled, thwarted, left behind. Machines take their jobs, traffickers take their dignity, demagogues take their rights, warlords take their lives, fossil fuels take their futures. And yet people believe in the spirit and ideas that bring us to this Hall. They believe in the United Nations. But do they believe in us? Do they believe that, as leaders, we will put people first? We the leaders must deliver for we the peoples.

People have the right to live in peace. One year ago in this Hall, I spoke of winds of hope despite the chaos and confusion of our world (see A/73/PV.6). Since then, some of those currents have continued to move in promising directions. Against the expectations of many, elections unfolded peacefully in Madagascar, the Maldives and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to name just a few places. Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia resolved their decades-long name dispute. Political dialogue in the Sudan and the peace process in the Central African Republic have brought renewed hope. A long-sought step forward has just been taken on the political path out of the tragedy in Syria, in line with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015).

As I announced yesterday, an agreement has been reached with all parties for a credible, balanced and inclusive Syrian-owned and Syrian-led constitutional committee. My Special Envoy just left Damascus after finalizing the last details with the Government and the opposition. The United Nations looks

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forward to convening the committee in Geneva in the coming weeks.

However, across the global landscape, we see conflicts persisting, terrorism spreading and the risk of a new arms race growing. Outside interferences, often in violation of Security Council resolutions, make peace processes more difficult. Many situations remain unresolved, from Yemen and Libya to Afghanistan and beyond.

A succession of unilateral actions threatens to thwart a two-State solution between Israel and Palestine. In Venezuela, 4 million people have fled the country — one of the largest displacements in the world. Tensions are heightened in South Asia, where differences need to be addressed through dialogue.

Above all, we are facing the alarming possibility of armed conflict in the Gulf, the consequences of which the world cannot afford. The recent attack on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities was completely unacceptable. In a context where a minor miscalculation can lead to a major confrontation, we must do everything possible to push for reason and restraint. I hope for a future in which all the countries of the region can live in a state of mutual respect and cooperation, without interference in each other's affairs. I hope equally that it will still be possible to preserve the progress on nuclear non-proliferation represented by the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

From the first day, I have emphasized prevention, mediation and a surge in diplomacy for peace in order to address the crises that we face. Consider the lives that we can save by strengthening our investments to sustain peace around the world. Across some of the most troubled corners of the world, some 100,000 United Nations peacekeepers protect civilians and promote peace.

Through the Action for Peacekeeping initiative, we are strengthening our effectiveness and efficiency and we are renewing partnerships with troop- and police-contributing countries, host countries and regional organizations, such as the African Union and the European Union.

I am also proud of the work of our humanitarian workers, easing suffering around the world. Fully half of all international relief aid is channelled through the United Nations, ensuring that millions receive protection, food, medicine, shelter, water and other life-saving forms of assistance. This year alone, in

brutal attacks and other circumstances, we have lost at least 80 peacekeepers, humanitarian workers and others, all of whom gave their lives serving the United Nations and trying to better the lives of others. I honour their service and their sacrifice.

We have bolstered our counter-terrorism architecture and defined new strategies to tackle violent extremism and to address root causes, while respecting human rights. I have put forward a new disarmament agenda to advance global peace. In the near term, the New START Treaty must be extended. We must work to address the heightened threat posed by ballistic missiles and ensure a successful 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The situation of the Korean peninsula remains uncertain. I fully support the efforts towards a new summit between the President of the United States and the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

At this time of transition and dysfunction in global power relations, there is a new risk looming on the horizon that may not yet be large but it is real. I fear the possibility of a great fracture — the world splitting in two, with the two largest economies on Earth creating two separate and competing worlds, each with their own dominant currency, trade and financial rules, their own Internet and artificial intelligence capacities and their own zero-sum geopolitical and military strategies. We must do everything possible to avert the great fracture and maintain a universal system — a universal economy with universal respect for international law, a multipolar world with strong multilateral institutions.

People have a right to security in all its dimensions. Every measure to uphold human rights helps to deliver sustainable development and peace. In the twenty-first century, we must see human rights with a vision that speaks to each and every human being and encompasses all rights — economic, social, cultural, political and civil.

It would be a mistake to ignore or diminish economic, social and cultural rights. However, it would be equally misguided to think that those rights are enough to answer people's yearnings for freedom. Human rights are universal and indivisible. One cannot pick and choose, favouring some while disdaining others. People have a right to well-being and a dignified standard of living, with health, housing and food; social protection and a sustainable environment; education,

not only to learn but to learn how to learn and prepare for the future; and decent jobs, particularly for young people. Those rights permeate the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and they are among our best tools for preventing conflict.

Yet we are not on track. Inequality is exploding. Our global economy generates great flows of income but that prosperity is captured by a small number of elites. It is a sad fact of our world today that one's chances of leading a life free of want and in full human dignity still depend more on the circumstances of one's birth than one's innate capacities.

Today's High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development and the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development to be held on Thursday, 26 September, are opportunities to ramp up ambition, including by utilizing the promise of technology and innovation, as recommended by the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation, which has concluded its report.

As was emphasized at yesterday's Climate Action Summit 2019, the climate emergency is a race that we are losing but it is a race we can win if we change our ways now. Even our language must adapt: what once was called climate change is now truly a climate crisis and what was once called global warming has more accurately become global heating. We are seeing unprecedented temperatures, unrelenting storms and undeniable science.

Ten days ago, in the Bahamas, I saw the destruction caused by Hurricane Dorian. That aftermath is a mere prelude to what science tells us is on its way. But something else is on its way — solutions. The world is starting to move, not yet fast enough but in the right direction, away from fossil fuels and towards the opportunities of a green economy.

The Climate Action Summit highlighted some of the solutions that we need to scale up in order to dramatically reduce emissions, keep the temperature rise to 1.5°C degrees and reach carbon neutrality by 2050. But we are not yet there. We must build on that momentum and do much more to be able to defeat climate change.

*(spoke in French)*

People have a right to the fundamental freedoms that every country has promised to uphold. Yet today we are at a critical juncture where long-standing rights are being threatened, undermined and thwarted. We

see wide-ranging impunity, including for violations of international humanitarian law. We are seeing the emergence of new forms of authoritarianism. And, in too many spaces, the disappearance of civic space stifles the voice of citizens. Human rights defenders, environmental activists and journalists are being targeted. Day after day, click after click, from one camera to another, surveillance systems expand their reach and encroach on our privacy. Those cracks are more than just the collapse of the rules governing the behaviour of States and the economy; they go deeper. They are testing our compassion and humanity.

With an unprecedented number of refugees and displaced people, what has happened to our solidarity? We see borders — and, above all, hearts — closing and societies becoming hostile to foreigners. We watch refugee families being torn apart and their right to seek asylum denied. We must restore the integrity of the international refugee protection regime and deliver on the promise of shared responsibility set out in the global compact on refugees.

We must also build on the momentum of the landmark adoption, in December 2018, of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration — the first agreement of its kind. We must strengthen international cooperation for orderly and regular migration, and remove the management of migratory movements from the hands of the smugglers and criminals who enrich themselves on the backs of vulnerable people. The human rights of every migrant must be respected.

Sadly, fear is winning in today's world. Isolation and mistrust of the other are being used for political purposes. That is why I have launched two initiatives. The first is an Organization-wide strategy to combat hate speech. The second is an action plan to support efforts to safeguard religious sites and uphold the freedom of worship. All minorities — ethnic, religious or other — must be able to fully enjoy their fundamental rights. Social cohesion is rarely easy; we must make great efforts to ensure that every community feels that its identity is respected and that it can fully participate in society as a whole. To those who choose oppression or division, I say that diversity is not a threat, but an asset. It is unacceptable that, in the twenty-first century, women and men are persecuted because of their beliefs, identity or sexual orientation. We must, of course, also guarantee the rights of vulnerable and marginalized people. To that end, this year, I launched the first United Nations Disability Inclusion Strategy.

Finally, let us not forget the most widespread form of discrimination in the world, one that affects half of humankind — gender discrimination against women and girls. Gender equality is fundamentally a question of power. That power remains, mainly, in the hands of men. We see it in parliaments, boardrooms and, even this week — it must be said — in the halls and meeting rooms of the United Nations. We must break with the immobility of the past and think of women's rights and representation as a common goal for all humankind. That is why, every day at the United Nations, we work for gender parity and regional gender balance. Today we have achieved parity in my Senior Management Group and among Resident Coordinators leading the work of the United Nations in each country.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

I will not let up until we have reached gender parity at all levels at the United Nations and full equality for women and girls around the world. That means continuing to push back against those who resist women's rights. It means calling out a troubling commonality in terrorist attacks, extremist ideologies and brutal crimes — the violent misogyny of the perpetrators. It also means stepping up our efforts to expand opportunities.

Based on current trends, it will take two centuries to close the economic empowerment gap. We cannot accept a world that tells my granddaughters that equality will have to wait for their granddaughters' granddaughters.

*(spoke in English)*

As we continue all this vital work and more, I have launched ambitious reforms to make the United Nations more effective. I count on the Member States to place our Organization on a sound financial footing. In an ever more divided world, we need a strong United Nations.

Next year we will mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations — a critical moment to renew our common project. The problems we face are real, but so is hope. As we strive to serve people, we can also be inspired by people.

Over the past two and a half years, I have spent time with young African girls learning to code, with teachers equipping young people with new skills for the future and with entrepreneurs in many fields leading the world, innovation by innovation, into the green

economy. They and so many others are helping to build the future we want. Their aspirations and their human rights must always be our touchstone.

We are here to serve. We are here to advance the common good while upholding our shared humanity and values. That vision united the founders of our Organization. At a time of division, today we must reconnect with that spirit. Let us restore trust, rebuild hope and move ahead together.

**The President:** I thank the Secretary-General for his presentation.

## **Agenda item 8**

### **General debate**

**The President:** It is with great pleasure that I welcome everyone to the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. The presence of all participants is a veritable testament to the primacy of this great multilateral body. The issues raised here are most critical and increasingly urgent for the attainment of international peace and security, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For too long, we have remained at the crossroads of human development and, if we are to propel humankind to attain its utmost capacity, then we need to join efforts to find solutions to the untold hardships — violent conflicts, terrorism, natural disasters, drug and sex trafficking, illiteracy, and so on — that beset millions of people around the world.

In 1945, rising from the ashes of the Second World War, this Organization was created to ensure that we would never again traverse that destructive path. Despite occasional failings on our part, much good has come to humankind because of the work of this great Organization.

Our most recent achievement was the adoption of the transformative and ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015. The implementation of the SDGs by 2030 must be our priority for the sake of the billions of people who may never step inside this great Hall, but who hope that the work undertaken here will galvanize efforts for poverty eradication, zero hunger, quality education, climate action and inclusion. Achieving our targets under the SDGs requires cooperation in both financing and the sharing of experience. Without a doubt, the challenges posed by health pandemics, terrorism, displacement, climate

change, illiteracy and poverty will not be resolved by individual countries, as focused cooperation is required if they are to be halted. As President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, I will work with all delegations and the other organs of the United Nations to advance the implementation of the priorities that I have set out for the seventy-fourth session of the Assembly.

The promotion of international peace and security is at the heart of the work of the United Nations. We must continue to strengthen the Organization by ensuring that its peace and security architecture is appropriate for the twenty-first century, in particular by making prevention a priority. Such drivers of conflict as poverty, inequality, human rights abuses and a lack of access to education and employment opportunities must be tackled head-on. Through proper sharing of ideas and functional partnerships, we can address them successfully.

Poverty eradication remains a great challenge globally. While many countries around the world have succeeded in taking millions out of poverty, we have to do more to take hundreds of millions more out of abject poverty, misery and a squalid existence. Accordingly, I urge delegations to reflect specifically on how their countries can, among other things, ensure improved social-protection systems and channel a significant proportion of Government spending to hitherto marginalized or excluded groups that are most affected by poverty. In addition, countries need to cooperate on the development of entrepreneurial capacity and in the modernization of agriculture.

The fact that poverty and food shortages around the world have been exacerbated by climate change means that special focus must be placed on tackling climate change, as the repercussions of not acting pose grave dangers for our world, now and in future. Those dangers are evident in the financial and human impact that climate-related disasters like floods, cyclones, hurricanes, droughts and wildfires cause around the world. We need to deploy the knowledge and technologies available to us to ensure that we do not condemn our children to a world that cannot be repaired. I call for cooperation among nations to ensure that coalitions for climate resilience and mitigation actions are formed and strengthened. Accordingly, we should deliver on our commitments made in Paris in 2015 and devise creative ways of bridging the huge financial and technical gaps required for meaningful impact.

Ensuring access to free and quality primary and secondary education, as well as affordable and inclusive vocational and technical education, is vital. This is imperative, given the reality that no nation can develop beyond its educational capacity, particularly the capacity of its teachers. In that regard, there is an immediate need, inter alia, to ensure that students around the world are taught by qualified teachers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and the humanities. I urge countries endowed and better placed to deepen cooperation with those currently in greater need of capacity development of their teachers.

In addition, there is need to reflect on the gains that have been made and the opportunities that are available to the girl child and disabled children. Ensuring inclusion, particularly as it relates to the rights and empowerment of youth, women and the disabled is the right thing to do. It is also a guarantor of the expansion of the economy and the accentuation of inclusion in all countries. While many countries have made considerable advancement in that regard, all countries have ample room for improvement in that direction.

Clearly, effectively implementing what I have mentioned will require that we never relapse into the bitter rivalries of the past, while prioritizing cooperation, mutual interests and respect. We must pool our resources and energies and try harder to urgently address major global challenges facing humankind. Accordingly, it is important that we continue to strengthen South-South and triangular cooperation to reinforce the work of the United Nations.

Evidence abounds that we can do great things if we are courageous, steadfast and show empathy. From Mahatma Gandhi, who led a successful campaign for India's independence, to the young Greta Thunberg, who leads the demand for action on the climate, from Nelson Mandela, who stood resolutely and saw to the dismantling of apartheid, to Malala Yousafzai, who, against all odds, insisted on her rights to education, from Martin Luther King, Junior, a Baptist minister and leader of the civil rights movement, to Abubakar Abdullahi, a Nigerian imam, who saved the lives of over 250 Christians when they fled to his community during an attack on their community in Nigeria, to the various acts of courage and generosity of ordinary people in all countries, we are reminded that hope is not lost.

In conclusion, we should not forget that the fact that we stand in this magnificent Hall today, in the presence

of leaders from around the globe, to debate how best to achieve the world of our collective dream, is a remarkable feat in itself. I am certain that, during the remainder of this event-packed week, which will see us all shuttling between the various halls and meeting rooms of our great Organization, we will be giving focused attention to the suffering of billions of people around the world and crafting stronger cooperation, which is essential to creating a world where, in concert and in line with the founding principles of this Organization, we will give succour and hope to all people and nations for a more peaceful and prosperous world. There is great work to be done. We have no room for either cynicism or apathy. We should strive together to deliver for all.

Before giving the floor to the first speaker for this morning, I would like to remind members that the list of speakers for the general debate has been established on the agreed basis that statements should be no longer than 15 minutes, so as to enable all the speakers to be heard at a given meeting.

I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace within that time frame, so that interpretation into the other official United Nations languages may be provided properly.

I would also like to draw attention to the decision taken by the General Assembly at previous sessions, namely, that the practice of expressing congratulations inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered is strongly discouraged.

In that connection, after delivering their statements, speakers are invited to exit the General Assembly Hall through room GA-200, located behind the rostrum, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to proceed in the same manner during the general debate of the seventy-fourth session?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Finally, I should like to draw the attention of members to the fact that during the general debate official photographs of all the speakers are taken by the Department of Global Communications. Members interested in obtaining such photographs are requested to contact the Photo Library of the United Nations.

### **Address by Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil**

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

*Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Bolsonaro** (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): First of all, I thank God for my life, for the mission of presiding over Brazil and for the opportunity to re-establish truth, which is a good thing for all of us.

I come before the General Assembly today to introduce a new Brazil, a country that is re-emerging from the brink of socialism — a country being rebuilt on the basis of the yearnings and ideals of its people. Under my Administration, Brazil has been working to regain the world's trust and reduce unemployment, violence and the risk for business activities by streamlining bureaucracy, pursuing deregulation and, above all, leading by example.

My country came very close to socialism, which led to a situation of widespread corruption, serious economic recession, high crime rates and endless attacks on the family and religious values that underpin our traditions. In 2013, an agreement between the former Workers Party Government and the Cuban dictatorship brought to Brazil 10,000 physicians who had no evidence of professional training. They were prevented from bringing their spouses and children, had 75 per cent of their wages confiscated by the Cuban regime and were denied basic freedoms, such as that of coming and going. Their situation was tantamount to slave labour — believe me — and it was supported by human rights entities of both Brazil and the United Nations alike.

Before I took office, almost 90 per cent of those Cuban citizens left Brazil due to unilateral action by the Cuban regime. Those who decided to stay in Brazil will be subject to proper technical eligibility criteria in order to exercise the medical profession. Brazil has thus

stopped supporting the Cuban dictatorship by no longer sending \$300 million to Havana every year, as was the case previously.

History taught us that, as early as the 1960s, Cuban agents were sent to several countries to help establish dictatorships across the region. A few decades ago they tried to change the Brazilian regime and the systems in place in other Latin American countries. They were defeated. Brazilian civilians and military personnel were killed and many others had their reputations utterly destroyed. Nonetheless, we ultimately won the war and prevailed in safeguarding our freedom.

Agents of the Cuban regime made their way likewise into Venezuela thanks to Hugo Chávez. Today around 60,000 Cuban agents control and interfere with every area of Venezuelan society, especially intelligence and defence. Once a vibrant democratic country, Venezuela is today experiencing the cruelty of socialism. It is fair to say that, yes, socialism is working in Venezuela: everyone is poor and deprived of freedom.

Brazil has also felt the impact of the Venezuelan dictatorship. Of the more than 4 million citizens who fled the hunger and violence in Venezuela, a sizeable proportion migrated to Brazil. We have done our part to assist them, through Operation Welcome — an operation conducted by the Brazilian army that has earned praise worldwide.

We have also worked with other countries, including the United States of America, to ensure that democracy is restored in Venezuela. We have devoted concerted efforts to ensure that no other South American country will experience this nefarious scourge. The Sao Paulo Forum, a criminal organization established in 1990 by Fidel Castro, Lula da Silva and Hugo Chávez to spread and implement socialism throughout Latin America, remains alive and must be fought.

In the quest for prosperity, we have put in place policies to bring us closer to other countries that have achieved development and consolidated their democracy. There can be no political freedom without economic freedom, and vice versa. A free market, concession projects and privatization opportunities are already a visible part of today's Brazil. The Brazilian economy is recovering from the distortions and chains of more than two decades of fiscal irresponsibility, ideological manipulation of the State apparatus and widespread corruption. Economic openness, capable governmental management and enhanced productivity

are immediate goals for our Administration. We are opening up our economy and becoming an integral part of global value chains. In only eight months, we have successfully concluded the two most significant trade agreements in the history of my country: between the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR) and the European Union; and between MERCOSUR and the European Free Trade Association. We will enter into further such agreements in the months ahead.

We also stand ready to begin the process of accession to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. We are well on our way in that effort, having adopted the world's highest standards and best practices in all areas, ranging from financial regulation to environmental protection.

I note the presence here of indigenous leader and spokesperson Ms. Ysani Kalapalo. I shall now turn to the Amazon.

First of all, I wish to say that my Administration is solemnly committed to environmental preservation and sustainable development, to the benefit of Brazil and the world at large. Brazil is one of the richest countries in the world in terms of biodiversity and mineral resources. Our Amazon region is larger than all of Western Europe combined and remains virtually pristine and untouched. That is evidence of the fact that Brazil is a leader when it comes to environmental protection.

At this time of the year, dry weather and winds favour both spontaneous forest fires and criminal blazes. It is important to note that indigenous peoples and local populations also use forest fires as part of their culture and means of livelihood.

We all know that all countries have problems. However, the sensationalist attacks we suffered from much of the international media following the outbreak of fires in Amazonia stirred our patriotic sentiment. It is a fallacy to say that the Amazon is the heritage of humankind, and a misconception, scientists confirm, to say that our Amazonian forests are the lungs of the world. In resorting to those fallacies, certain countries, instead of helping, have amplified media lies, behaved disrespectfully and shown their true colonialist colours. They have even called into questioned that which we hold most dear: our sovereignty.

One of those countries, during the most recent Group of Seven meeting, dared to suggest imposing sanctions against Brazil without even consulting with

or listening to Brazil. I am grateful to those countries that refused to proceed with that absurd proposal. I thank President Donald Trump in particular, who very aptly summarized the spirit that should prevail among States Members of the United Nations, that is, respect for the national sovereignty and freedom of each of us.

Today 14 per cent of Brazilian territory is officially demarcated as indigenous land, but we must understand that our native peoples are human beings like all the rest of us. They want and deserve to enjoy the same rights as all of us. I want to make it clear: Brazil will not increase the area officially demarcated as indigenous lands to 20 per cent, as some Heads of State would like to see.

There are 225 different indigenous peoples in Brazil, in addition to about 70 tribes living in isolated locations throughout the country. Each people or tribe has its own chief, culture, traditions, customs and, above all, its own way of seeing the world. The views of one indigenous leader do not represent those of the entire Brazilian indigenous population. Some of those leaders, such as tribal chief Raoni, have often been used as pawns by foreign Governments as part of their information warfare to advance their interests in the Amazon. Unfortunately, some people, both inside and outside Brazil, with the support of non-governmental organizations, have stubbornly insisted on treating our indigenous peoples as cavemen.

Brazil now has a President who cares about those who were on our territory before the Portuguese arrived in the 1500s. Indigenous people do not want to be poor landowners sitting on rich lands, some of which, such as the Yanomami and Raposa Serra do Sol reserves, are the richest lands in the world. Those reserves are home to vast deposits of gold, diamonds, uranium, niobium and rare earth elements, among other resources. And those territories are huge. The Yanomami reserve alone is approximately 95,000 square kilometres, the size of Portugal or Hungary, although only 15,000 indigenous persons live there. That shows clearly that those who attack us are not concerned with indigenous peoples as human beings, but, rather, with the mineral wealth and biodiversity in those areas.

As evidence of the fact that there is no single authority among the indigenous peoples, I wish to read out an open letter by, and representing a substantial portion of, the indigenous communities in Brazil, addressed to the General Assembly.

“The Indigenous Farmers Group of Brazil, composed of various ethnic groups with representatives in all states of the Brazilian Federation, who inhabit an area of over 30 million hectares of the Brazilian territory, respectfully addresses Brazilian society to express its full, unconditional support for indigenous spokesperson and representative Ysani Kalapalo, of the Xingu indigenous park in the state of Mato Grosso, so that she may explain to the United Nations General Assembly, in New York, the reality of the indigenous peoples of Brazil, as well as shed light on the lies disseminated by the national and international media, which insist on keeping the indigenous peoples of Brazil as an endless market reserve, serving the interests of foreign countries that still see Brazil as a colony without rules or sovereignty.

“Fourteen per cent of Brazil’s national territory has been officially established as indigenous land, and many communities are thirsty and eager for the development of this part of the country to finally take place, without ideological constraints, which will, in turn, improve quality of life and the standard of entrepreneurship, health care and education. A new indigenous policy in Brazil is needed. Time is of the essence. Bold measures can and should be encouraged in the pursuit of autonomy and economic empowerment for indigenous peoples. Certainly, if a series of decisions is taken to that effect, we can envision a new model for the Brazilian indigenous agenda.

“A new chapter of hope is needed for indigenous communities. The situation of extreme poverty in which we find ourselves, surviving only on the family stipend and basic food supply, has never brought dignity or development. Radical environmentalism and outdated approaches to indigenous issues are out of sync with what indigenous peoples truly want and are tantamount to backwardness, marginalization and utter absence of civic rights.

“That reality requires world leaders attending the United Nations General Assembly to become familiar with our wishes and aspirations through the voice of indigenous spokesperson Ysani Kalapalo, who will convey the real situation of Brazilian indigenous communities and the environment. Therefore, Ysani Kalapalo enjoys the

trust and prestige of indigenous leaders interested in furthering development and empowerment and in attaining a higher profile and greater role and voice, and is in a position to represent the 52 ethnic groups listed in the annex to this letter. The monopoly of tribal chief Raoni is over.”

The United Nations has played a key role in overcoming colonialism and cannot possibly accept that this type of mindset be allowed to return to its halls and corridors under any pretext.

We must not forget that the world needs to be fed. France and Germany, for example, use more than 50 per cent of their territories for agriculture. By contrast, Brazil uses no more than 8 per cent of its land for food production; 61 per cent of our territory is preserved. Ours is a zero-tolerance policy for crime, including environmental crimes. I wish once again to affirm my stance in that regard. Any initiative to help or support the preservation of the Amazon rainforest, or other biomes, must fully respect the sovereignty of Brazil. Moreover, we reject attempts to exploit and instrumentalize environmental issues or indigenous policy in order to further foreign political and economic interests, especially attempts disguised as good intentions. We stand ready to work in partnership to exploit our resources with a view to developing all of our potential in a sustainable manner.

Brazil reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the highest standards of human rights and to the promotion of democracy and freedom, including the freedoms of expression, religion and the press. That commitment goes hand in hand with our efforts to fight corruption and crime — an urgent demand of Brazilian society. We will continue to contribute, in and outside the United Nations, to building a world free from impunity, with no safe havens for criminals or corrupt individuals. Under my Administration, Italian terrorist Cesare Battisti fled Brazil and was later arrested in Bolivia and extradited to Italy. Three other terrorists from Paraguay and one from Chile, who until recently lived in Brazil as political refugees, have also been repatriated to their countries of origin. Terrorists, under the guise of politically persecuted persons, will no longer find refuge in Brazil.

Not long ago, socialist Presidents who came before me embezzled hundreds of billions of dollars to buy off part of the media and our Parliament, all in a bid to attain absolute power. They have been tried and punished

thanks to the patriotism, perseverance and bravery of a judge who has become an icon in my country, Mr. Sérgio Moro, our current Minister of Justice and Public Security. Those Presidents also transferred a considerable amount of funds to third countries with the aim of promoting and realizing similar power-grabbing objectives throughout the region. That source of funds has now dried up. The same top-ranking Government officials came here, year after year, and made blithe statements about issues that never served Brazil’s real interests or contributed to world stability. Still, they were all applauded.

In my country, we had to do something about the nearly 70,000 murders and countless violent crimes that tore apart Brazilian society each year. Life, after all, is the most basic human right. Our military police officers were the preferred target of crime. In 2017 alone, around 400 military police officers were brutally murdered.

That is changing. Measures were taken and we managed to reduce murder rates by more than 20 per cent in the first six months of my Government. The seizure of cocaine and other drugs has reached a record high. Today Brazil is safer and even more welcoming. We have just extended visa exemptions to countries such as the United States, Japan, Australia and Canada. We are currently considering the adoption of similar measures for China and India, among others. With greater safety and ease, we want everyone to be able to visit Brazil, particularly our Amazon rainforest, with all its vastness and natural beauty. The Amazon is not being destroyed or consumed by fire, as the media misleadingly says. Each Member State can verify what I am saying. Do not hesitate to visit Brazil. It is very different to the country portrayed in many newspapers and television programmes.

Religious persecution is a scourge against which we must tirelessly fight. In recent years, in various regions we have witnessed cowardly attacks that victimized the faithful gathered in churches, synagogues and mosques. Brazil strongly condemns all such acts. It is ready to cooperate with other countries to protect those who are oppressed because of their faith.

The Brazilian people are particularly concerned about the growing persecution, discrimination and violence against missionaries and religious minorities in different regions of the world. That is why we supported the establishment of the International Day Commemorating the Victims of Acts of Violence

Based on Religion or Belief. On that day every year we will remember those who have suffered the harmful consequences of religious persecution. It is unacceptable that in the twenty-first century, with so many instruments, treaties and organizations whose aim is to safeguard all kinds of rights, there are still millions of Christians and people of other religions that lose their lives or their freedom because of their faith.

Brazil's devotion to the cause of peace is evidenced by its strong history of contributing to United Nations missions. For 70 years, Brazil has effectively contributed to United Nations peacekeeping operations. We support all efforts to make peacekeeping missions more effective, bringing real and tangible contributions to the host countries.

In diverse contexts, whether in Haiti, Lebanon or the Democratic Republic of Congo, our troops are acknowledged for their outstanding work and their respect for local communities, human rights and the principles that guide peacekeeping operations. I reaffirm our willingness to continue our tangible contributions to United Nations peacekeeping missions, including through training and capacity-building, areas where we have recognized experience.

Throughout this year, we have established a broad international agenda to restore Brazil's role on the world stage, as well as to re-establish relations with key partners. In January, we were in Davos, where we presented our ambitious reform programme for investors from all around the world. In March, we went to Washington, D.C., where we launched a comprehensive and bold partnership with the Government of the United States in all areas, particularly political cooperation and economic and military collaboration. Also in March, we visited Chile, where the Forum for the Progress and Development of South America was launched, an important initiative to ensure that South America is consolidated as an area of democracy and freedom.

We then visited Israel, where we identified numerous opportunities for cooperation, especially in the area of technology and security. I thank Israel for its support in combating recent disasters in my country.

We also visited one of our major partners in the Southern Cone: Argentina. With President Mauricio Macri and our partners from Uruguay and Paraguay, we have moved away from the ideology of the Common Market of the Southern Cone and achieved important trade advantages in terms of international trade

by concluding negotiations that had been ongoing for decades.

Later this year, we will visit key partners, both in the Middle East and in East Asia. Those visits will strengthen friendship and deepen relations with Japan, China, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Qatar. We hope to follow the same path with the entire Arab world and Asia. We are also looking forward to visiting our partners and friends in Africa, Oceania and Europe.

As can be seen, Brazil is open to the world and eager to establish partnerships with all those interested in working for prosperity, peace and freedom.

The Brazil that I represent is a country that is recovering and rising again, reinforcing its partnerships and regaining its political and economic confidence. We are ready to take on our responsibilities in the international system.

Over the past few decades, without realizing we let ourselves be seduced by ideologies that sought not the truth but absolute power. Ideology has taken root in the areas of culture, education and the media, dominating means of communication, universities and schools. Ideology has invaded our homes and sought to dismantle the *cellular mater* — mainstay — of any healthy society: the family.

It has also tried to destroy the innocence of our children, distorting even their most basic and elementary identity: biology itself. Political correctness came to dominate the public debate, expelling rationality and replacing it with manipulation, recurring clichés and slogans. Ideology has invaded the human soul itself to expel from it God and the dignity with which He has endowed us.

With such methods, ideology has always left a trail of death, ignorance and misery wherever it went. I am a living proof of that. I was cowardly stabbed by a leftist militant and survived only by a miracle. Once again, I thank God for my life.

The United Nations can help to overcome the materialistic and ideological environment that undermines some basic principles of human dignity. The Organization was established to promote peace among sovereign nations and social progress in freedom, in accordance with the Preamble of the Charter of the United Nations.

With regard to issues such as climate, democracy, human rights, equal rights and duties of men and women and many others, all we need to do is to behold the truth:

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” (*The Holy Bible, John 8:32*)

All our means, both national and international, should ultimately be directed towards that goal.

We are not here to erase nationalities and sovereignties in the name of an abstract global interest. This is not the global interests organization; this is the United Nations Organization, and so it must remain. With humility and confidence in the liberating power of truth, I reassure the United Nations that it can count on the new Brazil that I have presented to the Assembly today. By the grace and glory of God, I thank everyone.

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

*Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America**

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

*Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Trump:** Seven decades of history have passed through this Hall in all of their richness and drama. From where I stand, the world has heard from presidents and premiers, even at the height of the Cold War. We have seen the foundation of nations. We have seen the ringleaders of revolution. We have beheld saints who inspired us with hope, rebels who steered us with passion and heroes who emboldened us with courage, all here to share plans, proposals, visions and ideas on the world’s biggest stage.

Like those who met us before, our time is one of great contests, high stakes and clear choices. The essential divide that runs all around the world and throughout history is once again thrown in to stark relief. It is the divide between those whose thirst for control deludes them into thinking they are destined to rule over others and those people and nations who want only to rule themselves.

I have the immense privilege of addressing the General Assembly today as the elected leader of a nation that prizes liberty, independence and self-government above all. The United States, after having spent over \$2.5 trillion since my election to completely rebuild our great military, is also by far the world’s most powerful nation. Hopefully, it will never have to use this power. Americans know that, in a world where others seek conquest and domination, our nation must be strong in wealth, in might and in spirit. That is why the United States rigorously defends the traditions and customs that have made us who we are.

Like my beloved country, each nation represented in this Hall has a cherished history, culture and heritage that is worth defending and celebrating, and which gives us our singular potential and strength. The free world must embrace its national foundations. It must not attempt to erase them or replace them. Looking around and all over this large, magnificent planet, the truth is plain to see. If you want freedom, take pride in your country. If you want democracy, hold on to your sovereignty. And if you want peace, love your nation.

Wise leaders always put the good of their own people and their own country first. The future does not belong to globalists. The future belongs to patriots. The future belongs to sovereign and independent nations that protect their citizens, respect their neighbours and honour the differences that make each country special and unique. That is why we in the United States have embarked on an exciting programme of national renewal. In everything we do, we are focused on empowering the dreams and aspirations of our citizens.

Thanks to our pro-growth economic policies, our domestic unemployment rate reached its lowest level in over half a century. Fuelled by massive tax cuts and regulations cuts, jobs are being produced at a historic rate. Six million Americans were added to the employment rolls in under three years. Last month, African-American, Hispanic-American and Asian-American unemployment reached their lowest rates

ever recorded. We are marshalling our nation's vast energy abundance, and the United States is now the number one producer of oil and natural gas anywhere in the world. Wages are rising, incomes are soaring and 2.5 million Americans have been lifted out of poverty in less than three years.

As we rebuild the unrivalled might of the American military, we are also revitalizing our alliances by making it very clear that all of our partners are expected to pay their fair share of the tremendous defence burden that the United States has borne in the past. At the centre of our vision for national renewal is an ambitious campaign to reform international trade. For decades, the international trading system has been easily exploited by nations acting in very bad faith. As jobs were outsourced, a small handful grew wealthy at the expense of the middle class.

In America the result was 4.2 million lost manufacturing jobs and \$15 trillion in trade deficits over the last quarter-century. The United States is now taking decisive action to end this grave economic injustice. Our goal is simple. We want balanced trade that is both fair and reciprocal. We have worked closely with our partners in Mexico and Canada to replace the North American Free Trade Agreement with a brand new and, hopefully, bipartisan United States-Mexico-Canada agreement. Tomorrow I will join Prime Minister Abe of Japan to continue our progress in finalizing a terrific new trade deal. As the United Kingdom makes preparations to exit the European Union, I have made clear that we stand ready to complete an exceptional new trade agreement with the United Kingdom that will bring tremendous benefits to both our countries. We are working closely with Prime Minister Boris Johnson on a magnificent new trade deal.

The most important difference in America's new approach to trade concerns our relationship with China. In 2001, China was admitted to the World Trade Organization (WTO). Our leaders at that time argued that that decision would compel China to liberalize its economy and strengthen protections against things that were unacceptable to us and in support of private property and the rule of law.

Two decades later, that theory has been tested and proven completely wrong. Not only has China declined to adopt promised reforms, but it has embraced an economic model dependent on massive market barriers, heavy State subsidies, currency manipulation, product

dumping, forced technology transfers and the theft of intellectual property and trade secrets on a grand scale.

As just one example, I recently met the Chief Executive Officer of a terrific American company, Micron Technology, at the White House. Micron produces memory chips used in countless electronics. To advance the Chinese Government's five-year economic plan, a company owned by the Chinese State allegedly stole Micron's designs, valued at up to \$8.7 billion. Soon the Chinese company obtained patents for a nearly identical product, and Micron was banned from selling its own goods in China. But we are seeking justice.

The United States lost 60,000 factories after China entered the WTO. That is happening to other countries all over the globe. The World Trade Organization needs drastic change. The second-largest economy in the world should not be permitted to declare itself a developing country in order to game the system at others' expense. For years, those abuses were tolerated, ignored or even encouraged. Globalism exerted a religious pull over past leaders, causing them to ignore their own national interests.

But as far as America is concerned, those days are over. To confront those unfair practices, I placed massive tariffs on more than \$500 billion worth of Chinese-made goods. Already, as a result of those tariffs, supply chains are relocating back to America and other nations and billions of dollars are being paid to our Treasury.

The American people are absolutely committed to restoring balance to our relationship with China. Hopefully, we can reach an agreement that would be beneficial for both countries. But as I have made very clear, I will not accept a bad deal for the American people.

As we endeavour to stabilize our relationship, we are also carefully monitoring the situation in Hong Kong. The world fully expects that the Chinese Government will honour its binding treaty made with the British and registered with the United Nations, in which China commits to protecting Hong Kong's freedom, legal system and democratic ways of life. How China chooses to handle the situation will say a great deal about its role in the world in future. We are all counting on President Xi as a great leader. The United States does not seek conflict with any other nation. We desire peace, cooperation and mutual gain with all. But I will never fail to defend America's interests.

One of the greatest security threats facing peace-loving nations today is the repressive regime in Iran. The regime's record of death and destruction is well known to us all. Not only is Iran the number one State sponsor of terrorism, but Iran's leaders are fuelling the tragic wars in both Syria and Yemen. At the same time, the regime is squandering the nation's wealth and future in a fanatical quest for nuclear weapons and the means to deliver them. We must never allow that to happen.

To stop Iran's path to nuclear weapons and missiles, I withdrew the United States from the terrible Iran nuclear deal, which has very little time remaining. It did not allow inspection of important sites and did not cover ballistic missiles. Following our withdrawal, we implemented severe economic sanctions on the country. Hoping to free itself from sanctions, the regime has escalated its violent and unprovoked aggression. In response to Iran's recent attack on oil facilities in Saudi Arabia, we just imposed the highest level of sanctions on Iran's central bank and sovereign wealth fund.

All nations have a duty to act. No responsible Government should subsidize Iran's bloodlust. As long as Iran's menacing behaviour continues, sanctions will not be lifted; they will be tightened. Iran's leaders will have turned a proud nation into just another cautionary tale of what happens when a ruling class abandons its people and embarks on a crusade for personal power and riches.

For 40 years, the world has listened to Iran's rulers as they lash out at everyone else for the problems they alone have created. They conduct ritual chants of "Death to America" and traffic in monstrous anti-Semitism. Last year, the country's Supreme Leader stated: Israel is a malignant, cancerous tumour that has to be removed and eradicated: it is possible and it will happen.

America will never tolerate such anti-Semitic hate. Fanatics have long used the hatred of Israel to distract from their own failures. Thankfully, there is a growing recognition in the wider Middle East that the countries of the region share common interests in battling extremism and unleashing economic opportunity. That is why it is so important to have full normalized relations between Israel and its neighbours. Only a relationship built on common interests, mutual respect and religious tolerance can forge a better future.

Iran's citizens deserve a Government that cares about reducing poverty, ending corruption and

increasing jobs, not stealing their money to fund massacres at home and abroad. After four decades of failure, it is time for Iran's leaders to step forward and stop threatening other countries and focus on building up their own country. It is time for Iran's leaders to finally put the Iranian people first.

America is ready to embrace friendship with all who genuinely seek peace and respect. Many of America's closest friends today were once our greatest foes. The United States has never believed in permanent enemies. We want partners, not adversaries. America knows that, while anyone can make war, only the most courageous can choose peace. For the same reason, we have pursued bold diplomacy on the Korean peninsula. I have told Kim Jong Un what I truly believe — that, like Iran, his country is full of tremendous untapped potential, but that in order to realize that promise North Korea must denuclearize.

Around the world our message is clear — America's goal is lasting harmony, and not to go on with these endless wars. With that goal in mind, my Administration is also pursuing the hope of a brighter future in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, the Taliban has chosen to continue their savage attacks. We will continue to work with our coalition of Afghan partners to stamp out terrorism, and we will never stop working to make peace a reality.

Here in the Western hemisphere we are joining with our partners to ensure stability and opportunity all across the region. In that mission, one of our most critical challenges is illegal immigration, which undermines prosperity, rips apart societies and empowers ruthless criminal cartels.

Mass illegal migration is unfair, unsafe and unsustainable for everyone involved. The sending countries become depleted very fast, their young people are not taken care of and human capital goes to waste. The receiving countries are overburdened with more migrants than they can responsibly accept, and the migrants themselves are exploited, assaulted and abused by vicious coyotes. Nearly one third of women who make the journey north to our border are sexually assaulted along the way.

Yet here in the United States and around the world there is a growing cottage industry of radical activists and non-governmental organizations that promote human smuggling. Those groups encourage illegal migration and demand the erasure of national borders.

Today I have a message for those open-border activists who cloak themselves in the rhetoric of social justice: your policies are not just; your policies are cruel and evil; you are empowering criminal organizations that prey on innocent men, women and children; you put your own false sense of virtue before the lives and well-being of countless innocent people; when you undermine border security, you are undermining human rights and human dignity.

Many of the countries represented here today are coping with the challenges of uncontrolled migration. Every country has the absolute right to protect its borders. And so, of course, does our country. Today we must resolve to work together to end human smuggling and human trafficking and put those criminal networks out of business for good.

Our country, I can tell the Assembly sincerely, is working closely with our friends in the region, including Mexico, Canada, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador and Panama, to uphold the integrity of borders and ensure safety and prosperity for our people. I would like to thank President López Obrador of Mexico for the great cooperation we are receiving and for right now putting 27,000 troops on our southern border. Mexico is showing us great respect, and I respect them in return.

In the United States we have taken unprecedented action to stop the flow of illegal immigration. I implore anyone thinking of crossing our border illegally to please hear these words: do not pay the smugglers; do not pay the coyotes; do not put yourself in danger; do not put your children in danger because, if you make it here, you will not be allowed in; you will be promptly returned home; you will not be released into our country. As long as I am President of the United States, we will enforce our laws and protect our borders.

For all of the countries of the Western hemisphere, our goal is to help people invest in the bright futures of their own nations. Our region is full of such incredible promise, dreams waiting to be built and national destinies for all waiting to be pursued. Throughout the hemisphere, there are millions of hard-working, patriotic young people eager to build, innovate and achieve. But those nations cannot reach their potential if a generation of young people abandon their homes in search of a life elsewhere. We want every nation in our region to flourish and its people to thrive in freedom and peace.

In that mission we are also committed to supporting those people in the Western hemisphere who live under brutal oppression, such as those in Cuba, Nicaragua and Venezuela. According to a recent report of the Human Rights Council, women in Venezuela stand in line for 10 hours a day waiting for food. More than 15,000 people have been detained as political prisoners. Modern-day death squads are carrying out thousands of extrajudicial killings. The dictator Maduro is a Cuban puppet protected by Cuban bodyguards, hiding from his own people, while Cuba plunders Venezuela's oil wealth to sustain its own corrupt communist rule.

Since I last spoke in this Hall (see A/73/PV.6), the United States and our partners have built a historic coalition of 55 countries that recognize the legitimate Government of Venezuela. To the Venezuelans trapped in that nightmare: please know that all of America is united behind you. The United States has vast quantities of humanitarian aid ready and waiting to be delivered. We are watching the situation in Venezuela very closely. We await the day when democracy will be restored, Venezuela will be free and liberty will prevail throughout the hemisphere.

One of the most serious challenges our countries face is the spectre of socialism. It is a wrecker of nations and destroyer of societies. Events in Venezuela reminds us all that socialism and communism are not about justice, equality or lifting up the poor, and they are certainly about the good of the nation. Socialism and communism are about one thing only — power for the ruling class. Today I repeat a message for the world that I have delivered at home: America will never be a socialist country.

In the last century socialism and communism killed 100 million people. Sadly, as we see in Venezuela, the death toll continues to rise in that country. Those totalitarian ideologies combined with modern technology had the power to exercise new and disturbing forms of suppression and domination. For that reason, the United States is taking steps to better screen foreign technology and investments and to protect our data and our security. We urge every nation present to do the same. Freedom and democracy must be constantly guarded and protected, both abroad and from within. We must always be sceptical of those who want conformity and control. Even in free nations, we see alarming signs and new challenges to liberty. A small number of social media platforms are acquiring immense power over what we can see and what we are

allowed to say. A permanent political class is openly disdainful, dismissive and defiant of the will of the people. A faceless bureaucracy operates in secret and weakens democratic rule. The media and academic institutions make outright assaults on our histories, traditions and values.

In the United States, my Administration has made clear to social media companies that we will uphold the right to free speech. A free society cannot allow social media giants to silence the voice of the people, and a free people must never, ever be enlisted in the cause of silencing, coercing, cancelling or blacklisting their own neighbours.

As we defend American values, we affirm the right of all people to live in dignity. For that reason, my Administration is working with other nations to stop the criminalization of homosexuality, and we stand in solidarity with lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer persons who live in countries that punish, jail or execute individuals based upon sexual orientation.

We are also championing the role of women in our societies. Nations that empower women are much wealthier and safer and much more politically stable. It is therefore vital — not only to a nation's prosperity but also to its national security — to pursue women's economic development. Guided by those principles, my Administration launched the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative. It is the first-ever Government-wide approach to women's economic empowerment, which will work to ensure that women all over the planet have the legal right to own and inherit property, work in the same industries as men, travel freely and obtain access to credit and institutions.

Yesterday I was pleased to host leaders for a discussion about an ironclad American commitment to protect religious leaders and religious freedom. That fundamental right is under growing threat around the world. It is hard to believe, but 80 per cent of the world's population lives in countries where religious liberty is in significant danger, or even completely outlawed. Americans will never tire in our efforts to defend and promote freedom of worship and religion. We want and support religious liberty for all.

Americans will also never tire of defending innocent life. We are aware that many United Nations projects have attempted to assert a global right to taxpayer-funded abortion on demand right up until the moment of delivery. Global bureaucrats have absolutely

no business attacking the sovereignty of nations that wish to protect innocent life. Like many nations here today, we in America believe that every child, born and unborn, is a sacred gift from God.

There is no circumstance under which the United States will allow international actors to trample on the rights of our citizens, including the right to self-defence. That is why I announced this year that we will never ratify the Arms Trade Treaty, which would threaten the liberties of law-abiding American citizens. The United States will always uphold our constitutional right to keep and bear arms. We will always uphold our Second Amendment. The core rights and values America defends today were inscribed in America's founding documents. Our nation's founders understood that there will always be those who believe that they are entitled to wield power and control over others.

Tyranny advances under many names and many theories, but it always comes down to the desire for domination. It protects not the interests of many but the privilege of few. Our founders gave us a system designed to restrain that dangerous impulse. They chose to entrust American power to those most invested in the fate of our nation, a proud and fiercely independent people.

The true good of a nation can be pursued only by those who love it, by citizens who are rooted in its history, nourished by its culture, committed to its values and attached to its people, and who know that its future is theirs to build or theirs to lose. Patriots see a nation and its destiny in ways no one else can. Liberty is only preserved, sovereignty is only secured, democracy is only sustained and greatness is only realized by the will and devotion of patriots. In their spirit is found the strength to resist oppression, the inspiration to forge legacy, the goodwill to seek friendship and the bravery to reach for peace. Love of our nations makes the world better for all nations.

I invite all the leaders present here today to join us in the most fulfilling mission a person could have, the most profound contribution anyone can make — lift up your nations, cherish your culture, honour your histories, treasure your citizens, make your countries strong, prosperous and righteous, honour the dignity of your people, and nothing will be out of your reach.

When our nations are greater, the future will be brighter, our people will be happier and our partnerships will be stronger. With God's help, together we will cast

off the enemies of liberty and overcome the oppressors of dignity. We will set new standards of living and reach new heights of human achievement. We will rediscover old truths, unravel old mysteries and make thrilling new breakthroughs. And we will find more beautiful friendship and more harmony among nations than ever before. The path to peace, progress, freedom, justice and a better world for all humankind begins at home.

God bless those present, God bless the nations of the world. And God bless America.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the United States of America for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Donald Trump, President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

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

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

*Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Al Sisi (spoke in Arabic):** At the outset, it gives me pleasure to sincerely congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. I also express my appreciation to Ms. María Fernanda Espinoza Garcés, President of the General Assembly at its previous session.

Our gathering this year comes at a time when the magnitude of the challenges facing our world is increasing. It is therefore imperative that we all engage in an in-depth discussion on the prospects for advancing our work under the umbrella of the United Nations, while upholding the noble values upon which the Organization was founded. That can be achieved by reaffirming our commitment to an effective and just international order that is based on dialogue, cooperation, promoting a culture of peace and mutual respect.

As a founding member of the United Nations and of a number of regional organizations, including the African Union, which we are honoured to chair this year, and of the League of Arab States, Egypt has always possessed its own unique vision and contribution towards addressing the greatest challenges of our world. Allow me here, from this important rostrum, to present Egypt's visions and contributions in that regard.

Respecting the principle of national ownership of solutions is crucial to ensuring the effectiveness of the international multilateral system. Egypt has a pioneer national experience in that regard. In recent years, it has embarked on an ambitious plan to comprehensively advance its society, including by resolutely combating terrorism and launching the most ambitious economic reform programme in its modern history. That has been undertaken in accordance with national plans and priorities, which have been embraced by the Egyptian people, who have graciously shouldered their burden of successfully implementing the first phase in a manner that exceeded all expectations.

Regionally, as the current Chair of the African Union, we have worked alongside our brothers to consolidate the principle of African solutions to African problems. That seeks to develop a comprehensive approach that lays the foundations for development through a continent-wide vision based on our common history, unity of destiny and confidence in our ability to achieve progress towards integration and uphold the interests of our peoples. To that end, a new mechanism has been launched in Cairo, which will focus on post-conflict reconstruction, namely, the African Union Centre for Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Development.

Undoubtedly, all Member States are well aware of the many recent successes in implementing the principle of national ownership, supported by an active African role, which resulted in achieving a peace agreement in the Central African Republic as well as developing a common vision among the various parties in the Sudan to manage the transition phase in that country. In that connection, I would like to call for the removal of the Sudan's name from the list of States that sponsor terrorism, in order to acknowledge the positive transformation of that brotherly country, which would enable it to confront the economic challenges it faces by interacting with international economic organizations in order to fulfil its people's ambitions

and ensure that it returns to its rightful place within the international community.

On the principle of national ownership, African countries are fully cognizant of the importance of formulating genuine and effective partnerships to address the political and economic challenges they face and gain access to knowledge and technology, develop African human resources and mobilize the necessary financing and political support — all essential to achieving the African Union's Agenda 2063.

I therefore call upon international, continental and regional financing institutions to assume their role in financing development in Africa on the most favourable terms. Indeed, Africa is a continent of promising opportunities. It could become the new engine of growth for the entire global economy, especially after the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area, the strengthening of regional integration arrangements and the development of an ambitious strategy for infrastructure.

I would like, in that connection, to refer to Egypt's convening of the first Aswan Forum for Sustainable Peace and Development, to be held in December in Aswan, which will serve as a platform for dialogue among international and regional actors, including political leaders, financial institutions, civil society and the private sector, that aims to implement international and regional initiatives and mechanisms targeting Africa.

Resolving protracted and inherited crises is a necessary precondition for any serious efforts to formulate a more effective international system. The most prominent example of that is the longest-standing crisis in the Middle East — the Palestinian question. The persistence of that question, without a just solution based on international resolutions that call for the establishment of the independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital, means not only the continued plight of the Palestinian people but also the continued depletion of the capabilities and resources of the peoples of the Middle East.

I reiterate with a clear conscience what I have stated from this rostrum over the past few years — Arabs are open to the realization of a just and comprehensive peace, the Arab Peace Initiative is still valid and there remains an opportunity to launch a new phase in the Middle East.

However, we need bold decisions that restore the rights of the Palestinians and pave the way for a major change in the reality of the region and — I say this without exaggeration — the entire international system. Such decisions would lead to the establishment of a security and economic system in the Middle East that is based on peace, security, cooperation and common interests.

The adoption of comprehensive solutions to address the root causes of international problems is imperative for the success of the international multilateral system. That applies to the protracted crisis of the brotherly Libyan people, who suffer daily from the scourge of an armed conflict that must be stopped.

It is time to take a decisive stance to address the root causes of the Libyan crisis in a comprehensive manner by committing to the full implementation of all the provisions of the United Nations action plan adopted by the Security Council in October 2017 and by addressing the grave imbalance in the distribution of wealth and power, as well as the lack of public oversight by the Libyan people's elected representatives over political and economic decision-making. We also need to work on unifying all national institutions in order to save our brotherly neighbour from the ensuing chaos triggered by militias and prevent the intervention of external actors in Libya.

Just as it is imperative to find a comprehensive solution to the Libyan crisis, a political solution in Syria has also become an urgent need. We can no longer afford to waste time and continue in the vicious cycle that Syria has been enduring for eight years. While Egypt welcomes the announcement of the formation of a constitutional committee, we nevertheless call for the immediate commencement of its work without delay as a fundamental step towards the realization of a comprehensive political settlement, in accordance with Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). That would lead to safeguarding the unity and territorial integrity of Syria and the cohesion of its institutions, and would put an end to the bloodshed while totally eliminating terrorism.

The same logic applies to the protracted crisis in Yemen. It is time to take a decisive stance to end the crisis there by implementing a political solution based on the well-known parameters. We need to end foreign interventions by non-Arab regional parties that seek to curtail Arab national security. We also need to

address the unprecedented threats facing the Arabian Gulf region, including threats to navigation, as well as the recent attacks on oil installations in the sisterly Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The principle of addressing matters comprehensively also applies to one of the most daunting challenges of our time — terrorism. Egypt has persistently called for a comprehensive approach to combating terrorism based on the necessity of confronting all terrorist organizations, without exception. In that regard, I stress the need for all to fully comply with the relevant Security Council resolutions and hold accountable those who support terrorism — whether by providing them with funding, weapons, safe havens or media platforms — in addition to those involved in facilitating the movement and travel of terrorists.

From this rostrum, I reiterate Egypt's readiness, in the light of its extensive counter-terrorism experience, to intensify its cooperation with friendly countries and the United Nations, especially with regard to countering the ideology of terrorism. I stress the importance in that regard of implementing Security Council resolution 2354 (2017), on the implementation of the comprehensive international framework to counter terrorist narratives, which was adopted on the basis of an Egyptian initiative to uphold the values of tolerance and the renewal of religious discourse.

The Security Council must work seriously and resolutely to address the imbalance in its composition and the shortcomings of its decision-making process. We must ensure a just and balanced representation in the Council. We must work to rectify the historical injustice to which our African continent has been subjected. I reiterate our commitment to the common African position based on the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration, and I call upon the Assembly to adopt that just position within the framework of the relevant governmental negotiations.

For decades, Egypt has sought to strengthen and deepen the bonds of cooperation with its brotherly Nile basin countries, with which it enjoys excellent relations. As a testament to its keenness to further the well-being of the sisterly peoples of the Nile basin, Egypt has expressed its understanding regarding Ethiopia's first steps towards construction of the Renaissance Dam, despite the fact that Ethiopia did not conduct the necessary studies on the effects of that huge project

to ensure that no harm befalls the water interests of downstream countries, including Egypt.

Yet Egypt took the initiative to propose the Agreement on Declaration of Principles on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, which was signed in Khartoum on 23 March 2015, initiating a four-year negotiation process to reach an agreement governing the process of filling and operating the Renaissance Dam. Unfortunately, those negotiations have not yielded the desired results.

Nevertheless, Egypt still hopes for an agreement that will secure the common interests of the peoples of the Blue Nile in Ethiopia, the Sudan and Egypt. The continued impasse in the negotiations on the Renaissance Dam will have negative repercussions for the stability and development of the region in general, and of Egypt in particular.

While we recognize Ethiopia's right to development, for Egypt the water of the Nile is a matter of life and existence, which places a great responsibility on the international community to play a constructive role in urging all parties to demonstrate flexibility in order to achieve a mutually satisfactory agreement.

In conclusion, Egypt's message today comes in the form of a call for the pursuit of peace, a call to action for the benefit of humankind, a call for cooperation and mutual understanding, a call for the achievement of sustainable development and the promotion and protection of human rights, and a call for the realization of what is the ideal path for the benefit of the international community.

May God help us for the good of all our peoples. Peace and God's mercy and blessing be upon those present.

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

*Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey**

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

*Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Erdoğan** (*spoke in Turkish; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): On behalf of the Turkish nation and on my own behalf, I salute the General Assembly with the most heartfelt emotion.

I would like to thank Ms. Espinosa Garcés for her successful work over the past year. I also wholeheartedly congratulate Mr. Tijjani Muhammad Bande, who has taken up the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. I hope and pray that this session of the Assembly will bring peace and prosperity to the whole world and humankind.

Our world today faces many challenges and much pain resulting from injustice on a global scale. The great scholar of our civilization, Rumi, once defined justice as

“appropriately sharing rights and obligations among the people and allocating to them what they are entitled to”.

It is obvious that today neither people’s rights nor their responsibilities are shared appropriately. At the same time, injustice generates instability, power struggles, crises, waste and extravagance. Yet the Organization in whose Hall we are gathered today was established in the aftermath of the Second World War with the ultimate purpose of eradicating injustice.

Indeed, the international community is gradually losing its ability to find lasting solutions to such challenges as terrorism, hunger, misery and climate change, all of which threaten the future of all of us. We have no doubt that the theme for the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly is fitting in that regard: “Galvanizing multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion”.

But what is more important than that is to understand what we can achieve together. It is unacceptable to see that one part of the world lives in luxury and enjoys the benefits of prosperity while people in other parts

of the world suffer at the hands of poverty, misery and illiteracy. It is painful to see that, while a fortunate minority in the world is discussing such issues as digital technology, robotics, artificial intelligence and obesity, more than 2 billion people are living under the poverty line and 1 billion people are suffering from hunger. We cannot turn our backs on the reality that, until all of us are safe, none of us will be safe.

For many years I have been saying from this rostrum that we cannot leave the fate of humankind to the discretion of a handful of countries. Today I would like to reiterate once again that the world is greater than five countries. It is high time that we change our current mentality, our institutions, organizations and rules. The inequality between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States is by itself enough to undermine global stability. It bothers us, like everyone else, that weapons of mass destruction, instead of being totally eliminated, are used as leverage in every crisis. The possession of nuclear power should either be forbidden for all or permissible for everyone. For the sake of a peaceful future for all humankind, let us solve that problem as soon as possible on the basis of justice.

At a time when 13 people lose their lives every minute owing to air pollution and when global warming threatens our very future, we cannot afford to remain indifferent. First and foremost, we need to strengthen the capacity and efficiency of the United Nations. In particular, we should immediately carry out much-needed fundamental reforms of the Security Council, in line with the principles of justice and equality.

With a proactive and humane foreign policy, Turkey embraces the rest of the world and strives to find justice-based solutions to our problems. It is not without reason that Turkey has earned distinction as the most generous country in terms of humanitarian aid and the country hosting the largest number of displaced persons in the world.

The third African Union-Turkey Partnership summit, to be held in Turkey in 2020, is another concrete example of our dedication and our proactive humanitarian policy. I invite all the countries present in this Hall to support our policies and initiatives, which we have formulated on the basis of justice, ethics and conscience.

Syria today has become a wound in the collective conscience of humankind and a symbol of global injustice. Since 2011 the regime and terrorist

organizations, as well as the forces encouraging them, have been pursuing a policy of perpetual crisis. Almost 1 million people have been killed and 12 million people have been displaced, while half of the population has been forced to live elsewhere. The Syrian crisis needs to be ended once and for all.

Turkey is the country most affected by the threat of Da'esh, the terrorist organization that has threatened our borders and targeted the very heart of surrounding cities with suicide bombings, killing hundreds of Turkish citizens. Turkey is the country that has inflicted the most important and heaviest blow against the presence of Da'esh in Syria. Through Operation Euphrates Shield, we have neutralized approximately 3,500 Da'esh terrorists and paved the way for that terrorist organization's downfall in Syria. We are also at the forefront of international efforts to identify the terrorists and foreign fighters who come from all over the world to join Da'esh, by imposing entry bans and deportations to and from our country.

At the same time, Turkey is the most generous country today in terms of humanitarian aid and in terms of the ratio between official humanitarian assistance and gross domestic product. We are currently hosting 5 million asylum seekers who are fleeing conflict, starvation and persecution. In other words, there are more asylum-seekers in Turkey than in the combined population of 29 states of the United States, and 3.6 million of them are from Syria. In fact, the number of Syrian brothers and sisters we are currently hosting on our soil is well over half the population of New York City.

We have devoted \$40 billion to the asylum seekers over the past eight years. But have we in Turkey received anything? I will tell the Assembly. To date we have received no more than €3 billion from the European Union, not as direct contributions into our national budget but through international organizations. That amount was allocated to the Disaster Relief Agency of Turkey and the Turkish Red Crescent.

Of the asylum seekers who have fled to our country, 365,000 have safely returned to areas that we have secured within Syria, including the city of Jarablus. Nearly half the Syrian asylum seekers in Turkey are under the age of 18. The number of Syrian children born on our territory has reached 500,000. We provide them not only housing but also with essential services, such as education and health care.

Unfortunately, the international community has been too quick to forget the journey of survival that they have made, ending either in the dark waters of the Mediterranean Sea or confronted by the security fences stretching along the borders that they are trying to flee. As the Assembly can see, this is the picture of baby Aylan, whose lifeless body washed ashore not so long ago but has already been forgotten. We should never forget that that could happen to any of us. There are many baby Aylans. There are millions of baby Aylans. And we need to take action for them. It is a responsibility to which we must rise.

In the first eight months of this year alone, we saved 32,000 irregular migrants from drowning at sea and sent 58,000 irregular migrants, excluding Syrians, back to their countries. Together with those fleeing other parts of the world, Turkey currently hosts 5 million oppressed and victimized people on its soil. Unfortunately, we have been abandoned in our selfless sacrifice to benefit asylum-seekers.

Genuine return has not been possible to the regions in Syria controlled by the regime and terrorist organizations such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party-Kurdish People's Protection Units (PKK-YPG) and Da'esh. Syrians who fled their country for their lives have been able to return only to those areas liberated and secured by Turkey. Today we face three important issues that must be dealt with as we seek to resolve the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

The first is the territorial integrity and political unity of Syria, which depends greatly on an effectively functioning constitutional committee. We met with our Russian and Iranian counterparts in Ankara early last week and, through the Russian summit memorandum, have managed to accomplish most of our goals. When a permanent political solution is reached in Syria, territorial integrity will be restored.

The second important issue is that we must do everything possible to prevent a possible massacre in the city of Idlib and a wave of migration 4 million strong. Despite some setbacks, the agreement we reached with Russia in Sochi on that issue remains valid. Turkey cannot withstand another influx of migration. We therefore expect all countries around the world to support Turkey's efforts to ensure security and stability in Idlib.

The third important issue is the elimination of the PKK-YPG terrorist organization east of the Euphrates,

where it occupies one quarter of Syria and seeks to legitimize itself as the so-called Syrian democratic forces. We will not be able to find a permanent solution to the issue of Syria if we fail to deal with all terrorist organizations in the same way.

We remain engaged in talks with the United States with a view to establishing a safe zone within Syria. We intend to establish a peace corridor in Syria, 30 kilometres wide by 480 kilometres long, where we hope, with the support of the international community, to facilitate the settlement of 2 million Syrians.

I would like to show the Assembly a map illustrating our plans — the border with Turkey and the proposed safe zone below. If such a safe zone can be established, we could confidently resettle between 1 million and 2 million refugees. Achieving that goal is within our reach. By working together — with the United States, the coalition forces, Russia and Iran — we could resettle the refugees, thereby saving them from tent camps or container camps. We can take the necessary steps by working together. The Republic of Turkey cannot bear that burden alone. We need to take the necessary measures as soon as possible.

If the region can be extended to the Deir ez-Zor/Raqqa line, we could increase to 3 million the number of Syrians who will return from Turkey, Europe and other parts of the world. We are resolutely committed to implementing that plan and have already begun the necessary preparations.

We are also laying the groundwork for the holding of an international conference with the participation of Lebanon, Iraq and Jordan. We also attach great importance to the success of the Global Refugee Forum, which we will co-chair in Geneva in December. In our view, a donor conference should be convened under the auspices of the United Nations to support returns to safe areas. There is also a need for worldwide implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the global compact on refugees, as adopted and affirmed at the United Nations last year.

If we succeed in establishing an environment of trust and stability on the basis of the principles of legitimacy and justice in Syria, we will also help to alleviate the situation in neighbouring Iraq that has been generated by the presence of Da'esh and the PKK. I take this opportunity to call on the entire United

Nations family to engage in initiatives and support our ongoing efforts to stop the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

The Mediterranean basin, in addition to the tragedies triggered by the Syrian crisis, such as illegal migration, faces further problems owing to developments in the eastern Mediterranean. Despite negotiations over more than five decades, the Cyprus question has yet to be resolved because of the uncompromising position of the Greek Cypriots.

The Greek Cypriot side has been pursuing an inequitable and unjust policy of imposition and refuses to share political power and prosperity with the Turkish Cypriots. Turkey is the international treaty-based guarantor of the Turkish Cypriot people, with whom it has deep historical and cultural bonds. Similarly, Greece is a guarantor, as well the United Kingdom. It is clear that those who claim to be working towards solving the Cyprus problem with zero security and zero guarantee have had ill-intentions from the outset.

For its part, Turkey will continue its efforts until a solution that guarantees the security and rights of the Turkish Cypriot people is reached. We believe that the energy resources in the eastern Mediterranean constitute an important opportunity for cooperation if we all adopt a win-win approach. Unfortunately, however, despite our reasonable approach, some countries in the region, through unilateral action, are trying to turn the issue of energy resources into a conflict.

In the eastern Mediterranean, we are determined to protect the legitimate rights and interests of both Turkey and the Turkish Cypriot people until the very end. We will continue to be open minded to all proposals based on cooperation and equitable sharing.

Libya is another critical area of the Mediterranean. We endeavour to ensure security and stability in the country by establishing a democratic Administration based on the free will of the people. The political and economic empowerment of Libya will provide relief for both North Africa and Europe. The solution in that country can be reached only by respecting the choices and the free will of the Libyan people.

Interventions in Yemen and Qatar have had serious consequences in both humanitarian and economic terms. We should all seek an immediate settlement to that crisis in the region, which has re-emerged as a result of the attacks on oil production facilities.

We will continue to follow the developments relating to the demise of journalist Jamal Khashoggi, who was brutally murdered last year and on whose case the courts have yet to reach a verdict, because we are steadfast in our commitment in that regard.

Another issue that we are heavily invested in is that Egypt's first democratically elected President, Mohamed Morsi, suspiciously lost his life in a court room and his family was not allowed to give him a proper burial. That remains a bleeding wound in our hearts. They have both become a profound symbol of the need for justice and equality in the region.

We also hope that the discussions about Iran's activities, as well as the related threats to that country, will be resolved in a rational manner.

The Palestinian territories today under Israeli occupation have become one of the most striking places of injustice. If the images of an innocent Palestinian woman who was heinously murdered by Israeli security forces on the street just a few days ago will not awaken the global conscience, then we have reached a point where words no longer suffice.

I am quite curious about this map of Israel. Where does the land of Israel begin and end? Look at this map. Where was Israel in 1947 and where is Israel now? Where was Israel between the years of 1949 and 1967 in particular, and where is it now? Look. This is 1947, the land of Palestine. There is almost no Israeli presence in those lands; the entire territory belongs to the Palestinians, as the map suggests.

However, in 1947, the distribution plan took place and was ratified, Palestinian lands began to shrink and Israel started expanding. From 1947 to 1967 Israel continued to expand and Palestine continued to shrink. In the current situation there is seemingly no Palestinian presence and the entire land belongs to Israel. But is that enough for Israel? No, Israel remains intent on taking over the remaining territories.

What about the Security Council, the United Nations and their resolutions? Are those resolutions being activated, implemented and enforced? No, they are not. We must therefore ask ourselves, what purpose does the United Nations serve? Under this roof we adopt resolutions that effect no change. When and where, then, can justice prevail? That is the origin of our suffering and pain. The current Israeli Government, together with their murders and atrocities, is busy intervening

in and attacking the historical legal status of Jerusalem and its holy sacred sites and artefacts.

We as Turkey have a clear stance on that issue — the immediate establishment of an independent Palestinian State, with homogeneous territories on the basis of the 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital, is the only solution. Any other peace plan, apart from that, will never stand a chance at being fair, just and implemented.

Now, from the rostrum of the General Assembly, I ask those present, where are the borders of the State of Israel? Are they the 1947 borders, the 1967 borders or is there another border of which we must be informed? How can the Golan Heights and the West Bank settlements be seized, just like other occupied Palestinian territories, before the eyes of the world if they do not fall within the official borders of that State? Is the aim of the initiative promoted as the deal of the century to entirely eliminate the presence of the State and the people of Palestine? Is there a thirst for more bloodshed?

All the actors of the international community, in particular the United Nations, should provide concrete support to the Palestinian people beyond mere promises. It is very important in that regard for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East to continue its activities effectively. Turkey will continue to stand by the oppressed people of Palestine, as it has always done.

It is also very important for the South Caucasus to cease to be one of the areas of conflict and tension in the world, with a view to achieving a fair and peaceful future. It is unacceptable that Nagorno Karabakh and its surrounding areas, which are Azerbaijani territories, are still occupied despite all the resolutions that have been adopted in that regard.

One of the problems to which the international community has failed to devote enough attention is the Kashmir conflict, which has been awaiting a solution for 72 years. The stability and prosperity of South Asia cannot be separated from the Kashmir issue. Despite the resolutions that the Security Council has adopted, Kashmir remains besieged and 8 million people are still stuck in Kashmir; they cannot leave. In order for the Kashmiri people to look towards a safe future with their Pakistani and Indian neighbours, it is imperative to solve the problem with dialogue and on the basis of justice and equality, instead of with conflict.

Another issue to which the world appears to remain indifferent is the humanitarian tragedy faced by Rohingya Muslims. The independent commission of inquiry, established under the auspices of the United Nations, has recorded the existence of a genocidal intent behind the events perpetrated in Myanmar's Rakhine state. Turkey will continue to carry out initiatives to ensure the security and fundamental rights of the Rohingya people, as well as the humanitarian relief activities it has undertaken since day one.

The invasions, conflicts and terrorist activities that have continued uninterrupted in Afghanistan for almost four decades have also raised challenges at the global level. It is high time for peace and security to be restored. It is up to us to assume that responsibility and to take action.

Today, one of the biggest threats to global peace and stability is the rise in racist, xenophobic, discriminatory and anti-Islamic rhetoric. Muslims are the primary targets of hate speech, discrimination and defamation against their sacred values. The most striking recent example was the terrorist attack perpetrated last March in Christchurch, New Zealand.

Just as the terrorist attack targeting Muslims in New Zealand was wrong and unacceptable, acts of terrorism targeting Christians in Sri Lanka and Jewish communities in the United States are equally wrong and unacceptable. We are responsible for turning that disease into a raging insanity. Populist politicians seeking votes by provoking such tendencies, as well as the communities that normalize hate speech under the pretext of freedom of expression, are primarily the ones to blame.

Prejudice, ignorance and bigotry, as well as attempts to marginalize migrants, in particular Muslims, have paved the way for the rise in such morbid tendencies, which can be defeated only by our common will and efforts. As statesmen and stateswomen, it is our fundamental duty to adopt inclusive and tolerant public rhetoric to eradicate the scourge of terrorism once and for all.

The Secretary-General recently introduced the Plan of Action to Safeguard Religious Sites, a United Nations initiative in the establishment of which Turkey played a lead political role within the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. We hope it will help raise awareness on the issue. I hereby request the designation of 15 March by the United Nations — the date the Christchurch

attack was carried out — as the International Day for Solidarity against Islamophobia. I also invite the Islamic world to start a thorough assessment of all issues, in particular the Sunni-Shia divide, which have fuelled its internal conflicts and political power struggles to date, and to settle their disputes once and for all.

Turkey is a rightful successor to the collective heritage of both Eastern and Western civilizations, owing to its geographical location at the centre of the ancient world. Therefore, we are obliged to take the necessary steps, assume responsibility and rise to the occasion. We will continue to fulfil our responsibilities to humankind because we are deeply affected, directly and indirectly, by the crises that besiege our region.

A United Nations — and especially a Security Council — that is reformed on the basis of justice, moral values and conscience will again give hope and aspirations to humankind. Turkey stands ready to support all endeavours and initiatives in that regard. With that understanding, we are willing to assume the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. We have therefore nominated to that important post Ambassador Volkan Bozkir, former Minister of European Union Affairs and current Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey. We have full confidence that Mr. Bozkir, a seasoned diplomat and politician, will shoulder that responsibility very successfully. I trust that the Assembly will give him its full support.

Istanbul, the biggest city in Turkey, currently hosts various United Nations regional agencies and we would like to turn Istanbul into a bigger regional and global hub for the United Nations. The United Nations Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries became operational last year in Istanbul. We also appreciate the positive and encouraging reactions we have received to date to our proposal to host a United Nations youth centre in Istanbul, which I announced last year from this very rostrum (see A/73/PV.6).

There are now 59 members of the Group of Friends of Mediation, which we co-chair. We have carried that United Nations initiative into the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. I believe that it is within our reach to find fair, equitable and conscientious solutions to all the global challenges we face.

I would like to conclude my remarks with the following wishes: freedom for all, peace for all,

prosperity for all, justice for all and a peaceful and safe future for all. I wish every success for the work of the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly. On behalf of my people, I extend greetings to all members with the most heartfelt love and respect.

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

*Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

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

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

*Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Buhari:** First, I wish to thank the General Assembly for the honour bestowed on the Government and the people of Nigeria by electing our national, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, to the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. It is indeed a great honour to our country. Nigerians are truly grateful and shall endeavour to live up to the expectations and responsibilities thrust upon us. Ambassador Muhammad-Bande is an experienced and seasoned diplomat, and I am confident that he will prove to the international community that he is most suitable for this most demanding assignment.

Let me also offer my sincere thanks to the outgoing President, Her Excellency Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, for her skill, resourcefulness and bottomless reservoir of patience in piloting the seventy-third session of the General Assembly. In the same vein, may I commend the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, for his tremendous energy and the genuine international outlook exhibited in his leadership of the United Nations.

The theme of the current session of the General Assembly is “Galvanizing multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion”. These are prime areas calling for collective action that will benefit national and global interests.

Today the world is at a critical juncture. This year marks the first anniversary of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. This year also marks the centenary of the founding of the League of Nations, which led eventually to the establishment of the United Nations as a part of the post-Second World War international order.

Article I, paragraph 4 of the Charter of the United Nations calls for the Organization to be “a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in the attainment of common ends”, which include international peace and security, prosperity and social justice, respect for human dignity and protection of the environment. Multilateralism, symbolized by the United Nations system, has brought immense benefits to the people of the world. It has saved lives, prevented wars, restored peace and stability and generated economic and social progress in many countries.

We must admit that as the world grows richer there are regrettable signals in the world economic and political order. Millions in Africa and around the world remain in abject poverty. Furthermore, we are witnessing a backlash against multilateralism in the form of a rising tide of racism, xenophobia, resurgent nationalism, populism and tendencies towards protectionism and unilateralism. The pristine principles of the United Nations, I fear, are threatened.

Upon the cessation of hostilities after the Second World War, the United States, in one of the greatest selfless undertakings in history, decided to revive Europe through the Marshall Plan and to lift up and restore Japan economically. Those generous policies catalysed a great global economic revival that not only benefited Europe and Japan but the United States as well, through vastly improved trade and cross-investment. The United States and Europe have become friends and allies since the end of the war. The United States and Japan have also become friends and allies.

Those examples can be replicated with respect to Africa. A developed Africa will not be antagonistic to industrialized countries but will become their friends and partners in prosperity, security and development.

A prosperous Africa will mean greater prosperity for the rest of the world. A poor Africa would be a drag on the rest of the world. Is that what the international community wants?

A coordinated multilateral effort should be set in motion to utilize and maximize the use of the enormous resources on the African continent for the benefit of all nations. Investment partners will be able to recoup their investment over time. Current attempts by industrialized countries to help develop Africa are uncoordinated and plainly incremental. We have the skills, the manpower and the natural resources but in many instances lack the capital, hence my plea for industrialized countries to take a long-term view of Africa. We request them to come and partner with us to develop the continent for the benefit of all. Africa charges them with the singular task of initiating the effort we are calling for.

The United Nations has processes in place for promoting collective action to combat global threats. No threat is more potent than poverty and exclusion, which are the power source from which common criminality, insurgency, cross-border crimes, human trafficking and its terrible consequences draw their inspiration. Poverty in all its manifestations remains one of the greatest challenges facing our world. Its eradication is an indispensable requirement for achieving sustainable development.

In that regard, Nigeria has developed a national social investment programme that works as a key that targets the poorest and most vulnerable households in the country. Under that initiative, easy access to financial services is provided to traders, artisans, market women and cooperative societies. That type of initiative can help lessen and eventually eliminate mass poverty in Africa. At the core of our efforts to build an inclusive society are other programmes that focus on youth and human empowerment and aim to ensure the participation of women and youth in governance, industry, climate action and agriculture.

On the international scene, the United Nations has new opportunities to take the lead on issues that continue to cloud the prospects for international peace and prosperity, in particular with regard to the right of the Palestinian people to have their own country free of occupation. From resolution 242 (1967) to the present day, the international community has spoken on the right of the Palestinian people to have their own land and live in peace in it.

Separately, I would mention the risks associated with nuclear proliferation and unfair, unjust trade practices, notwithstanding World Trade Organization rules and precepts.

With respect to the looming danger of climate change, Nigeria stands resolutely with the international community as we observe the agreed carbon emission targets that I signed in 2015. We have since issued two sovereign green bonds and have added an additional 1 million hectares of forested land, taking our total forest coverage to 6.7 per cent through collective national efforts.

As we advocate and strive for inclusion within our societies, we must also ensure, as members of the international community, our participation in collective action, which is why we support the expansion of the Security Council to reflect the diversity and dynamics of the twenty-first century.

From Asia to the Middle East and from Africa to South America, violence and the threat of conflict continue to imperil the lives of too many people. Our own country is no exception. Nigeria is a nation of nearly 200 million people made up of many diverse groups. Our diversity is a source of our strength, which is why in the elections this year our people backed the forces of tolerance, inclusion and community over the politics of protest and division. Our election promises emphasized political stability, freedom and prosperity, tackling poverty, schooling our young and providing them with the tools to build better lives. We are placing special emphasis on the role of women in our female-gender advancement programmes. Our progress and delivery are deliberate, purposeful and measured.

We clearly appreciate that there are no quick fixes to complex challenges. In particular, the challenge of education in Africa is enormous. On 3 December 2018, the General Assembly adopted resolution 73/25, which proclaimed 24 January as the International Day of Education. The resolution, which was spearheaded by Nigeria and co-sponsored by 58 other States Members, marked a watershed in the recognition of the fundamental role of education in building modern societies.

In order to ensure access to education for all, our Government has introduced the Home Grown School Feeding Programme to address the challenge faced by out-of-school children and children who have been forced out of school. That social intervention programme is aimed at encouraging increased school

enrolment through the provision of free school meals. The benefits extend beyond the school environment. In addition, we have introduced mainstreaming and the implementation of safe schools declaration laws and policies across all educational institutions in Nigeria.

The world was shocked and startled by the massacre in New Zealand by a lone gunman taking the lives of 50 worshippers. That and similar crimes, which have been fuelled by social media networks, risk seeping into the fabric of an emerging digital culture. Major technology companies must be aware of their responsibilities. They cannot be allowed to continue to facilitate the spread of religious, racist, xenophobic and false messages capable of inciting whole communities against one another, leading to the loss of many lives. That could tear some countries apart.

Organized criminal networks, often acting with impunity across international borders, present new challenges in response to which only collective action can deliver genuine results. That is also true of the battle against violent extremism, the battle against trafficking in people and drugs and the battle against corruption and money-laundering. The current Nigerian Government is facing the challenges of corruption head-on. We are giving notice to international criminal groups through the vigorous prosecution of the scam by the firm of Process and Industrial Development in its attempt to cheat Nigeria out of billions of dollars.

As a young man and a soldier, I witnessed firsthand the terrible legacy of destruction and broken lives that conflict leaves in its wake. As the seventy-fifth anniversary of the end of the Second World War approaches, I wish to pay tribute to the sacrifices made by the many millions of people across the globe in defence of freedom, tolerance and the rule of law. In Nigeria, we have made significant strides to put our own house in order. We will work tirelessly to uphold due process. The rule of law remains the permanent, unchanging foundation of the world order. Freedom, tolerance and the rule of law are universal values and underline the best that the General Assembly represents and that binds us all.

In conclusion, I reaffirm Nigeria's commitment to promoting international peace and security and sustainable development. We are also committed to strengthening partnerships and cooperation with international and regional organizations for the benefit of humankind.

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

*Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives**

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

*Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Solih:** There is much that is wrong in this world. The post-war multilateral order, which this institution helped usher in, shows signs of strain. Trade wars threaten to plunge us into another worldwide recession. Populism, political extremism and nativism have found currency among the disaffected within our societies. The promise of democracy, enshrined in the principle of self-determination on which the Organization was founded, is in retreat. Emboldened by populist rhetoric, racism and xenophobia in various guises threaten to rip our societies apart.

Terrorism continues to plague and affect all our societies. Meanwhile, the climate crisis looms ever larger, heightened by our collective inability to address it — which is why the world needs the United Nations now more than ever. We need to remind ourselves of the horrors that led to the formation of this institution. Let me jog our collective memory. The United Nations was formed out of the ashes of two devastating world wars, in which more than 100 million people were killed.

It was born out of a belief in the sanctity of human freedom and self-determination, which means that even small nations may have a voice on the global stage. The Charter of the United Nations privileged peace and international cooperation so that we might avoid wars and enjoy the dividends of our peaceful coexistence. We need the United Nations because the problems of our times are extraordinary — none of us can resolve

them alone. We need our collective strength to fix the challenges of our times.

In these difficult times, when the great wave of democracy that swept the world during the last century seems to have ebbed, the Maldives represents a remarkable story. It is a story of second chances, people power and how we as a nation managed to reverse a downward spiral towards autocratic rule. Exactly one year ago, in the early hours of 24 September 2018, the results of the Maldivian presidential elections were announced. The elections were significant because they represented our one shot at rekindling democracy in our country.

As many here know, our democratic journey, which began in November 2008, was cut short within a few years. Lurking behind the high idealism of our democratic moment were remnants of the old autocracy. The judiciary was hijacked, Parliament was brought to a standstill, the institutions of State were co-opted and the press was gagged. Political opponents were constantly threatened and opposition leaders were either jailed or exiled.

Many in the international community spoke out against that reversal. As is the wont of autocrats, the regime turned its back on the world. We left the Commonwealth of Nations, insisting that its calls for democracy in the Maldives were an affront to our sovereignty. Isolationism became our default foreign policy.

The fact that we won the election last year in the face of such adversity, against odds that seemed insurmountable, is to the immense credit of the Maldivian people. I do not take lightly the responsibility they have entrusted in me. There is much that needs to be done — from embedding good governance to delivering justice; from educating our young people to uplifting our most marginalized; from creating opportunities for businesses to leverage the benefits of new technology; from protecting our fragile ecosystem and coral reefs to building a vibrant Islamic society that is just and modern in its outlook.

Development without justice does not work, which is why we have a transitional justice programme where we seek to redress human rights abuses, investigate murders and enforced disappearances and bring to book the endemic corruption undermining all levels of Government. We are engaged in a comprehensive police reform programme and working closely with

other institutions of State to reform and modernize our judicial system.

Meaningful democracy is about more than just holding elections. It is about involving citizens in the decision-making process. That is why we are working on legislation to decentralize our governance structures and devolve power to our local communities.

As I said at the start, these are challenging times, which require strong action from us all. This is why, on the international front, we have reaffirmed long-neglected old friendships and commenced new ones. We have begun the process of rejoining the Commonwealth of Nations. It is our intention to be a good international partner and to be part of a shared solution to the pressing issues of our time, from climate change to fighting the scourge of terrorism.

Terrorism and violent extremism have become one of the biggest threats of the twenty-first century. Their roots are found not only in the disaffection and disenchantment brought on by a rapidly changing world, but also in the active efforts of opportunists who twist religion and poison young minds to do their bidding. As we have come to know, terrorism and terrorists do not recognize national boundaries.

On Easter Sunday, we woke up to the shocking news of terror attacks in Sri Lanka, our closest neighbour. The danger of those networks spilling over our borders is all too real. What is required is concerted global action. That involves everything from sharing intelligence and best practices, counter-terrorism training and reforming our financial system to starve terrorist networks of funding. Unilateral attempts to deal with this menace are largely futile without corresponding global coordination, which is why the United Nations remains so relevant in today's world.

Despite the best attempts of the United Nations and its Member States spanning a number of decades, the question of Palestine remains unresolved on the Assembly's agenda. Never before have the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people been so acutely and blatantly dismissed by Israel, and never have the Palestinian people been so marginalized and discriminated against, in complete disregard of international law and the resolutions of both the General Assembly and the Security Council.

We are strongly of the view that lasting peace in the Middle East can come to fruition only through a

two-State solution driven by genuine and meaningful dialogue between the Arab countries and Israel. We call on the United Nations and its Member States to make every effort to work towards a settlement that would achieve that result. The Maldives will never waver in its support for the Palestinians and their endeavour to achieve an independent and sovereign State of Palestine, based on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

For more than 30 years, we have been struggling to meaningfully address the climate emergency. For 30 years, we Maldivians have been saying that this is the fight of our lifetime because it threatens our very existence as a nation. While the scientific evidence is irrefutable, there has been an alarming lack of global action.

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, if the mean temperatures continue to rise above the two-degree threshold, we will have reached the point of no return. While the Paris Agreement was a breakthrough for what we can collectively achieve, so much more needs to be done. Although this problem is not of our making, the Maldives is determined to drive the solution. We cannot and will not wait for the prescribed timelines of the Paris Agreement. We are revising and upscaling our nationally determined contributions now. We shall work in concert with other island nations, including the small island developing States and fellow members of the Alliance of Small Island States.

Just yesterday, at the Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, the Maldives presented a plan, entitled "Climate Smart Resilient Islands", that seeks to utilize natural solutions, promote innovation and leverage new technologies to build resilience in our communities. As part of the plan, we are seeking to phase out our usage of single-use plastic by 2023. That will be one of the most far-reaching and ambitious plastics phase-out plans of any nation on Earth.

Furthermore, you cannot protect the oceans without solving climate change and you cannot solve climate change without protecting the oceans. For us, this is personal. A visit to the Maldives necessitates crossing over miles upon miles of our territory before ever spotting land. A stunning 99 per cent of the Maldives is ocean, with just 1 per cent dry land — making us a very large ocean State. We can conceive of no climate and resilience plan without a sustainable ocean plan.

This week, the Maldives will enter into a partnership with the Blue Prosperity Coalition on an ambitious blue economy plan, including marine protected areas to conserve the ocean resources that sustain our livelihoods and measures to protect them for future generations. We are confident that we will receive the support of the international community to help us achieve those goals.

Our dependence on our oceans is only one aspect of what it means to be a large ocean State. Our home, the Indian Ocean, has over the past two decades come to the forefront of global geopolitics and rapidly taken its place at the heart of international maritime trade. The peace and security of the Indian Ocean is inextricably linked to the peace and security of the world. Its importance to the global economy cannot be overstated.

Sadly, I note that the Indian Ocean remains, especially in its South Asian core, one of the least integrated regions in the world, lacking regional governance and unable to reap the potential economic benefits of an effective multilateral order. The Maldives intends to promote regional integration through greater cooperation with our neighbours to make the Indian Ocean region peaceful and prosperous.

This great Organization has helped foster peace and avert conflict for over half a century. The world order that it helped build represents the pinnacle of what concerted diplomacy can achieve and continues to embody the hopes of all who believe in peaceful dialogue to solve global problems. While all of us present here represent the interests of our individual nations, we also represent something far larger than that. We represent the world community. We represent humanity.

For its part, the Maldives shall continue to partner with our many international friends with a renewed spirit of openness and engagement so that together we can overcome obstacles and effectively resolve our common challenges.

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

*Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar**

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Emir of the State of Qatar.

*His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**Sheikh Al-Thani** (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, it gives me pleasure to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, and to wish you every success.

I also express our appreciation to Her Excellency Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés for her efforts in leading the work of the General Assembly during its seventy-third session.

We appreciate as well the efforts of Secretary-General António Guterres to enhance the role of the United Nations and achieve its lofty goals.

The world is facing enormous and diverse cross-border challenges between peoples and States that require multilateral action, especially to address threats to international peace and security, environmental issues, sustainable development, asylum and migration.

Regarding international peace and security, nothing can replace the wisdom of leaders — especially among the major Powers — who embrace the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. All that we can do is use the mechanisms adopted by the international community for collective security, deter those who violate international law, ensure respect for the sovereignty and security of States, prohibit the occupation or annexation of the territory of others by force or attempts to change their nature, and prevent armed conflict through the peaceful resolution of disputes.

The strategic importance of the Gulf region makes stability in our region an imperative issue at the regional and international levels. We stress our firm position that the region should be kept risk-free by resolving differences through dialogue based on

common interests and respect for the sovereignty of its States. Provoking tensions and dictating conduct through the use of blockades and sanctions are not in the interests of any of the States of the region. I have previously pointed out the need to establish a regional security system that preserves the security and stability of the Middle East in general and the Gulf region in particular. Current events confirm the importance of that idea and the need to achieve it.

The unjust, unlawful and unjustified blockade imposed by some countries against the State of Qatar continues. The Gulf Cooperation Council was the second victim of the blockade, which paralysed it and robbed of its role in the region.

When I stood here before the Assembly two years ago, three months after the imposition of the blockade, I was confident in the steadfastness of the Qatari people and that we could overcome the blockade's effects (see A/72/PV.4). I was even confident they we would take advantage of the challenge imposed on us despite the price we paid.

I have also been confident, since the first day of the campaign of incitement and distortion which preceded the blockade, that Gulf, Arab and world public opinion would come to realize the hidden agenda of the propaganda campaign against the State of Qatar, which is driven by a tendency towards domination, a desire to impose influence and control over the potential of other States and the objective of making false accusations that are quickly proven wrong. That has indeed happened, as was the case when that approach was repeatedly exposed in the past after other States fell victim to it.

In line with our firm policy of respect for international law and the peaceful resolution of differences and disputes, and having endured aggression, we emphasize our position that unconditional dialogue based on mutual respect and the lifting of the unjust blockade is the only means to end the crisis. We reiterate our deep appreciation for the sincere efforts of His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of the sisterly State of Kuwait, and the endeavours of sisterly and friendly countries to resolve the crisis.

The ongoing Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories and of Arab territories in general, as well as associated unlawful practices, in particular the expansion of settlements, the Judaification of the city of Jerusalem, the unjust and repressive blockade of the Gaza Strip and the intensification of settlement

activity in the occupied Syrian Golan Heights leading to a change in its nature, are taking place in overt defiance of the United Nations and its resolutions, to the extent that Israel has come to regard the airspace of the countries of the region as open to it. How long will the international community remain unable to enforce respect for itself when it comes to Palestine?

It has been proven that settling differences by force can only lead to occupation based on force. However, permanent peace is based on justice, which entails guaranteeing the rights of the Palestinian people whose homeland has been usurped and who have the absolute right to the establishment of a Palestinian State within the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, as well as the ending of the Israeli occupation of all occupied Arab lands, including the Syrian Golan Heights and the Lebanese territories. Qatar will continue to support any effort to realize a just peace and to provide political and humanitarian support to the brotherly Palestinian people.

The tragedy of the Syrian people and their continuous suffering for the past eight years has become a major scandal and a disgrace to humankind. What makes that human crisis all the more dangerous is the absence of a clear vision for its resolution, compounded by the continued killings, destruction, displacement and international indifference.

We are all aware that the main responsibility for the failure to impose a political solution, which we would all like to have for Syria, is the inability of the Security Council to protect civilians and make the necessary decisions to stop the bloodshed and the continued intransigence of the Syrian regime and its rejection of all regional and international initiatives. Everyone listening to me now knows that when we refer to the Security Council, we mean the major Powers.

It is high time for the Syrian people to enjoy security, a decent life and justice through a political solution that fulfils the aspirations of all segments of the population in line with the 2012 Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and Security Council resolutions, including resolution 2254 (2015). That would preserve the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Syria, while upholding justice by holding accountable, in keeping with the international law, those who commit atrocities against civilians. The State of Qatar will continue to fulfil its humanitarian obligations by providing political support and humanitarian aid

to the brotherly people of Syria in order to alleviate their suffering.

As for our brotherly Yemen, we stress its unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty, as well as the need to conclude the political process in accordance with relevant Security Council resolutions, specifically resolution 2216 (2015).

In that regard, I emphasize that the outcome of the National Dialogue Conference in January 2014, in which all the Yemeni parties participated, provided equitable and fair solutions to all the issues related to the ongoing fighting, including the system of government, the State's federal structure and the issue of the south. The parties reached those solutions by way of dialogue among themselves. Until Yemenis implement the solutions they have reached without foreign intervention, there is nothing to be done but support United Nations efforts to end the war and support its humanitarian and relief efforts.

The latest developments in Libya threaten national unity and stability. The recent military operations against the capital Tripoli have thwarted the comprehensive National Conference — yet another failure of the collective security system in the Middle East caused by double standards and selectivity in the implementation of international law resulting from some countries supporting the military militias against the legitimate Government.

The militias do not hesitate to commit war crimes against civilians. We call for the perpetrators of such crimes to be held accountable and for the legitimate, internationally recognized Government of National Accord to be supported with a view to enabling it to discharge all its functions, putting an end to the suffering of the Libyan people and restoring security and stability across Libya.

The Libyan people have paid a high price for their liberty but have not reaped the fruits of their struggle and sacrifices and have grown tired of the chaos despite international efforts and an internationally recognized settlement. Why is it not being implemented? Because certain countries do not practise what they preach. They formally participate in international efforts while undermining those efforts by supporting warlords and terrorist militias for the benefit of their narrow interests. We call on all actors in Libya to assume their responsibilities and respect the will of the Libyan people for a peaceful solution. We caution that interference in

Libyan affairs further complicates the crisis, impedes national reconciliation and goes against Security Council resolutions.

With the help of God, Qatar continues to provide a space for dialogue and support for reconciliation based on rational and equitable solutions to crises and armed conflicts. We hosted negotiations between the United States and the Taliban. Before the United States decided to hold those negotiations, significant progress had been made between the two sides to achieve peace in Afghanistan. We call on the international community and in particular on the States of the region to join their efforts to achieve peace and stability in that country.

Developments over the past year in more than one country in our region have proven that repression and crimes against humanity, whose perpetrators have tried in vain to block the course of history, have not diminished people's aspirations for justice and human dignity or the aspirations of Arab young people for a better future. They have also proven that gradual reform is the best path to change in countries with complex societies in what is a complicated region. Had some regimes opted for reforms in response to the aspirations of their people, they would have saved themselves enormous losses and the lives of countless victims.

In that regard, we value the steps taken and agreements reached between the Sudanese parties. We are confident that the Sudanese people are capable of moving beyond the ongoing sensitive transitional phase. We renew our commitment and stand alongside our brethren people of the Sudan, and call on all regional and international Powers to support the Sudan in realizing the aspirations of its people for security, stability and development. I also call on the Administration of the United States to remove the Sudan from the list of States that sponsor terrorism.

The combination of terrorism and violent extremism has become a major threat to the entire world. The eradication of terrorism requires a comprehensive approach that includes tackling its political, economic and social roots, in addition to taking preventive and military action.

We reiterate our condemnation of all forms of terrorism and our support for combating them. In that regard, many countries have begun to realize the mistake of linking terrorism to a particular religion after experiencing racially or ideologically motivated terrorist acts. There is a political and moral imperative

to stop confining terrorism to certain individuals and groups and to consider all crimes against unarmed civilians committed by States as State terrorism. We all know what is happening in Syria, Palestine and Libya. It is also necessary to distinguish between terrorism and resistance against occupation.

The State of Qatar will continue to actively participate in international efforts to combat violent extremism. In that respect, I note the conclusion of a partnership agreement between the State of Qatar and the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism and our contribution of \$75 million to strengthen the capacity of that Office, as well the opening of the international centre on applying behavioural insights to preventing and countering violent extremism, as well as the partnership agreement between the Silatech institution in Qatar and the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force for capacity-building and launching projects in the Arab region aimed at preventing terrorism.

Locally, efforts are continuing at the legislative level and so is our support for national counter-terrorism institutions — to the point where they have become a model to be followed at the regional level. Qatar is playing an active role today in implementing the counter-terrorism mechanisms adopted by the international community.

Although the use of communications technology is of the utmost importance in our modern world in the security, economic, commercial and other fields, the misuse of that technology is threatening the security of States and the cordial relations among them, and is also infringing on the private lives of individuals and causing economic damage. As the Assembly may know, Qatar News Agency has been prey to digital piracy and espionage.

Mindful of the growing importance of that issue, I renew my proposal of last year (see A/73/PV.6) in calling for an international conference to examine means of regulation in that area by international law. I would like to express the readiness of the State of Qatar to host such a conference under the auspices of the United Nations and to make every effort alongside international partners to ensure its success.

We are all aware that the effects of climate change are a common concern of the international community and pose an existential threat to some countries. They also have a negative impact on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

and the quality of human life. Despite the different situations and circumstances among countries, we need international cooperation today more than ever and must ensure the credibility of multilateral action to counter the challenges of climate change. In that connection, the State of Qatar has assumed an active role in international efforts on climate change — in partnership with France, Jamaica and the United Nations — and has led the coalition on climate finance and carbon-pricing.

The State of Qatar has pursued a consistent policy to protect and promote human rights on the basis of our Arab and Islamic principles and values, which affirm human worth. In that regard, we honour our commitments at the national and international levels to defend individual and collective rights and ensure respect for human rights and dignity. Qatar has made significant achievements in terms of workers' rights and work conditions, in coordination with the International Labour Organization.

The success of the United Nations in addressing common challenges depends on the implementation by Member States of their commitments and responsibilities. In that regard, the State of Qatar has concluded partnerships with many United Nations organs and Doha will soon host the United Nations House, which includes offices of various agencies of the Organization concerned with peace, development, human rights, the rule of law, humanitarian action, counter-terrorism and combating extremism, so as to enable them to optimize the performance of their functions.

The State of Qatar has recently announced its support for the core resources of the United Nations, with the allocation of \$500 million in addition to the support that we have already provided. Qatar is now one of the biggest donor partners supporting the United Nations in various fields.

In conclusion, I renew our commitment to multilateral international action, partnership and cooperation in the interest of our peoples and the good of humankind.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon those present.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Emir of the State of Qatar for the statement he has just made.

*His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Ueli Maurer, President of the Swiss Confederation**

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Swiss Confederation.

*Mr. Ueli Maurer, President of the Swiss Confederation, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Ueli Maurer, President of the Swiss Confederation, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Maurer (spoke in French):** Our world is changing rapidly. The values that have long served as guideposts are being challenged. The result is chaos — what can we cling to if nothing lasts? Can we still trust politics, the economy, international organizations? These are questions that will have to be answered in the context of our General Assembly.

Let us start with our values. In that regard, the Charter of the United Nations is our compass. In its Preamble, it affirms the fundamental rights and equality of all persons. It also speaks of the equality of nations. Relations between States should be governed by shared standards.

Allow me, as a representative of a small State, to dwell on this point. Several small countries have found that the principle of equality is too often violated. We are concerned about that trend. Often the strength of the large countries prevails over the rights of the small ones. Let me be clear — I did not come here to complain. I am simply reminding the Assembly that this is a reality that affects us all. Indeed, the smooth functioning of the international community depends on compliance with those principles — and it is not words but actions that count. Small States only have laws and rights to rely on, but it is up to the international community to uphold them for its own good.

Let me say a few more words about fundamental rights. This year will be the seventieth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions — an incontestable landmark. Thanks to Geneva, Switzerland is the depositary of the Conventions. Humanitarian engagement is therefore at

the heart of our foreign policy. As dedicated as we are to the cause of international humanitarian law, the list of its violations is long — too long. It is now up to all of us to make those values a reality. There is no more important or noble mission for us.

Let me also mention the pressing issues at hand — combating hunger, meeting water and energy needs, providing training for all, fighting climate change and reducing armed conflict. Those are just some of the challenges ahead. Periods of hope are succeeded by periods of despair. Our efforts in the past were often rewarded when we were able to take advantage of the latest technological developments to benefit everyone. In large part, the progress of our civilization depends upon such innovations and how we share them.

Investing in research and training creates the conditions for a world that offers more opportunities for all. If we want to have enough food, drinking water and energy for all in future, if we want to successfully fight climate change, we do not need declarations of intent — we need technical innovations. We must therefore invest in training and research. Knowledge must be freely shared. Technical progress must be encouraged, not stifled. The development of digital technologies could quickly generate considerable benefits.

Digital technology makes it possible to simplify processes. It also contributes to greater transparency. Digital technology will transform our world, our way of living together and our way of working. It can help us to accelerate the advent of a sustainable development model. The international community has set itself ambitious objectives in that respect in the form of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. New technologies and innovation will give us the tools to achieve them.

As everyone knows, Switzerland is one of the most important financial centres. We are committed to ensuring that our financial sector is beyond reproach. The financial sector has the ability to influence sustainable investment choices and to set an example. Together with a sensible use of new digital technologies, it can develop innovative, sustainable and attractive products. Let us have the courage to try something new and to say yes to the promises of tomorrow.

Digital technology also involves certain risks. Illicit practices and cyberattacks have become part

of everyday life. The protection of privacy is also a fundamental right. It is up to the politicians to act and monitor the use of data. In that connection, I note that three weeks ago in Geneva we launched the Swiss Digital Initiative Foundation. It brings together the world's leading suppliers of computer equipment and software, as well as several heavyweights in the industry, but also the United Nations, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Facebook, Google and many others. What is it about? We want the new digital society to adopt common ethical rules. New technologies must inspire and win our trust. Any organization can join the initiative and demonstrate its commitment to progress and strong ethical values. It is evident that Switzerland is banking on digital technology and sees it as an opportunity in all areas. The initiative must follow clear rules that are in line with our common values. We invite all gathered here today to share our experience and cooperate with us.

Finally, let us talk a little bit about ourselves. I mean the United Nations. We want a strong Organization because it is the only global exchange platform that can help us meet the challenges ahead together. Certainly, the institution must be reformed, along lines we know well. In that regard, we assure the Secretary-General of our support to ensure that the Organization becomes more effective and focuses on its core missions. The United Nations depends on the trust placed in it — that trust is our capital.

Switzerland declares its readiness to contribute to the smooth functioning of the United Nations. Geneva is an ideal platform in that regard — for decades it has been one of the capitals of humanitarian aid. It is the headquarters of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. It is home to more than 400 non-governmental organizations and is now also the home of a global initiative dedicated to the ethical issues linked to digital technology.

The world is changing, and that change sometimes causes confusion. Fortunately, we have values that help orient us. We call for equal rights for all — individuals and States. Law must prevail over force. That is our motto. In addition, thanks to new technologies, we have a tool that will enable us to meet the challenges of tomorrow. We are determined to be actively involved in addressing these challenges in future. Switzerland and Geneva stand at the ready.

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

*Mr. Ueli Maurer, President of the Swiss Confederation, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović,  
President of the Republic of Croatia**

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

*Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of the Republic of Croatia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Her Excellency Ms. Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of the Republic of Croatia, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

**President Grabar-Kitarović:** We are gathered here on the eve of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. Gatherings and anniversaries are usually a time of reflection and introspection. One such global occasion is the United Nations General Assembly. Here the world meets, reflects, exchanges ideas and sets goals for the future. It is a unique forum in human history.

I believe that we must use the coming months and the seventy-fifth birthday of our Organization in 2020 not only to emphasize its accomplishments and global relevance to the spheres of peace and security, development, climate action, human rights and humanitarian assistance, but also to take a bold leap forward and reiterate our commitments. However, time is of the essence.

The Secretary-General, António Guterres, said in January,

“[t]he best-selling brand in our world today is indeed fear. It gets ratings. It wins votes. It generates clicks”.

Indeed, fear is present and it inhibits us from taking that step in the right direction; it is hampering our potential and our creativity. We who are gathered here should lead by example. It is incumbent upon us to fearlessly use the instruments we have at our disposal and to boldly think of new ones to advance our nations and our planet, right now. It is incumbent upon us

to address the greatest challenges of the globalized twenty-first century — climate change, sustainable development, migration, terrorism, weapons of mass destruction and new technologies. How do we prevent unfavourable scenarios and harvest the benefits? How do we mobilize States and joint resources to respond adequately to emerging threats?

We all know the answer, which is at the same time simple and ever more difficult — by joining forces. We cannot deny that multilateralism is facing challenges, the reasons for which may be numerous and complex. However, multilateralism is still our best chance of achieving our common goals. Standing alone and isolated, one fails, but many of us, together, united around common ideas and working in good faith, have the tools in our hands to succeed. Let us use the existing mechanisms, transform them for the better and make them more effective.

No doubt, reforms are necessary. We also need to take a deep look at our Organization — its strengths and weaknesses — and trace the path for decades to come. In that connection, I affirm Croatia’s full support for the United Nations reform agenda and the Secretary-General’s continued efforts. We have to revitalize the United Nations and redouble efforts to make this building a home to true global leadership and a platform for the promotion and development of the rules-based international order.

The goals before us — poverty eradication, quality education, inclusion and climate action — cannot be achieved without individual national efforts coupled with our common dedication and action. For its part, Croatia is doing its best to fulfil the goals we have set for ourselves.

First, we are combating poverty and social exclusion and reducing social inequalities. Secondly, we believe that quality education is key to long-term social stability and economic progress. Thirdly, with regard to inclusion, the ultimate values of our constitutional order are freedom, parity, gender equality and respect for human rights. Finally, Croatia is dedicated to fighting climate change through the implementation of innovative solutions that will transform our economy and society, and remains committed to the efficient fulfilment of its obligations under the Paris Agreement.

Just as accession to the European Union (EU) provided a blueprint for the transformation of governance, the economy and society, so does Croatia

see the Sustainable Development Goals as a matrix for our future and an obligation to our citizens and the international community. We need to reinvigorate the political momentum and renew our enthusiasm for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. For us, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals are guidelines for our own development and a framework for securing a better and more sustainable future, both locally and globally.

Together with other EU member States, Croatia strives to become a leader of sustainable development. Our focus is and will be on a green Croatia and the balanced regional development and territorial cohesion of all our geographic areas, including the sustainable development of our more than 1,000 Adriatic islands.

I have spoken more than once at this rostrum. Together with the Assembly, I have raised many issues that trouble our nations and the world. I want to focus today on the environment, in particular our seas and oceans. They are the essence and foundation of all life on Earth. Without them, we would not be here.

Croatia is both a Central European and a Mediterranean country, with great biodiversity. The number of known species in Croatia is about 40,000, including significant populations of many species that are threatened today in Europe and worldwide. Besides our talented people, biodiversity is our greatest treasure.

In that connection, Croatia pays particular attention to the environmental protection of the Adriatic Sea. We are focused on preserving and facilitating the recovery of the marine and coastal environment, protecting biodiversity and ensuring the sustainable use of the sea and coastal areas. Croatia's national ecological network covers 37 per cent of our entire land area and 15 per cent of our marine area.

However, climate change and pollution threaten our natural resources, our delicate ecosystems and our Adriatic Sea. We cannot continue to neglect its severe implications for our environment and the significant economic losses we can expect in future. Marine litter is a problem of increasing concern. It threatens marine life in the world's oceans and in the Adriatic Sea, having already impacted more than 700 marine species. Croatia's coastal areas, some of the world's cleanest and most wondrous, are at times severely affected by poorly managed waste from our neighbouring countries to the south.

The plastic pollution in our seas and oceans is one of the greatest threats that humankind is facing today. Without the preservation of our waters and our marine life, there will be nothing to leave to future generations. About 8 million tons of plastic debris ends up in our oceans and seas every year. Plastics are found throughout the marine environment, from the surface of the water down to the sea floor.

We know that pollution has an annual financial negative impact measured in billions of dollars, which reflects only the immediate costs of the impact of plastic on marine life, tourism, fisheries and businesses. However, plastic pollution carries toxic pollutants into our own food chain. A recent study has revealed that, in general and on average, people may be ingesting approximately 5 grams of plastic every week, the equivalent weight of a credit card. What we throw into the sea today, we consume in our food tomorrow.

The renowned Institute of Oceanography and Fisheries, in Split, has been monitoring the Adriatic Sea since 1930. Its scientific activity encompasses very complex research in the fields of biological, chemical and physical oceanography, sedimentology, fisheries biology and aquaculture. More than 100 scientists and experts are diligently working on the preservation of the sea as one of our greatest assets. One of their main projects involves cooperation with fishermen — plastics and litter from the sea floor that is found in their fishing nets is collected and disposed of. A number of fishing ships are involved in the project and to date have collected more than 50 tons of waste.

In the Croatian part of the Adriatic Sea, 97 per cent of beach water is of exceptional quality. We do not take that for granted, nor can we allow ourselves to do so. That is why more and more local communities are organizing beach clean-ups and encouraging tourists to take part in those activities as well. From this rostrum, I encourage everyone to please stop throwing waste into our oceans and rivers. Our own future is at stake.

I spoke last year (see A/73/PV.8) about the Ocean Cleanup project, the first feasible method to rid the world's oceans of plastic and remove 50 per cent of the Great Pacific Garbage Patch in just five years. The media has named it Pac-Man, referring to a popular video game. I spoke about the inventor of this method, the brilliant young Croatian scientist living in the Netherlands, Boyan Slat. But what we need is more deeds like that, not just words. The clock is ticking.

Today, instead of a lengthy speech, I want to use the remaining time to give real people a voice and emphasize again the need for real actions that inspire further action. In that connection, I will tell the Assembly about Zlarin, one of the 1,246 Croatian islands. It is a small island, inhabited by about 300 people — people with hearts and minds dedicated to the preservation of their environment and their home. Last year, young environmental enthusiasts gathered the entire local community to start an action called “Take a break from plastic”. The goal was to make Zlarin the first Adriatic island free of single-use plastic and plastic waste within a year. Their action was local, but their efforts are indeed global. Since I could not project any videos in the Hall, I kindly ask those gathered here to watch their short video message entitled *HRT — An Island Without Plastic*, which is subtitled in English, via the web link provided in the written version of my speech.

*Ms. Young (Belize), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The people of Zlarin and the activists that appear in the video had the vision and courage to transform their island community. Within just one year, the island has been transformed. By signing a symbolic declaration, all residents, caterers and merchants banned disposable plastics from everyday use. Today the children on Zlarin educate hundreds of visiting tourists that plastic is not welcome on their island. Those children are our future, and they deserve recognition for what they have been doing.

We in this Hall are running out of excuses for not following the example of the people of Zlarin and doing the same globally. Let us make all of our communities as responsible as the people of Zlarin. Let us not hesitate or be discouraged by past and present failures, but rather provide strong leadership for our common success in the future. Fear steals time, and time is scarce. In the words of Saint John Paul II, “Be not afraid”.

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

*Ms. Grabar-Kitarović, President of the Republic of Croatia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

### **Address by Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

*Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Morales Ayma (spoke in Spanish):** We gather once again at humankind’s most important multilateral Organization to collectively reflect upon and analyse the global problems that affect the people of the world. We note with concern the deterioration of the multilateral system as a result of the unilateral measures promoted by some States that have decided to act in bad faith and ignore the commitments and global structures set up for healthy coexistence among States, within the framework of international law and the basic principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

We meet in this forum to discuss and seek solutions to the serious threats to humankind and life on the planet. Our home, Mother Earth, is our only home and is irreplaceable. Fires, floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, droughts and other disasters are becoming increasingly frequent. Each year is hotter than the previous one, global melting is increasing and ocean levels are rising. Every day we suffer the disappearance of species, land erosion, desertification and deforestation.

We have been warned that, if we follow this course of action, by the year 2100 the global temperature will have increased by 3° Celsius, with concomitant massive and devastating changes. According to data from our Organization, the consequences of climate change will condemn millions of people to poverty, hunger, lack of drinking water, the loss of their homes, forced displacement, more refugee crises and new armed conflicts.

We have been surprised in recent weeks by the forest fires that have broken out in different parts of the planet — in the Amazon, Oceania and Africa — affecting the flora, fauna and biodiversity. In recent weeks, Bolivia has experienced literal hot spots,

which we have been battling with financial, technical and human resources. Our country has spent more than \$15 million to date to mitigate fires. We thank the international community for its timely cooperation in our fight against the fire, as well as its commitment to participate in post-fire relief.

The arms race, military spending and technology in the service of death and the unscrupulous arms trade have all increased. The financial system continues to be anti-democratic, inequitable and unstable. It promotes tax havens and banking secrecy, which subjugate weak countries and force them to accept conditions that perpetuate their dependence. We note with sadness that the great social asymmetries persist. According to Oxfam data, currently 1.3 billion people live in poverty, while 1 per cent of the richest held 82 per cent of the world's wealth in 2017. Inequality, hunger, poverty, the migration crisis, epidemic diseases and unemployment are not merely local problems, they are global problems.

Nevertheless, humankind's creative ability surprises us every day with new inventions and new technological applications, which have provided great solutions to very complex problems. Technology has meant a qualitative leap for humankind. However, it is necessary for this multilateral body to establish agreements in that domain with the participation of all States.

It is essential that we talk about the structural causes of the various crises. Transnational companies control food, water, non-renewable resources, weapons, technology and our personal data. The aim is to commercialize everything in order to accumulate capital. The world is being controlled by a global oligarchy; a mere handful of billionaires define the political and economic destiny of humankind. Twenty-six people possess the same wealth as 3.8 billion people. That is unjust. That is immoral. That is inadmissible.

The fundamental problem lies in the production model and consumerism, the ownership of natural resources and the inequitable distribution of wealth. Let us put it very clearly — the root of the problem lies in the capitalist system. That is why the United Nations is more relevant and important than ever despite individual efforts, which are insufficient, because only joint action and unity will enable us to overcome those problems.

As we have already said, our generation's responsibility is to pass on to the next generation a fairer

and more humane world. That will be achieved only if we work together to build a multipolar world with rules common to all, while defending multilateralism, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

We have taken some very important steps in Bolivia. We are the country with the highest economic growth in South America, averaging 4.9 per cent in the past six years. Between 2005 and 2019, the gross domestic product increased from 9.574 to 40.885 billion dollars. We have the lowest unemployment rate in the region, which fell from 8.1 per cent in 2005 to 4.2 per cent in 2018. Extreme poverty fell from 38.2 per cent to 15.2 per cent over 13 years. Life expectancy has increased by nine years. The minimum wage rose from \$60 to \$310.

The gender gap in land titles owned by women has been reduced — only 138,788 women had received land by 2005, while 1,011,249 women had received land by 2018. Bolivia has the third-highest participation of women in Parliament in the world — more than 50 per cent of its representatives are women.

Bolivia declared itself an illiteracy-free country in 2008. The school dropout rate fell from 4.5 per cent to 1.5 per cent between 2005 and 2018. The infant mortality rate has been reduced by 56 per cent. We are in the process of implementing a universal health-care system that will guarantee that 100 per cent of Bolivians — women and men — have access to free, quality services that are caring and that respect their dignity. We have adopted a law on free care for cancer patients.

The data I have just mentioned are part of the achievements of our democratic and cultural revolution, which have brought political, economic and social stability to Bolivia. How did we achieve that in such a short time? How did Bolivia embark upon the path to defeating poverty and underdevelopment?

It was thanks to the conscientiousness of the people — social movements and indigenous people, campesinos, workers, professionals and rural and urban men and women. We nationalized our natural resources and strategic businesses. We took control of our destiny. We built a communitarian and productive socioeconomic model that recognizes basic services as a human right, not as a private business. Today we can say with pride and optimism that Bolivia has a future.

There is one outstanding issue in the region, and that is the sea. The sea is indispensable for life, integration and the development of peoples. For that reason, Bolivia will not give up its right to sovereign access to the Pacific Ocean. In 2015 and 2018, the International Court of Justice in The Hague ruled on the following elements in its judgments.

First, in paragraph 19 of the 1 October 2018 judgment in *Obligation to negotiate access to the Pacific Ocean (Bolivia v. Chile)*, the Court stated that “Bolivia had a coastline of over 400 km along the Pacific Ocean”.

Secondly, in paragraph 50 of the 24 September 2015 ruling in the same case, it stated that

“the matters in dispute are matters neither ‘settled by arrangement between the parties, or by arbitral award or by decision of an international court’ nor ‘governed by agreements or treaties in force’”.

Thirdly, in paragraph 176 of the 1 October 2018 ruling, it also stated that

“[n]evertheless, the Court’s finding should not be understood as precluding the Parties from continuing their dialogue and exchanges, in a spirit of good neighbourliness, to address the issues relating to the landlocked situation of Bolivia, the solution to which they have both recognized to be a matter of mutual interest. With willingness on the part of the Parties, meaningful negotiations can be undertaken”.

That judicial decision did not put an end to the controversy; on the contrary, it explicitly recognizes that the controversy persists and emphasizes that it does not exclude the possibility of both States finding a solution. Therefore, the United Nations should monitor the situation and demand full compliance with the Court’s decisions, so that both peoples continue negotiating in good faith to close open wounds. It is possible to promote a spirit of good neighbourliness and to open a new chapter in our relationship in which mutually acceptable and lasting solutions can be forged.

Our countries face diverse and contentious situations that must be approached in a sovereign manner and for which solutions must be found through dialogue and negotiations that benefit the interests of our peoples. Bolivia, in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations, ratifies its rejection of the economic and financial blockade imposed against Cuba, which violates all human rights.

Finally, I take this opportunity to thank all the member countries for their support in the various initiatives promoted by Bolivia, such as the International Year of Indigenous Languages, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Peasants and other People Working in Rural Areas and the recognition of 21 June as the International Day of the Celebration of the Solstice.

To conclude, we ratify our commitment to consolidate a new world order of peace with social justice, in harmony with Mother Earth, with a view to living well while respecting the dignity and identity of the world’s peoples.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Evo Morales Ayma, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

*His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**King Abdullah:** This week leaders from around the world will stand before members, here in this great General Assembly Hall, to take part in the general debate of its seventh-fourth session. We come here in recognition of a simple reality — the General Assembly is vital to meet the dangers and seize the opportunities of our world.

Collective action — that is the promise of the United Nations. Nearly 75 years ago, this Organization was created by the specific, individual actions of Member countries, coming together to shape a better future, and today we still urgently need each and every

Member country to act, and to act together, with our global neighbours and achieve the better, safer world all of us need.

For if we do not act, what hope do we have? What will our future look like if millions of the world's young people continue to be denied the rich fruits of new technology and global wealth? Can we afford to ignore the crisis of exclusion? Or will we do the right thing, support the energies and talents of all the world's youth and drive all economies forward, through fair and inclusive global growth? What will our world look like if we do not work together for a healthy and safe environment? Water-scarce countries like Jordan already know the dangers of climate change. A global crisis demands global action. How can we excuse delay?

Let us ask ourselves why, in the twenty-first century, crises are still displacing millions of people across our world. There are more forced displacements today than at any time since the Second World War. What will tomorrow's world look like if we do not help end those crises and give refugees and hosts alike the support they need to meet the future?

How is it that people today can still be disrespected and victimized for their faith? Atrocities at mosques, churches, synagogues and temples have shocked the conscience of the world, but so should the dark, criminal ideas, from across the ideological spectrum, that drive those and other attacks. Hard work by all of us is needed to defeat those groups and their message of hate and mistrust, but no effort stands a chance unless young men and women everywhere have a stake in a positive future. The forces of violence seek out the vulnerable and excluded. Can we afford to abandon the world's young people to extremism and despair?

Collective action is also vital for ending bitter crises and conflict, and no crisis has done more global damage than the core conflict in my region, the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Neither side has achieved the durable peace that a secure future depends on, while regional and world stability have continued to pay the price.

It is a terrible irony that a land holy to three faiths that share the great commandment to love one's neighbour should ever be a place of conflict. That is the land where prophets have walked and where generations of Muslims, Christians and Jews have sought to live in obedience to God, teaching their children compassion, mercy and respect for others. Segregation, forced

displacement, violence and mistrust do not belong in that Holy Land.

Forty years ago my father, His Majesty the late King Hussein, who loved peace, stood in this very Hall and decried the occupation and attempts

“to eradicate from the world's memory centuries of history and tradition and of spiritual, moral and cultural ideals” (*A/34/PV.7 para. 22*).

It is a global moral tragedy that the occupation continues, yet no occupation, no displacements, no acts of force can erase people's history, hopes or rights or change the true heritage of our shared values among the three monotheistic faiths — and nothing can take away the international rights of the Palestinian people to equality, justice and self-determination.

Young people ask me, Why does the world not stand up for Palestinian rights? Is it not time to answer them by showing that global justice and human rights belong to them too? It begins with respect for the holy sites and rejecting all attempts to alter the legal status of East Jerusalem and the authentic historical character of the Holy City, Jerusalem. What lessons do we teach young people when armed personnel enter Al-Aqsa Mosque/Haram Al-Sharif, even as Muslim worshippers gather to pray? As a Hashemite Custodian, I am bound by a special duty to protect Jerusalem's Islamic and Christian holy sites, but all of us have a reason and a moral obligation to uphold religious freedom and human rights. Let us therefore safeguard the Holy City for all humankind as a unifying city of peace.

We must also press forward towards an end to the conflict and a just, lasting and durable peace through the realization of the two-State solution — a solution that is in accord with international law and the relevant United Nations resolutions, provides an end to conflict and creates a viable, independent and sovereign Palestinian State, on the 4 June 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital and living side by side with Israel in mutual peace and security.

The two-State solution is the only genuine solution, because what is the alternative — one State, segregated, with unequal laws, dependent on force, betraying the deepest values of the good people on both sides? That is a formula for enduring conflict, not a path to stability, security and peace.

Tolerance, compassion and the equality of all human beings are the values that make global harmony

and collective action possible. Those are the values that permeate the Charter of the United Nations — to live together in peace as good neighbours, to honour the rights and equality of all and to combine our efforts and unite our strengths, not only in order to maintain peace and security but also to improve human life through justice, prosperity and greater hope for humankind.

Those are the moral obligations that the United Nations founders set forth. Now they are our responsibility. We must not fail. May peace and God's mercy be upon everyone.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the statement he has just made.

*His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea**

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

*Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Moon Jae-in** (*spoke in Korean; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Thanks to the dedication of the United Nations and its Member States, many of the world's problems have been resolved, and their efforts towards achieving peace are coming to fruition. I would like to convey my deepest respect and appreciation.

Let me offer my congratulations to Ambassador Tijjani Muhammad-Bande on assuming the presidency of the General Assembly. I am confident that, under his outstanding leadership, the seventy-fourth session of the General Assembly will become a catalyst for promoting multilateral cooperation. The United Nations and the Korean peninsula share the same goal of sustaining peace. I would like to pay tribute to the endeavours of Secretary-General Guterres to sustain peace through a virtuous cycle of peace and development.

The commitment of the United Nations to the peace of all people and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will certainly bear fruit. The world's countries are joining forces to help one another in disaster and emergency relief operations, as well as in peacekeeping efforts. The United Nations must continue to play a central role in fostering cooperation within the international community.

The Republic of Korea is a country that has benefited immensely from the United Nations. It was liberated from colonial rule in the year in which the United Nations was founded. It was able to overcome the scourge of war with the assistance of the United Nations and the international community. In assuming a sense of responsibility commensurate with the progress that it has made, Korea is now working together with the international community to bring about peace and prosperity in East Asia and the whole world.

The Olympic Truce resolution adopted by the General Assembly in November 2017 was of great help to us once again. In accordance with the resolution, the joint military exercises between the Republic of Korea and the United States that had been planned for the spring of 2018 were suspended, thereby creating an environment that enabled the North Korean Olympic delegation to come to Pyeong Chang. Despite initial concerns about security, the Pyeong Chang Olympic Winter Games were transformed into peace Olympics that served as an invaluable opportunity to resume dialogue between the two Koreas. Inter-Korean talks subsequently led to dialogue between the United States and North Korea.

The decisions made by President Trump and Chairman Kim provided the momentum behind the dramatic change in the situation on the Korean peninsula. Compared to the past, when only a few rounds of gunfire were sufficient to instigate major political unrest, the current situation on the Korean peninsula has undergone a distinct change. The negotiating table for achieving peace on the peninsula remains accessible. The two Koreas and the United States are setting their sights not only on denuclearization and peace but also on the economic cooperation to follow.

The Republic of Korea intends to create a peace economy in which peace can lead to economic cooperation, which in turn will reinforce peace for all who work in a virtuous cycle. The examples of how the European Coal and Steel Community and the

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe had a positive impact on peace and prosperity within Europe provide an excellent model for us to emulate.

Achieving peace on the Korean peninsula remains an ongoing challenge, and achieving peace on the peninsula and peace in the whole world represent two inseparable goals. We will continue dialogue with North Korea and will find and forge a path leading towards complete denuclearization and permanent peace, while maintaining cooperation with United Nations States Members.

Peace can be created only through dialogue and can be considered as genuine only when underpinned by agreements and the law, while only peace that has been accomplished based on trust will last. Dialogue and negotiations over the past year and a half have produced significant results on the Korean peninsula. Panmunjom, which used to be a symbol of division, has now become a demilitarized area in which not even a single pistol can be found. The two Koreas have withdrawn their guard posts inside the demilitarized zone, thereby transforming the very symbol of confrontation into a peace zone.

In the past, repeated breaches of the Korean Armistice Agreement gave rise to military tensions and at times escalated the threat of war. But no confrontation has occurred since the Inter-Korean Comprehensive Military Agreement was signed, on 19 September 2018.

In particular, I would like to inform the Assembly of the fact that a total of 177 sets of remains have been recovered so far from Arrowhead Ridge — the site of the fiercest battle waged between South Korean and United Nations troops, on one side, and those of North Korea and China, on the other. In addition to the remains of South Korean soldiers, the presumed remains of soldiers from the United States, China, France and the British Commonwealth have also been recovered.

Sixty-six years after the Korean War, the remains of three South Korean soldiers, whose identities were confirmed, have been returned to their families. That was truly a rewarding achievement made possible by the efforts to build peace, which also made it possible for President Trump to become the first sitting American President to cross the Military Demarcation Line and set foot on North Korean soil. The easing of military tensions and firm trust among the leaders of both Koreas and the United States set the stage for a momentous trilateral meeting at Panmunjom.

President Trump's action in taking Chairman Kim's hand and stepping over the Military Demarcation Line was in itself a declaration of the true beginning of a new era of peace. It was a remarkable step that will go down in the history of peace on the Korean peninsula and in North-East Asia. I hope that both leaders will take yet another huge step from there.

The principles that I have firmly held on to in the course of resolving issues related to the Korean peninsula remain unchanged. The first principle is zero tolerance for war. Korea is still in a state of armistice. The war has yet to come to an end. The tragedy of war should never be repeated on the Korean peninsula. To that end, we must end the longest-running armistice in human history and achieve a complete end to the war.

The second principle is a mutual security guarantee. South Korea will guarantee the security of North Korea. I hope that North Korea will do the same for South Korea. When the security of both sides is ensured, it will be possible to accelerate denuclearization and the establishment of a peace regime on the Korean peninsula. At the very least, all hostile acts must be put on hold while dialogue is under way. I hope that the international community will also work together to alleviate the security concerns on the Korean peninsula.

The third principle is co-prosperity. Peace does not simply mean the absence of conflict. Genuine peace is all about enhancing mutual inclusiveness and interdependence, while working together to achieve co-prosperity. A peace economy in which the two Koreas take part will solidify peace on the peninsula and, at the same, time contribute to economic development in East Asia and the whole world.

Today, based on those three principles, which are in complete accord with the values upheld by the United Nations, I would like to propose to the United Nations and all Member States the idea of transforming the demilitarized zone that cuts across the middle of the Korean peninsula into an international peace zone. The demilitarized zone is a colossal green zone that stretches 250 kilometres from the east to the west and four kilometres from the north to the south.

Its borders define the tragedy spawned by 70 years of military confrontation, but, paradoxically, it has become a pristine ecological treasure trove. It has also become a symbolic space steeped in history, which embraces both the tragedy of division, as embodied by the Joint Security Area, guard posts and barbed-wire fences, as

well as the yearning for peace. The demilitarized zone is the common heritage of humankind, and its value must be shared with the whole world. Once peace has been established between the two Koreas, I will work together with North Korea to have the demilitarized zone listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site.

If we were to designate the area connecting Panmunjom and Gaeseong in North Korea as a peace and cooperation district and transform it into a zone in which both Koreas and the international community could jointly explore the path to prosperity on the Korean peninsula, and if the demilitarized zone were to host the United Nations offices already stationed in the two Koreas, and other international organizations related to peace, ecology and culture, and emerge as a centre for research on peace, peacekeeping, arms control and confidence-building, it could become an international peace zone in name as well as substance.

There are approximately 380,000 anti-personnel mines in the demilitarized zone, and it is expected to take 15 years for South Korean troops to remove them on their own. However, cooperation with the international community, including the United Nations Mine Action Service, will not only guarantee the transparency and stability of demining operations but also instantly turn the demilitarized zone into an area of international cooperation.

If North Korea makes sincere efforts to implement denuclearization, the international community should also reciprocate. The establishment of an international peace zone will provide an institutional and realistic guarantee to North Korea's security. At the same time, South Korea will also be able to enjoy permanent peace.

Chairman Kim and I agreed on the peaceful use of the demilitarized zone, and on-site inspections of the current state of North Korea's railroads were conducted after the two Koreas embarked upon the reconnection of the severed railroads and roads. In addition, the groundbreaking ceremony to mark their reconnection and modernization already took place. All of those efforts constitute a process that will help solidify the foundation for peace on the Korean peninsula, as well as contribute to peace and stability in North-East Asia.

When the demilitarized zone that cuts across the midriff of the Korean peninsula is turned into a peace zone, the peninsula will evolve into a bridging nation that connects the continent and the ocean and facilitates peace and prosperity. The vision of an East

Asian railroad community in which six North-East Asian countries and the United States take part could also become reality.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, East Asia has made historically unprecedented progress through close mutual exchanges, the division of labour and economic cooperation by overcoming the pain of invasion and colonial rule. The free-trade order marked by fair competition has served as its very foundation. We will be able to make further progress through cooperation, while safeguarding the values of free and fair trade based on an earnest reflection of our history.

The Republic of Korea intends to expand a people-centred community of mutual prosperity throughout the Korean peninsula, East Asia and the entire world by working in partnership with its neighbours. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations-Republic of Korea Commemorative Summit and the Mekong-Korea Summit to be held in Busan in November, will provide an opportunity to lay the foundation in that regard.

The Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change are major tasks that we must achieve through multilateral cooperation. After formulating our own mechanism for the implementation of the SDGs, we are channelling considerable efforts into their implementation, in keeping with our pledge to the international community. We have enacted related laws, such as the sustainable development act, the framework act on low-carbon green growth and the framework act on international development cooperation. And we have established a presidential commission on sustainable development to ensure the institutional implementation of the Goals.

To date, Korea has dispatched 17,000 military personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations and has stood alongside people suffering from diseases and natural disasters throughout the world. Korea supports the Action for Peacekeeping initiative and the Declaration of Shared Commitments on United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, led by Secretary-General António Guterres. We will add to the virtuous cycle of peace and development by increasing the amount of our official development assistance.

In particular, Korea will actively participate in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, which will mark its twentieth anniversary next year, and the Elsie

Initiative for Women in Peace Operations, which was adopted in Vancouver in 2017. We will also host the next Peacekeeping Ministerial in Korea in 2021.

Korea will host the second summit on the Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 (P4G) initiative next year. The second P4G summit will provide an opportunity to strengthen the international community's solidarity for the implementation of the Paris Agreement and the SDGs. I hope that many stakeholders from Governments, international organizations, business and civil society will take interest and participate in that event.

This year is very special for Korea. One hundred years ago, the Korean people launched the 1 March Independence Movement against Japan's colonial rule and established the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea. After 100 years, Korea is now leading the efforts to achieve peaceful coexistence and equality based on love for humankind. Korea will continue to fulfil its responsibility and role in realizing the United Nations goals of peace, human rights and sustainable development, while standing together with the international community. We will also work together to ensure that the ultimate goals of the United Nations of international peace and security are realized on the Korean peninsula. I hope that the international community's support and cooperation will enable swords to be beaten into ploughshares on the Korean peninsula.

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

*Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Mr. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré,  
President of Faso and President of the Council of  
Ministers of Burkina Faso**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of Faso and President of the Council of Ministers of Burkina Faso.

*Mr. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, President of Faso and President of the Council of Ministers of Burkina Faso, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United

Nations His Excellency Mr. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, President of Faso and President of the Council of Ministers of Burkina Faso, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Kaboré** (*spoke in French*): As Africa's candidate for the position of President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande was elected on 4 June (see A/73/PV.87), and it gives me great pleasure to extend my heartfelt and brotherly congratulations, as well as those of my delegation. He has held high office in his country, Nigeria, and has a perfect knowledge of the United Nations. I wish him every success and assure him of Burkina Faso's full support as he fulfils his mandate.

History will remember the outgoing President, Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, as the fourth woman — the second in half a century — to be elected President of the General Assembly in the seventy-four years that our Organization has existed. In view of the outstanding work she did and the results she achieved, I wish to congratulate her on having undertaken the major challenges related to the theme of the seventy-third session.

Allow me to reaffirm the gratitude and appreciation of the people of Burkina Faso to the Secretary-General for his personal commitment and support, as well as that of the United Nations system, to my country in difficult times. This is an opportunity to renew my encouragement for the courageous implementation of the reforms undertaken and to congratulate him on his report presented to the Security Council on 24 July on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa and the Sahel (S/2019/549). The statement made by the President of the Security Council during that briefing bodes well for the future (see S/PV.8585).

This year's seventy-fourth session is being held under the theme "Galvanizing multilateral efforts for poverty eradication, quality education, climate action and inclusion". Burkina Faso welcomes the choice of theme, its relevance and its timeliness because, now more than ever, multilateralism remains the only way for my country to find solutions to the major problems faced by the world. Those challenges must include the fight against terrorism and violent extremism, organized crime and cybercrime, which no country, no matter how powerful, can vanquish alone.

In view of all the achievements made by the United Nations in the areas of peacekeeping, security, justice,

human rights, development and the fight against climate change, with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, it is imperative that we work to strengthen multilateralism and the role of the United Nations as a means of achieving common solutions to our planet's problems.

Terrorism and poverty are the most devastating phenomena that our world faces today. Since January 2016, our country has been confronted with persistent and unprecedented terrorist attacks, with far-reaching human, social and economic consequences. The escalation of violence and insecurity has led to a major humanitarian crisis, resulting in numerous casualties among civilians and defence and security forces alike; hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons; schools and health facilities shut down; and State symbols destroyed. Destabilization continues through the instrumentalization of latent problems between communities that develop into violent clashes. In terms of public finances, we can see an increase in security spending at the expense of funding for development and social sectors.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the support of the United Nations in the face of the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in Burkina Faso. Burkina Faso's eligibility for the Peacebuilding Fund, as announced by the Secretary-General, has made it possible — following an inter-agency mission led by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa and the Sahel and an emergency task force under the leadership of the Assistant Secretary-General — to open one of the five United Nations regional centres outside the capital, so as to be closer to the population in these difficult times.

To ensure that support from international partners is well coordinated and aligned with an agreed comprehensive and integrated strategy that links prevention, emergency aid, rehabilitation and development, the Government requested an assessment mission regarding prevention and peacebuilding to be conducted by the African Development Bank, the European Union and the World Bank. The assessment took place from 1 to 10 July and its recommendations are being implemented.

Eliminating poverty is the first of the Sustainable Development Goals because, according to the United Nations, millions of people are living below the poverty line. If that trend is not reversed, more than

168 million children will be living in extreme poverty. More than ever, the international community must intensify its efforts in the fight to eradicate poverty, which is a sine qua non for sustainable and inclusive development. The fight will have an impact only if we effectively coordinate multifaceted actions within the framework of the third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty 2018–2027 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The security situation in the area covered by the Group of Five for the Sahel (G-5 Sahel) remains a source of concern. Beyond Burkina Faso, and in my capacity as current Chair of the G-5 Sahel, I would like to remind the international community of the importance of supporting the G-5 Sahel countries in their determined fight against terrorism and to foster development. The activity of armed terrorist groups is expanding geographically, both within our countries and outside the G-5 Sahel area, which clearly demonstrates the urgent need to take appropriate measures and initiatives. In that regard, the Accra initiative and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) extraordinary summit on terrorism, held on 14 September, should be commended. Those initiatives serve to indicate clearly that terrorism needs to be fought at the regional level.

At this stage, I am delighted that the appeal of the G-5 Sahel, with the staunch support of the Secretary-General, was received favourably by the Security Council with the adoption of resolution 2480 (2019), to renew the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). Through that resolution, MINUSMA will provide support to all battalions operating under the Joint Force of the G-5 Sahel, on the condition that the G-5 Sahel or other partners will assume responsibility for the delivery of aid to operations beyond Malian territory.

At the ECOWAS extraordinary summit on terrorism in Ouagadougou, Heads of State noted the ineffectiveness of MINUSMA in dealing with terrorism in Mali because of the limits of the mandate conferred upon it by the Security Council. It would seem inconceivable that, with 12,000 men and substantial resources, the Joint Force is unable to contribute effectively to the fight against terrorism in the country. That is why, alongside my ECOWAS peers and in my capacity as current Chair of the G-5 Sahel, I call for a more robust and more offensive mandate for MINUSMA. Such a mandate would make it possible to

secure and stabilize Mali and all other countries of the G-5 Sahel. Likewise, we call on the Security Council to confer a mandate under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to the Joint Force of the G-5 Sahel in order to provide it with perennial resources.

At the Group of Seven Summit in Biarritz, we proposed, along with Germany and France, the establishment of an international partnership for stability and security in the Sahel that includes addressing the issues of terrorism and the need for development. I would like to call upon all partners to join that initiative unreservedly, as peace and stability in the Sahel also mean peace and stability in Africa and the rest of the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate the gratitude of the Governments and the peoples of my country as well as the countries of the G-5 Sahel to the entire United Nations system and all our partners for their support and guidance ever since the beginning of the security and humanitarian crisis. I reiterate my appeal for bilateral and international solidarity to provide the Joint Force of the G-5 Sahel with the predictable and sustainable equipment and financial resources necessary for its proper functioning in order to promote our national and regional development programmes through the Priority Investment Programme. The two pillars — security and development — are necessary to guarantee the stability of the region. In the same vein, the countries of the G-5 Sahel adopted, on 13 September, the Desert to Power initiative, together with the African Development Bank, which aims to harness solar energy and provide electricity to more than 60 million people by 2030, as well as to create jobs and provide access to water, agriculture, education and health care.

Despite the prevailing situation in my country, my Government is continuing to implement its development programme in order to meet the basic needs of our people, strengthen democracy and consolidate the rule of law. Bolstering economic recovery, fighting unemployment, empowering women and youth, creating initiatives for vulnerable people and promoting good governance are at the core of our efforts. Moreover, in the context of the fight against social inequality, as well as to ensure the harmonious development of the entire country, Burkina Faso has implemented two instruments to reduce regional disparities and to galvanize local economies through a local economic development support programme and the Emergency Programme

for the Sahel, which has now been extended to the five regions affected by violent extremism.

In terms of democratic governance, I invited the majority party and the opposition to partake in a political dialogue from 15 to 22 July. The dialogue was positive and has allowed us to make progress that should be consolidated by the adoption of relevant regulatory and legislative texts.

Turning to the fight against climate change, I would first of all like to applaud yesterday's Climate Action Summit, the format of which made it possible to put forward concrete proposals. I would also like to commend the success of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification held in India just a few days ago, and to recall the clear link between desertification and climate change. The countries of the Sahel understand that well, having created the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel in 1973.

Climate change is causing population displacement in Burkina Faso and exacerbating conflicts between herders and farmers due to water shortages and the scarcity of arable and grazing land. That is why, in the context of preventing and combating the impacts of climate change, my Government has taken important initiatives, including a five-year reforestation plan, a law to reduce the effects of disasters and humanitarian crises and a national plan for risk reduction and emergency preparedness for the period 2016 to 2020.

Despite the difficult security situation, Burkina Faso has continued to fulfil its international obligations by supporting fraternal nations restore peace through United Nations missions. For example, as one of the major troop contributors to peacekeeping missions, Burkina Faso is present in both Mali and Darfur. In Guinea-Bissau, our troops are involved in the ECOWAS Mission in Guinea-Bissau, which has contributed to providing a certain level of stability to that friendly country, allowing a President of the Republic to finish their term for the first time. We are also undertaking to increase women's contribution as part of gender mainstreaming efforts in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

As we meet today, the international news is marked by tensions and threats to international peace and security. If we are all present at each new session of the General Assembly, it is because we believe in the capacity of the United Nations — a symbol par

excellence of multilateralism and diplomacy — to find lasting solutions to the major challenges and various crises that affect us in many parts of the world.

I would like to recall that the ongoing security crisis in the G-5 Sahel space is a direct result of the destruction of the Libyan State. I urge the international community to mobilize in order to find a solution for lasting peace in that country, because resolving the security crisis in our countries is heavily dependent upon peace in Libya. In that connection, Burkina Faso welcomes United Nations mediation and strongly recommends the involvement of the African Union in the hope that such joint efforts will lead to the resolution of the Libyan crisis. In keeping with the shared views of the G-5 Sahel and the outcome of the ECOWAS extraordinary summit in Ouagadougou, I call on the Security Council to appoint a joint United Nations-African Union special envoy with a profound understanding of the situation in Libya.

On the question of Western Sahara, Burkina Faso reiterates its support for the political process under way, conducted under the exclusive auspices of the Secretary-General with a view to reaching a mutually acceptable and negotiated political solution to the dispute, as has been recommended by the Council since 2007, including in resolution 2468 (2019), adopted in April. Burkina Faso also welcomes the holding of two round tables among Algeria, Morocco, Mauritania and the Polisario Front, in accordance with Security Council resolutions 2414 (2018) and 2440 (2018). I would like to take this opportunity to commend the work carried out by the former Special Envoy of the Secretary-General of the United Nations during his tenure. Given the regional dimension of the dispute, Burkina Faso calls on all States in the region to contribute to the political process and step up their participation in the negotiation process.

In the Middle East, the question of Palestinian remains a major concern in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and Burkina Faso reiterates its support for the two-State solution, with Israel and Palestine living in peace and good-neighbourliness.

Burkina Faso strongly condemns the repeated attacks against Saudi Arabia and its oil facilities. Whatever their origin, these attacks constitute serious threats to peace in Saudi Arabia and the region as a whole. We therefore firmly call for these acts of hostility to end.

With regard to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States of America, Burkina Faso believes that it should be lifted, in the light of the great prejudices the Cuban people have suffered for many years.

International peace and security are under threat from the arms race. That is why Burkina Faso supports all multilateral initiatives and actions aimed at achieving disarmament on both weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons. Today there is ever-more evidence that the proliferation of small arms and light weapons poses a threat to international peace and security in various parts of the world, especially West Africa and the Sahel, and hinders the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. I urge States to allocate the resources freed up by disarmament to financing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), official development assistance and the Green Climate Fund. In so doing, we can offer better prospects to millions of disadvantaged people.

Yesterday we held the Climate Action Summit and the High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage, and in the coming days we will hold high-level meetings on sustainable development and Financing for Development. We express our hope that all these initiatives will help generate political momentum and support at all levels to strengthen engagement with the private sector in order to leverage innovative solutions for financing the SDGs.

In this regard, we commend the Secretary-General's launch yesterday, 23 September, of the Global Investors for Sustainable Development Alliance. This group, which will comprise 25 to 30 chief executive officers of major companies from around the world, is intended to leverage their know-how to boost long-term investment in sustainable development; as such, it is a beacon of hope at a moment when funding is ever scarcer.

Burkina Faso, like all countries, is keenly following the intergovernmental negotiations on Security Council reform, as well as issues relating to the revitalization of the General Assembly and partnerships with the regional and subregional organizations. Regarding the reform, as we prepare to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of our Organization under the theme "The future we want, the United Nations we need: Reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism", Burkina Faso continues to hope that the negotiations, launched more than 20 years ago, will

deliver the reform we all so wish to see — reform that makes the Security Council more representative of the 193 States Members of the United Nations across both categories of membership and with all corresponding privileges and obligations. I take this opportunity to reaffirm Burkina Faso's full adherence to the common African position as reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. In marking 24 April 2019 as the first International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, the United Nations reaffirmed the importance of multilateralism and showed that it is together that we can tackle and overcome the global challenges of the modern world.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of Faso and President of the Council of Ministers of Burkina Faso for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, President of Faso and President of the Council of Ministers of Burkina Faso, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echenique,  
President of the Republic of Chile**

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

*Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echenique, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

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

**President Piñera Echenique** (*spoke in Spanish*): Every generation faces its own challenges but no generation has faced a challenge as urgent and formidable as that confronting us in climate change and global warming. This is the mother of all battles, because it is the battle for our very survival. The human being is the most intelligent creature living on planet earth. However, it is also the only creature capable of destroying — and, at times, it seems, ready to destroy — its own planet.

Recent months have seen many prestigious magazines publish photos of planet earth captioned “Let's save the planet”. I believe they are mistaken: it is

not planet earth that is at risk; what is truly at risk is the survival of the human being on planet earth.

Our planet is over 4.5 billion years old, and during this long history, it has suffered and endured all kinds of phenomena — such as hurricanes, glaciations, warming, flooding, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, floods, asteroid strikes — and it survived them all. However, more than 99 out of every 100 species that once existed no longer exist today, and we do not want human beings to join that list of the extinct.

The scientific evidence is categorical and conclusive: the situation is now critical. In fact, the latest scientific report, *United in Science*, published just today, shows that the concentration of greenhouse gases and global temperature are the highest they have been in the past 800,000 years. The last five years have been the hottest in recorded human history. The report states that, even if we implemented the commitments made under the Paris Agreement, temperature would still significantly exceed the limit agreed, reaching an increase of almost 3.4 degrees, which is almost tantamount to disaster. We need to multiple comprises by five to meet the target of limiting warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The consequences are not theoretical; they are plain for everyone to see. We are enduring heatwaves, major storms and floods, severe droughts, devastating hurricanes, and ice calving and melting, among other things. Sea levels continue to rise by the day, as do the acidification and deoxygenation of their waters. In fact, over the past 30 years, humankind has destroyed 50 per cent of corals, which are the backbone of all marine life. We have burned or deforested large areas of forests crucial to the life and health of our planet. The most serious aspect is that such changes, which once occurred over the course of centuries or millennia, now take place in less than a decade. Nature has long been screaming in alarm and anguish, pleading for the simplest of things — that we take care of her so that she in turn may take care of us.

The 2015 session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP), held in Paris, set the goal of limiting maximum temperature increase to 2°C, later stepped up to 1.5°C by the end of the century. But the commitments countries made at that Conference did not, as has just been mentioned, go far enough. They are not even being honoured!

We must urgently rise to the challenge. This means that we must prevent climate change and global warming from becoming truly catastrophic. This is not a matter of scepticism, faith, politics or ideology; it is a problem founded in science. And the overwhelming science is telling us loud and clear that we have less than a decade left to radically change the course of history and the way in which we treat our planet. We know too much to remain sceptical.

This challenge is not just environmental; it is also a moral challenge, affecting our children and grandchildren, and the generations to come. They too have the right to live on planet Earth. From this same rostrum yesterday, we listened to children and young people raise their voices, urging us to shoulder responsibilities and account not only for what we have done but above all for what we have not done. Those future generations will also want to live on a healthy planet and they will, of course, judge us, and judge us harshly, for the way in which we responded to the monumental challenge of climate change.

Therefore, if we are to avoid catastrophe, it is now imperative that we recognize that we are on the wrong track, time has run out and we must change course. Facing this scenario, we have heard two options. There are those who say, "Let us wait and see what happens" and accept the consequences; and those who believe that the time has come to tackle this challenge and change the course of history. The good news is that science and technology give us tools and instruments and that we still have time to change course in how we as humankind treat our planet.

Chile has chosen this second path, deciding to tackle the challenge. That is why we agreed to host the COP in December. What are the objectives of the COP to be held in Chile?

First, it is aimed to get countries to make much more ambitious and enforceable commitments than they have to date to combat climate change. There is good news on this front, too. Today, 66 countries, or one in three, have already committed to becoming carbon neutral, which means cutting net emissions of carbon and greenhouse gases to zero. This seemed impossible only weeks ago. We note and welcome this change in attitude, heightened awareness and the stronger commitment to tackling the problem.

The Secretary-General tasked us some months ago with leading the coalition for climate mitigation so as to

ensure that more countries, business and cities commit to carbon neutrality. As I said at the Group of 20 Summit in Osaka, Japan, where six countries, including Chile, made this commitment, the movement is fast gaining momentum, with 66 countries, more than 100 cities and more than 100 major companies having committed to becoming carbon neutral.

Secondly, we also need to incorporate the protection and conservation of rainforests and their magnificent biodiversity and, of course, the incorporation not only of rain forests but where they grow, because when rainforests grow, they capture carbon and produce oxygen. This is why, together with the Presidents of France and Colombia, we created the Alliance for Rainforests, which will take the second step of its work at the December COP in Chile.

At the same time, we must also incorporate care for the oceans. Oceans capture 50 per cent of greenhouse gas emissions and absorb more than 90 per cent of the temperature increases generated by us human beings. However, they are suffering serious impacts. The United in Science report details the degree of acidification and deoxygenation affecting our oceans and killing marine life. This is why the Chile COP will be the blue COP, because without blue there is no green, and without green there is no life.

Thirdly, it will fully involve regional, municipal and city Governments, non-governmental organizations, businesses, civil society and communities at large in the cause of fighting climate change.

Fourthly, it will put into practice some instruments that were agreed in Paris but are yet to be activated, such as carbon bond markets, to generate more resources for and improve the efficiency of the struggle to reduce carbon emissions.

This is why Chile is today announcing the launch of the Alliance for Climate Ambition, which will bring together States and cities, business and civil society on all these fronts. Indeed, Chile committed a few months ago to becoming a carbon-neutral country. We are taking that commitment very seriously. We are implementing a plan to achieve that goal, based on four pillars: the complete decarbonization of our energy grid; the modernization of our public transport system, replacing fossil fuels entirely with electricity; energy efficiency in every sector; and an ambitious protection, conservation and reforestation programme for our forests.

We are pursuing all of this through a framework law on climate change, which identifies clear strategies, tools and timelines for upholding our commitment to carbon neutrality. In this great task, we will have to use all the tools that our great allies of science and technology put at our disposal. We must leave behind the culture of the disposable and embrace the culture of the recyclable. We must shift from the concept of a linear economy to one that is circular, repurposing its own waste.

Change will not be easy; it will require ambition. Ambition requires funding, but it is also true that funding always follows ambition. This is why I call on world leaders and all men and women of good faith to recognize that we have run out of time and must now go from diagnosis and debate to action, pure and simple. We must leave aside the false dichotomy between economic growth and sustainability. If development is not sustainable, there can be no development. The two concepts are not in competition, but complement one another.

Of course, we will have to significantly increase investment in innovation and technology to better tackle these challenges. Innovation and technology are the tools that will allow us to make crucially needed development compatible with urgently needed care for nature. We will also have to mobilize far more resources than those mobilized or pledged to date if we are to help the most vulnerable countries to join this noble struggle. From the edges of the Earth, the southern reaches of the world, we invite all Governments and all sectors of society to participate in COP Chile and commit to tackling the great challenge of our generation. This battle still depends on us, and we cannot therefore just continue to ignore it. This is the great challenge of our generation: to correct a decades-long course and treat our planet differently in order to guarantee the survival of humankind.

Last year, in this same Hall (see A/73/PV.10), I acknowledged certain errors and problems in my country and referred to what was happening in so-called sacrificial zones and the serious harm to thousands of people there (see A/73/PV.10). But acknowledgement is not enough; we must also take action. That is why I committed to address the pollution and poisoning endured by so many in the communities of Quintero and Puchuncavi decisively and with determination and urgency. I am pleased to say that a revamped and strict plan is now in place to decontaminate those

communities. The plan includes emission standards as exacting as those in the European Union and provides for strengthening the health-care system and State oversight of a modernized monitoring network. In addition, we have obtained the collaboration of the Finnish Meteorological Institute, which is specialized in that area and has conducted an in-depth analysis and made a series of useful recommendations to correct the situation.

The same applies to our planet. If we do not do anything very soon, the whole planet might become a sacrificial zone. And that we cannot allow. Just a few days ago, the headline of *The New York Times* read that a quarter of humankind faces looming water crises. Chile, Mexico, India, North Africa and California are among the most vulnerable places. I want to mention the acute and extensive drought in our country, which has lasted more than 10 years and is reflected in sharp decreases in river flows, water levels in reservoirs and snow accumulation in the mountains, as well as across all other indicators. That is why we are tackling the issue with a sense of urgency, but also one of efficiency. We have issued water scarcity and agricultural emergency decrees with a view to ensuring the population's water supply and assisting small- and medium-scale farmers, who are so adversely affected by the drought. We are incorporating modern technologies for better use of water in all sectors of our economy, including irrigation technology in the agricultural sector. We have adopted a construction plan that prioritizes 26 reservoirs and are moving forward with a plan to recharge the natural aquifers under our country's soil. And, of course, we are improving the reuse of water through the treatment of grey water and sewage. However, it goes without saying, that it takes time to resolve those problems.

I would also like to refer today to a problem that affects the world economy as a whole. We are witnessing a worrisome weakening of the world economy. International trade and investment are stagnating. The trade and tariff war, which has gone on for too long, between the world's two greatest Powers, the weakening of free trade, areas of long-term protectionism, the growing inefficiency and deadlock at the World Trade Organization, which is unable to prevent or sanction protectionist actions that harm the entire economy — these impede job creation and limit the quality of life of our peoples.

Today, at a time of enormous technological progress, we should more than ever advance on the road to

integration. We need to rebuild a respected multilateral economic order that is based on rules known and respected by all and promotes free trade, integration and investment flows, combats protectionism, eliminates barriers to trade, harmonizes regulations and establishes universal rules to prevent and sanction unilateral acts that threaten the international order. To that end, it is necessary to modernize the World Trade Organization as soon as possible and to strengthen international collaboration.

In November, Chile will host the summit of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum, which brings together economies that represent two thirds of the world's gross domestic product. We hope to achieve great advances on that occasion in the areas of free trade and anti-protectionism. But allow me to make a remark. Today, when the world is most in need of leadership on issues such as climate change, global warming, free trade and integration, it seems unreasonable that the two great Powers, instead of uniting to lead us in effectively addressing those issues, should be fighting each other, resulting in a grave and dangerous leadership vacuum. I would like to comment that there is no incompatibility or conflict between thinking about a global world and being a patriot. There is no conflict there; these are merely two sides of the same coin that enable the balance we want to achieve between integration and national identity.

Before turning to the topic of my own country, I would like to refer to a vital point for our continent, Latin America. We must put an end to the ignominious, cruel dictatorship imposed on the Venezuelan people. It is a corrupt and incompetent dictatorship that flouts human rights and freedoms and has undeniable links with drug trafficking. Under the dictatorship, Venezuela, which had been the richest country in Latin America, with the world's largest oil reserves and a model of democracy for our continent, has become a country mired in a profound political, economic, social and moral crisis, where the very lives of its inhabitants, owing to a lack of food and medicine, are in jeopardy. The only avenue open to the people has been mass migration. More than 4.5 million Venezuelans have left their country because of a lack of prospects in order to seek better development opportunities. Without a doubt, this is a cause that engages all of Latin America.

I would like to end with remarks concerning Chile. Each generation has a mission to fulfil. Our country's fathers achieved freedom and independence and

bequeathed us a free homeland. The generation that preceded us was able to recover freedom and restore democracy in a very exemplary way. Our generation has a new challenge, that of defeating poverty and achieving development. That should be done in peace and unity, so that all my compatriots may have the opportunity to develop their abundant talents and be secure in their ability to live in dignity. In short, the goal is a homeland where everyone may pursue happiness and seek a fuller, happier life, together with their families and loved ones. That is our mission, and we are committed to it. It will be the yardstick against which the generations to come will judge us. Those generations, who are our children and grandchildren, we cannot and will not fail them.

I ask God to enlighten our paths and to bless Chileans and all the peoples of the world.

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

*Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echenique, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic**

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

*Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

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

**President Macron** (*spoke in French*): We are gathered here at the General Assembly at a time when the Secretary-General has chosen the very important theme of climate — we met on the subject yesterday — when impatience is being expressed everywhere and when everything in the world around us — or at least many things — could lead us to be pessimistic. We are not meeting our own expectations — the objectives that we have set for ourselves — in the fight against global warming and in the fight for biodiversity. The many tensions are at an unprecedented level in some parts of the world. Take, for example, what happened recently

in the Gulf, or the challenges many of our friends in this Hall are confronting — our friends from the Sahel in particular, whose friendly faces I see here, and from many other regions.

These conflicts are increasingly harsh, cruel to civilians, humanitarian workers and human rights defenders. As David Miliband says, we have entered an age of impunity. Commercial tensions are increasing, and concerns are growing about technological changes and their consequences. I do not want to paint a pessimistic picture here — and I know how tired delegations are of listening to the many speeches that have been given since this morning; indeed, I wish to spare us the litany of all the reasons for despair. Nevertheless, we have everything we need to meet these challenges, everything, and in a new way.

First, we have knowledge. Never before in the history of the world has science been brought together in such a way as to be able to describe the challenges we face and provide the means to address them, from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, to the point where we are building upon technological revolutions. It has been described thus: every year we know a little bit more.

We have the funding, which is not lacking across the globe. We have an unrivalled capacity for innovation, which, on many of the subjects I have cited, is also a means of responding to these challenges: in the fight against poverty and in efforts to foster stability and respond to the major changes I have just mentioned. We have an unprecedented awareness of these contemporary evils. We have our youth, who are weighing in on the climate and freedoms. And we have, I must say, public opinion, which is more informed than ever before. And we have a framework, which is operative in this Hall today: the framework of free States that recognize each other and are supposed to work for the common good and prepare for the future of humankind, responding to these contemporary crises. We also have multilateral regional frameworks on many subjects and thematic frameworks on such topics as trade and economic cooperation.

So what are we missing? What is it that makes us give speeches that make our peoples feel we cannot respond to their fears?

On reflection, as I prepared to speak today, I was reminded of a text that has often been with me, namely, the Harvard commencement address given by Alexandr Solzhenitsyn in 1978 on the decline of courage. We lack courage, spectacularly and often. Basically, today I just wanted to tell the General Assembly that the appeal I would like to make would be on the revival of courage — on two subjects to begin with: the courage to know how to build peace and the courage to take responsibility.

The courage to know how to build peace is important because, first of all, it takes courage to do so and because building peace always involves taking a risk, which consists in not simply defending one's primary interests or one's positions that have sometimes led to escalation or tensions. In all regions of the world, building peace is about taking the risk — the risk of dialogue, compromise, rebuilding trust — and in so many regions, that is what we need. That is what the Middle East needs today. That is what the Gulf region needs. Courage is not tensions, provocation, ripostes. It is a demanding consultation that is carried out in a transparent manner.

From the very first time I addressed the General Assembly (see A/72/PV.4) I expressed my strong belief with respect to Iran that the strategy of applying pressure on the Iranian nuclear issue could lead only to an increase in tensions in the region if, basically and above all, it did not have clear prospects for achieving a diplomatic solution. In 2018, after the United States withdrew from the 2015 Vienna Agreement, I proposed a comprehensive framework to preserve the Joint Comprehensive Programme of Action (JCPOA) and complement it with a broader approach to address the issues raised by Iran's post-2025 nuclear programme, the country's role in regional crises and its ballistic programme. Where are we today?

In response to the American strategy and the European, Russian and Chinese desire to preserve the 2015 Vienna Agreement, Iran has responded with a strategy of maximum pressure on its regional environment. In that context, the increase in tensions was constant in recent months, and the 14 September attacks on Saudi Arabia have changed the situation. From that point on, the risk of a flare-up based on a calculation error or a disproportionate response has become greater today. Peace is at the mercy of an incident that is getting out of hand, and the consequences for the

whole region and beyond would be too serious for us to accept living on the brink of disaster.

So what can we do? More than ever, I believe very deeply, the time has come to resume negotiations among the United States of America, Iran, the signatories to the JCPOA and the Powers in the region that are primarily concerned with the region's security and stability.

What should be the terms and objectives of those negotiations? First, there must be complete certainty that Iran will never acquire nuclear weapons. Secondly, there must be an end to the crisis in Yemen. Thirdly, a regional security plan integrating the other crises in the region and the security of maritime transit flows must be drawn up. Finally, economic sanctions must be lifted.

I am in no way naive, nor do I believe in miracles. I believe in the courage to build peace, and I know that the United States of America, Iran and all the signatories to this agreement have that courage. It is with the same conviction that we will continue our work on Syria, Libya and the Sahel, which has been discussed at length in recent weeks and, in particular, at the Group of Seven Summit in Biarritz.

With regard to Syria, I would like to welcome the encouraging announcements made yesterday by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and a decisive step forward with respect to the constitution, at last, by the long-awaited Constitutional Committee. We all look at the humanitarian situation in Idlib with vigilance and high standards. We are all committed to Syria's stability, throughout all its regions, and to the protection of all its people. We will continue to work towards a sustainable and inclusive political solution in Syria, which entails the work of the constitutional committee and securing Syrian territory so as to enable the voluntary and safe return of all refugees. It further requires a free electoral process that will include all Syrian citizens.

With respect to Libya, the Group of Seven (G-7) summit recalled our objectives and convictions. I believe very strongly that we currently need a robust inter-Libyan reconciliation conference and a firm commitment from the African Union, alongside the United Nations, to achieve that. Many initiatives have been undertaken. I welcome the commitment of Germany and all stakeholders who want to build peace. Lasting peace, however, can be built only on the basis of reconciliation among the Libyans themselves.

In the Sahel, France's commitment is well known, ongoing and reaffirmed. There too, the future lies in building lasting cooperation in the region among the five States members of the Group of Five for the Sahel, securing the commitment of our armies, involving the United Nations, changing the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA) and fully integrating our objectives of fighting terrorism and entrenching sustainable security in the Sahel into the missions that we have deployed. It is essential to transfer MINUSMA's mandate to Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, continue to involve all the armies in the region, re-engage all the region's security forces in the fight against terrorism and commit our energy to development and stabilization. Those are all situations in which engaging in dialogue and crafting political solutions are the key to success.

That courage to build peace is something we have seen in recent months at work in an unforeseen and unexpected way in the Sudan thanks to the strength of the Sudanese people, the capacity for dialogue between the army and the people, the work of the African Union and the role of Ethiopia, whose foresight and commitment to the whole region I want to salute here.

It is that same courage to build peace that is now required in Ukraine. President Zelenskyi has taken the first steps, President Putin has been able to respond to him and progress has been made in recent weeks. We see our horizon and know that the next steps are implementing the Minsk agreements and, ultimately, building a lasting peace on the ground. In the coming weeks, we will convene a summit in the Normandy format at the level of Heads of State and Government.

On each of those subjects, the question that is always asked is how to recreate an effective framework for cooperation among States. I believe that that it is possible. I do not believe that the problems that we face today can be solved by diluting responsibilities or by a globalism that, in a way, neglects the people. In that regard, I agree with what President Trump said this morning. I also do not believe that the crises that we are experiencing would be best resolved by national withdrawal. I believe very deeply in patriotism so long as it incarnates both love of country and the aspiration to the universal. I believe very deeply in sovereignty so long as it represents both autonomy for oneself and the need for cooperation.

What we need today is to reinvent what I defined when I last addressed the Assembly in speaking of robust multilateralism (see A/73/PV.6). That is not to say that our multilateralism is worn out, that we no longer listen to ourselves or that we are no longer effective. Rather, it is in acknowledgement that there is no solution to be found in national withdrawal or without cooperation. That cooperation must, however, produce concrete results and engage new actors. We have demonstrated the effectiveness of such robust, contemporary multilateralism.

I believe that we achieved that on the issue of climate when, after the American decision to withdraw from the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, we launched the One Planet Summit, together with the United Nations and the World Bank, which allowed us to maintain cohesion and engage new actors, investors and companies, as we saw again yesterday at the summit organized by the United Nations. We must engage new actors, create momentum and resist disintegration.

In that regard, Russia's ratification of the Paris Agreement, announced yesterday, is a sign of the success of that approach, in addition to what we have been able to undertake on many coalition issues. That is the same highly pragmatic multilateralism that we adopted to fight terrorism on the Internet through the Aqaba process and in the Christchurch Call to Action Summit, held on 15 May in Paris. I pay tribute here to the commitment of the King of Jordan and the Prime Minister of New Zealand.

Yesterday, we made a breakthrough when 50 countries joined that initiative and platforms were committed to set operational protocols and remove terrorist content. We will go even further, but we now have a concrete, real answer. We must continue to move forward, innovate and respond to contemporary challenges in a spirit of partnership, information and democracy. We must now innovate in the same spirit to secure our safety and security.

The major challenge for us today is that we are no longer capable of ensuring stability in an increasingly conflict-ridden world, having left behind the bipolar world in which we lived for decades. We no longer really have the last-resort guarantors of our deep-seated balances. As such, disorders have set in and things are often slow to be resolved effectively. I believe very strongly that the courage to build peace requires the reaffirmation of our values — those of human rights

and the dignity of human beings, which must not be subject any form of contemporary relativism. It calls for practical re-engagement in all areas of operation that I mentioned earlier, with a view to building peace and stability and proposing tangible solutions to the people.

I would refer, too, to the courage to take responsibility for our manifold challenges. When we talk about contemporary common goods, the climate, education and inequalities, we can say that we understand and see things for what they are. Today, we have an array of experts who are telling us about and describing in unprecedented detail the situation of our world. If we have weakened, it is because we have too often decided to question the truth, contest the facts, favour the short term and sometimes protect certain interests, and the loss of meaning has taken hold. But the reality is there.

Inequalities have again increased in our world among countries and within our countries. Our contemporary capitalism has become dysfunctional, leading to an unparalleled level of inequality. We are no longer capable of solving abject poverty and new forms of inequality, such as inequalities of opportunity and gender, as well as in access to education in the poorest regions, access to health care and necessary treatments, and climate, when it comes to the most vulnerable countries or the poorest regions that are hit even harder by global warming or the increasing scarcity of biodiversity.

On all those subjects, I presented the proposed the G-7 agenda last year and the desire to place the fight against inequality at its very core. I would like to briefly comment on that. I believe that we can collectively contribute to that subject in order for a response to begin to materialize, with a view to supporting the collective commitment already made to the Sustainable Development Goals. It is a way out of the short term; it is a decision to change our system. We have collectively committed, first and foremost, to a very proactive agenda for Africa and for the Sahel, its security, stability and development and, more broadly, to draft an agenda for Africa based on genuine security, development and reciprocity. In that context, we will host an Africa-France summit in France next June, based on economic partnerships and the involvement of civil societies in a spirit of deep reciprocity.

It is an agenda for equality between women and men. In Biarritz, we launched the €251-million

Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa initiative to support women entrepreneurs in Africa, and we will work with Angélique Kidjo to ensure that projects are quickly launched. That initiative was proposed by African women and operated by the African Development Bank, and for which the major economic Powers have decided support through investment.

We have supported Dr. Mukwege's fund for the protection of victims of sexual violence and launched the Gender Equality Advisory Council, which we have expanded in conjunction with this session of the General Assembly and which, for the States that join it, consists of implementing at least one measure at the national level on women's rights, based on best practices around the world.

The fight for gender equality is crucial, because we have not won it within our societies, as evidenced by the persistence of femicide in France and many other countries. We must give it legal status and build effective action to eradicate it. We must do even more than we have done before, because we are seeing in numerous States a decline in equality between women and men and a questioning of women's rights to control their bodies and the achievements of past decades. We must act because wherever inequality between women and men takes root, it leads to a decline in civilization, a rise in obscurantism, a growth in terrorism and a downturn in education. It also leads to diminished growth, because it means depriving each of those countries of half of its potential wealth.

That is also why we strongly support the United Nations on that agenda. On the three principles of action — namely, emancipate, protect and ensure real equality — we will act in view of the Generation Equality Forum, to be held in Paris in July 2020, 25 years after the Beijing Declaration, which marked the history of our Organization. There is no turning back now. We must move forward into a new era.

We must also fight that battle and have the courage to assume responsibility for our health. Here too, we have seen even today too many setbacks and difficulty of access to treatment in some regions, despite our efforts. The sixth replenishment conference of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will be held on 10 October in Lyon, France. From this rostrum in 2002, Kofi Annan called for the creation of a global fund to fight inequalities in the face of the possibility of curing deadly diseases. The Fund was then established,

with the support of the Group of Eight at the time, and 32 million lives have been saved as a result.

I insist that the eradication of major pandemics is within the reach of our action. We can save 16 million lives in the coming years. We must simply recognize that no one can understand any longer how, for reasons of finance and inequality, it is impossible today to access treatments to prevent or cure such diseases or to slow their resurgence. That is why we need \$14 billion in Lyon. We have three weeks, and we will put all our energy into making sure that a new global fund meets our ambition.

Lastly, the issue of climate is also a fight against inequalities and one of the subjects on which the courage of responsibility must be exemplified. Essentially, there is an ongoing paradox in climate matters, to which we are collectively being inured. We have basically given our impatient young people a boilerplate response. We give them the opportunity to express themselves and we tell them that we can hear them and that they are doing great; and then, all too often, we go on doing just as we did before. That will not hold up.

I welcome the commitment of the Secretary-General and say that, in the fight against climate change and biodiversity loss, we must undertake even stronger action and fundamentally change our collective Organization, the system itself, and seek not to offset, but rather to correct and change it ourselves with all our investors, companies and societies.

First, we must broaden our ambitions. That is crucial if we are to have a chance at limiting the rise in temperatures to below 2°C by the end of the century. To that end, we must act in 2020. In Europe, we must make the necessary decisions in 2020 in that regard, particularly on carbon taxation, with a real, higher minimum price and border taxation. If we have not convinced some partners to follow that agenda, those courageous decisions are needed, and the time is now.

We need to engage all countries more broadly in a carbon neutrality strategy by 2050. Several have joined that coalition. President Piñera Echenique has just presented it to the Assembly. We must continue to convince stakeholders and participate in that essential strategy. India has just expressed its willingness to join that agenda and coalition. I am aware of China's proactive approach to climate change, which has been so important in recent years.

I know that together, if we commit to carbon neutrality, we can make a significant difference in achieving our objectives. As such, the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Chile, and the twenty-sixth session, to be held in Europe, will be defining events.

Secondly, we must bring our agendas and actions back into line. I said this yesterday, but we cannot claim to be doing everything perfectly well and call for calm while we continue to be dependent on coal, as is the case in too many countries. Everyone, within their own limitations and with the help of the international community, the right funding and respect for each component of our societies, needs to commit to a strategy to wean ourselves of coal.

The major countries of the world must also stop financing new polluting facilities in developing countries. We continue to this day to export financing and projects in various countries financed by developed countries, which consist of launching new polluting structures and telling developing countries, the poorest countries, in not so many words that climate change is not for them. They can go on polluting; everything's fine where you are. That is inconsistent and irresponsible. Let us be honest with ourselves. We must commit all our development banks, as we began to do on Sunday, towards a reorientation of financing towards renewable energies everywhere, because in Africa, Asia, the Americas and the Pacific, the future of energy production is also about getting out of coal and no longer being coal-dependent.

In the same way, we must build a climate fund commensurate with these ambitions. In a few weeks, the first Green Climate Fund pledging conference will take place in Paris and I call on our major partners on this issue to provide crucial financing. There are many of us that have already doubled our commitments and I urge others to do the same, as such contributions will be most decisive.

On the matter of coherence, as I said yesterday, we can no longer have open, free-trade commercial strategies that do not include the climate question in their own agendas. The two must be combined. I believe in openness and free trade, but only to the extent that they are well thought out and able to integrate the objectives of zero carbon and zero deforestation. This means that, at each stage, we must build compatible solutions

and find measures for compensation. However, we cannot force certain countries to make efforts and then continue to trade with those that do not, and we cannot continue to make statements from this rostrum and continue importing products that contradict them.

Nothing is going to change overnight. France, on its part, is too often an importer of products that lead to deforestation. This will involve deep-rooted changes and partnership strategies with countries of origin, with our businesses and our financial backers. I am not saying that everything is going well in France and that we are doing everything right; that is far from the truth. But if we are not collectively responsible and transparent and if we do not accept the fact that we must practice what we preach when it comes to our commercial policies and climate agendas, we will never achieve it. It will take some years, but we must start now.

There are two climate-related topics that I wish to underscore here before concluding. If we want to succeed in the war on climate change, we must look to save our forests and our oceans. These two battles are essential to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and preserve our biodiversity balance. We are currently losing the battle on these two global issues. Yesterday, I believe that the commitment demonstrated by all marked an important step forward in defending the Amazon rainforest and the African forest — that is, the primary forest reserves of our planet.

We have countries that have committed to this cause — France is one of them — but here I wish to highlight in particular the efforts of Germany and Norway. We were joined by major countries, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the majority of the countries affected by Amazonia, to speak diplomatically. I encourage all those who wish to join the fight to join it, but we need to move forward. By the time the United Nations Climate Change Conference takes place in Santiago, we will have met extremely effective and pragmatic criteria so as to invest more closely on the ground and find useful solutions to promote reforestation, biodiversity and agroecology protection and all economic development projects concerning Amazonia and the African forest in the Congo basin. This will promote economic development and forest preservation, and thus our fight for biodiversity and against global warming.

The fight for biodiversity, too, will be the focus of major meetings in 2020, with the International Union for

Conservation of Nature World Conservation Congress in France and the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Beijing. We need clear actions to be taken by 2020. When it comes to our oceans, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report *Global Warming of 1.5°C* is utterly devastating. We have been confronted with the naked, stubborn truth and we are losing the battle. At the recent G-7 Summit in Biarritz, we began building coalitions with major transporters, which committed to reducing speeds. This is just the beginning — we are far from having won — and I hope that we will commit, as we are doing for the forests, to the fight for the oceans with the funding and concrete actions needed to win this battle.

Right now, it is all about our initial changes and our initial actions. I cannot stress enough that what we are collectively trying to do is vital. It is about working together to try to change our collective political, economic, social organizations to reduce inequalities and, better still, to prevent them. I do not believe that the right response to growing contemporary inequalities in the areas of climate, opportunities and education lies in the fiscal agenda of each individual country. I believe that the answer lies in education, access to health care and policies to prevent inequality in each individual country, but above all in stronger international cooperation and a robust agenda to combat such inequalities.

But on a fundamental level, this requires an agenda of reconciliation. What we are seeing in front of us is, on the one hand, a constant rhetoric of condemnation. I hear it, and it pushes us to act, but words of condemnation are no longer enough. We know that we cannot go on simply condemning. Our predecessors condemned 20 years ago, which allowed groups of experts to be established. But alongside this rhetoric of condemnation, for some, there is comfort in inaction, a habit of cynicism. In the middle of it all, there is a rather haphazard, somewhat clumsy group of people trying to take action.

Let us take this challenge in our stride; let us build this agenda of reconciliation with our public opinion, with our youth, with our companies, with our investors and with Governments of good faith. We have the facts; let us continue to establish them and, from now on, change our habits. We must change our consumer habits, our production habits, our investment habits, our governance and civic habits in order to collectively

engage in this agenda for change. Remaining in this tandem of condemnation and inaction will lead to nothing.

I firmly believe that the courage to assume responsibility means facing the facts, to accept that there are things we can do right now and others that will take time, because in all of our countries there are producers depending on certain products that are harmful; there are people who live in poorly constructed housing and continue to pollute even as they move on. We cannot point the finger at them. Rather, we must help them to change and we must offer solutions through technological innovation, investment and a real agenda to fight social and climate-related inequalities. That agenda of reconciliation is what we need and that is what I want to do in France, what we need to implement in Europe and what we must build right here.

That is what I wanted to say today. I believe in this courage to take responsibility and, more broadly, I believe that this courage will return. In any case, I believe we have no other choice. We must work together. Our grammars have changed; they are no doubt more complex than they were in the past and they certainly engage us more. We know that when it comes to security, inequality, health and climate change, we will all be accountable. But I no longer believe in the easy way out of pessimism. I no longer believe in division. I believe in our ability to propose ideas, to reflect and to act together to build this agenda for reconciliation that will enable everyone, everywhere, to see the light in our future.

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

*Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by Mr. Željko Komšić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will hear an address by the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

*Mr. Željko Komšić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Željko Komšić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Komšić** (*spoke in Bosnian; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Allow me first of all to congratulate Mr. Muhammad-Bande on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session. I would also like to use the opportunity to thank Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the General Assembly at its previous session.

I would like to emphasize the importance of the current moment. Amid quite complex political and geopolitical circumstances, next year we will celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The Organization has faced numerous challenges in the past. I believe that the General Assembly sessions have always been an opportunity to bring together leaders of different countries in order for them to share their opinions and views on the world situation and, in particular, to find optimal solutions to contemporary global challenges and problems.

In that respect, the United Nations has also faced the escalation of conflicts in different areas in 2019, including a major migrant and refugee crisis, followed by terrorism and violent extremism, as well as other forms of violence perpetrated by various extremist groups. There is also the issue of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which will also be discussed during this session.

The United Nations established the high-level political forum on sustainable development as a platform where political leaders agree on recommendations regarding sustainable development matters. This year's session of the forum was held in July, where my country, Bosnia and Herzegovina, for the first time presented its voluntary national review as part of monitoring the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the country, thereby sharing our experiences in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

By adopting the 2030 Agenda, Bosnia and Herzegovina has committed itself to initiating a systematic monitoring and supervision process for the implementation of that global agenda that integrates the social, economic and environmental dimensions

of development. Bosnia and Herzegovina takes the view that the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires an agreement on foreseeable, coherent and sufficient funding to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

For those reasons, we believe that the achievement of the SDGs should strongly and qualitatively contribute to the eradication of poverty, the reduction of world hunger, the protection of the environment and dealing with the evident climate change. Bosnia and Herzegovina sees the United Nations 2030 Agenda and its transformative nature as an opportunity and a mechanism of change seeking to comprehensively promote the social, economic and environmental aspects of the life of the population. We therefore hope that the review of implementation activities for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in Bosnia and Herzegovina will be finalized by the end of 2019 and submitted to the high-level political forum to be held in the coming years.

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

Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that the present time offers a special opportunity to change the course of development by creating a self-sustaining environment that will benefit everyone. It is a great honour for Bosnia and Herzegovina to be a part of that transformational agenda as a sovereign country and provide our contribution within the global family of nations. Successful cooperation with the United Nations encourages our implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which presents an opportunity for Bosnia and Herzegovina to share its own experience and lessons learned, as well as challenges and practices, on important life issues with the other United Nations Member States and contribute towards the strengthening of the international cooperation.

Activities related to the Euro-Atlantic integration process in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as the alignment of the Bosnia and Herzegovina sociopolitical system with the European Union acquis, are at the centre of political developments in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as the country is committed to continuing its activities to stabilize the situation and accelerate the reform processes initiated. The European Commission's Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union is a very accurate record of all the reforms required.

Some reforms require the voiding and annulment of the existing systemic discrimination against the citizens of my country, which is unfortunately set out in certain provisions of the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as those of various legislative acts. Bosnia and Herzegovina will have to undergo a process of development in order to reach such a political level that those necessary reforms can be implemented without major sociopolitical tensions.

Furthermore, Bosnia and Herzegovina actively contributes to regional security efforts in our region. In that regard, I would like to affirm that Bosnia and Herzegovina is a reliable, serious and determined partner of the United Nations, the European Union and NATO. We are particularly determined to strengthen the European security area. We are committed to fighting organized crime, combating terrorism and violent extremism, as well as illegal migration, and to protecting the security of national borders in terms of migration management. With regard to the international challenges of the modern times, Bosnia and Herzegovina particularly emphasizes its commitment to the global efforts to combat terrorism and violent extremism.

In addition to internal reforms, Bosnia and Herzegovina also focuses on strengthening regional cooperation, particularly with regard to infrastructure projects in the communications, transport and energy sectors. At the international level, Bosnia and Herzegovina is active within the United Nations and organizations such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Council of Europe, the Central European Free Trade Agreement and other various regional initiatives. We would like to emphasize that over the previous period Bosnia and Herzegovina had a prominent and active chairmanship of the South-East European Cooperation Process regional initiative and the Migration, Asylum, Refugees Regional Initiative, where it invested additional efforts and provided an active impetus to the regional approach to facing current challenges.

Bilateral relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the neighbouring countries are at the top of our foreign policy priorities. That should be the foundation for the continuous improvement of cooperation based on mutual interest and the principles of equality, respect for one another and respect for State sovereignty and territorial integrity. The aforementioned may lead to the conclusion that the relations between Bosnia and Herzegovina and the neighbouring countries are good

and strong. However, due to particular policies of our neighbours, we occasionally see their activities seeking to realize their own political interests within Bosnia and Herzegovina. That causes unrest and produces a degree of destabilization in my country, which is neither good nor does it contribute to the development of the desired good-neighbourly relations.

The United Nations has the primary responsibility for world peace and security. One should not lose sight of the interactive interdependence and complexity of the relationship between peace and security, development and cooperation and especially the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. With the increasing number of conflicts becoming progressively more complex, we are aware that the United Nations faces a number of challenges, particularly on the African continent and in the Middle East. In order to find an adequate solution to the numerous crises, Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the United Nations efforts to strengthen the preventive diplomacy sector within the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. It is of particular importance that all disputes be resolved peacefully, as stated in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations, which expressly requires that disputes be resolved peacefully and with the goodwill to resolve them. General Assembly and Security Council resolutions represent one form of support for such peaceful settlement of various disputes between countries.

Bosnia and Herzegovina continuously monitors such phenomena and, to the best of its ability, strengthens its capacities in the fight against terrorism, international crime and narcotics production and trafficking, as well as trafficking in human beings occurring within the framework of migration movements. Bosnia and Herzegovina strongly condemns violent extremism and terrorism in all its forms and finds all acts of extremism and terrorism, regardless of their form, motivation and perpetrators, to be criminal and unjustifiable. Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to the full implementation of all Security Council resolutions aimed at bringing persons involved in the financing, planning, preparation or commission of terrorist acts to justice.

Bearing in mind the direct correlation between security and sustainable development and the central role of the United Nations in the process of peacebuilding and the creation of basic conditions for the development of post-conflict societies, I would like to emphasize that

Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the United Nations direct activities in stabilizing post-conflict societies by building and strengthening institutions, especially those in the field of the rule of law, the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, security and reintegration and reconciliation processes.

Bosnia and Herzegovina expresses its concern about the ongoing escalation of violence in the world, particularly in the Middle East. I take this opportunity to call for an end of combat activities and for the finding of peaceful solutions. Bosnia and Herzegovina is of the principled view that the protection of civilians, respect for human rights and humanitarian law are necessary priorities in international relations.

Bosnia and Herzegovina's foreign policy is focused on maintaining and promoting lasting peace and security in all parts of the world. The activities of Bosnia and Herzegovina in terms of international relations are based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Helsinki Final Act and other Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe documents, as well as generally accepted principles of international law. Bosnia and Herzegovina has either ratified or successively adopted the most significant international documents in this field and is ready for full cooperation with other countries, both within relevant multilateral organizations and initiatives, as well as bilaterally, in order to effectively combat the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of deployment.

Bosnia and Herzegovina also advocates all general positions in terms of promoting and supporting all realistic and effective ideas that will lead to the ultimate goal, which is a world without nuclear weapons. In accordance with the obligations arising from the provisions of the Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), regarding preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of transport, Bosnia and Herzegovina focuses on fulfilling its commitments, with an emphasis on strengthening dialogue and non-proliferation cooperation on mass destruction, as well as various forms of regional cooperation.

Bosnia and Herzegovina explicitly opposes providing any support to non-State actors and entities seeking to develop, procure, produce, possess, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of transfer. Furthermore, we actively

and directly contribute to United Nations peacekeeping missions, one of the most visible components of the United Nations. As a sovereign country that attaches particular importance to peacekeeping missions, Bosnia and Herzegovina best demonstrates its participation and commitment to peacekeeping through its involvement in United Nations and NATO peacekeeping missions. Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the commitment of the United Nations to supporting the participation of women in peacekeeping missions. I would like to point out with particular pleasure that we are one of the few countries that has been fulfilling its stated goals for a long time, that is, more than 20 per cent of women participating in peacekeeping missions.

I would particularly like to point out that the Agreement on the Suppression of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse was signed on 10 January between the United Nations and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Agreement obliges my country to hold everyone responsible, civilian or uniformed, for all forms of sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping or other humanitarian operations, including support for a zero-tolerance policy towards such type of deviant behaviour.

The international legal framework is the starting point to exercise the rights of a child, and the international Convention on the Rights of the Child is the fundamental instrument to determine the legal framework and policies of the countries that are parties to the Convention, which focus on addressing the issues of the rights of a child. The country programme 2015-2019 between UNICEF and Bosnia and Herzegovina is particularly important, as it further contributes to the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, as well as the development agenda beyond 2015.

Racial discrimination, as well as other forms of discrimination, is insufficiently regulated by the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina. However, such deviant phenomena are referenced through several features of criminal offences within the criminal legislation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as lower levels of Government. That clearly demonstrates the commitment of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina to respect the human rights of all citizens who live there, as well as permanently resident aliens or aliens granted temporary residence on the territory of

Bosnia and Herzegovina, with respect to all principles of mutual tolerance.

However, as I said earlier, certain provisions providing for systemic discrimination remain in the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as established in the four judgments of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg, in the *Sejdić-Finci*, *Zornić*, *Pilav* and *Šlaku* cases, as well as the European Commission's Opinion on Bosnia and Herzegovina's application for membership of the European Union.

Bosnia and Herzegovina must provide for constitutional reforms as well as reforms of various laws in order to meet the European standard, which is the equality of all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina, in all aspects of life. Such action will require the agreement of domestic political actors to remove obstacles to the continuation of the process of integration into the European Union.

In the area of trafficking in human beings, a comprehensive and multidisciplinary action plan to combat trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina for the period 2016-2019 aims to improve the support system for combating trafficking in human beings in Bosnia and Herzegovina. We will further modernize the plan and prepare a new one for the coming period.

The rule of law and international law are firmly established in the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, which is the very foundation of the Organization. Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to promoting the rule of law at all levels, national, regional and international, and firmly committed to contributing towards the building, strengthening and full respect of international law, including human rights and international humanitarian law. I would therefore like to affirm that Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to respecting its international obligations. That is very important for our contribution to the comprehensive development, preservation and maintenance of peace and the promotion of human rights, fundamental freedoms and sustainable development.

Bosnia and Herzegovina fully cooperates with the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, which has taken over functions from the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, including judicial functions, the enforcement of sanctions, the relocation of released individuals and the protection of victims and witnesses. The authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina remain committed to ensuring that all persons suspected of war crimes on the territory of the former Yugoslavia be brought to justice.

Bosnia and Herzegovina hereby reaffirms its commitment to continuing negotiations on United Nations reform in accordance with the final document of the 2005 New York World Summit of Heads of State and Government (resolution 60/1). Reform of the United Nations system is necessary but such reform must be carried out with extreme care and the broadest consensus of Member States. Bosnia and Herzegovina shares the view that developing countries are underrepresented in the Security Council, which is an appropriate point to hear and discuss the specific issues and problems of developing countries.

Given the sensitivity of the issue, Bosnia and Herzegovina is committed to reaching a compromise solution. Given that the number of Eastern European countries has more than doubled, we expect the reformed Security Council to be expanded, with additional seats for non-permanent members of the Group of Eastern European States. Bosnia and Herzegovina also supports the greater representation of African countries, as well as small and medium-sized developing countries, including the small island developing countries.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the statement he has just made.

*Mr. Željko Komšić, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

*The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.*