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## Note by the President of the General Assembly

I have the honour to circulate, pursuant to decision 74/562 of 22 July 2020, the present compilation document of the statements delivered by Heads of State or other dignitaries by means of pre-recorded statements during the general debate and submitted to the President no later than the day on which the pre-recorded statement is played in the Assembly Hall.

The statements contained in the present document were delivered on the morning of Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly (see A/75/PV.6). Document A/75/592 and its addenda 1 through 11 contain the statements delivered in the 4th through the 15th meetings of the General Assembly (A/75/PV.4-A/75/PV.15).

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**Bosnia and Herzegovina** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 1)**Address by Mr. Šefik Džaferović, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

Dear President,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to address you on behalf of Bosnia Herzegovina at this year's United Nations General Assembly. Although, due to extraordinary circumstances caused by the health crisis, we did not have the opportunity to gather at the UN headquarters, it is extremely important to exchange experiences and opinions in this manner, and to maintain the continuity of the United Nations General Assembly sessions.

In human life in general, and with that, in all aspects of social life, there aren't many things as important as dialogue. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that, this year as well, despite of the health crisis, this largest dialogue platform mankind has is still happening.

First of all, I would like to congratulate Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande on a highly successful presiding over the 74th session of the United Nations General Assembly. I would like to put a particular emphasis on that, having in mind the effort Mr. Bande has put forth, along with the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres, in order to enable the General Assembly to be held this year.

I would also like to congratulate Mr. Volkan Bozkir on being elected, with the message that he can always count on full support of Bosnia and Herzegovina in securing productive work of the General Assembly in the following year.

Dear President,

The coronavirus pandemic has most certainly marked this year in the world, and has brought us before challenges we could not even imagine before that. By taking, now already, hundreds and hundreds of thousands of lives, the pandemic has sown misfortune throughout the world; aggrieving numerous families, whose pain we truly sympathize with.

At the same time, this very dangerous plague has, in an instant, blocked all physical contacts and traffic between continents, regions, states, and, eventually, the everyday meetings between people. The only way to efficiently fight against it was to physically distance ourselves from each other. Having in mind the human habits and people's needs to socialize, it was very demanding, and, in the end, even traumatic, and it has caused enormous damage, primarily to economy, and then to the overall quality of life. Still, one should not forget that due to lack of the vaccine and proper therapy, this was the only way to fight for human lives, the preservation of which was more important than economic growth or anything else.

Even though, within the first wave of the pandemic, we all had to physically distance ourselves from each other, a strong solidarity emerged which brought us closer together, both internationally, and within specific societies. We had the opportunity to witness numerous communities, in time when they themselves were fighting with this deadly pandemic, they had still provided assistance to others, those most vulnerable; they did not allow themselves to turn only inward and lock themselves down.

On behalf of Bosnia and Herzegovina I would like to thank all the friends who have come to our aid; who did not let us be alone during our most difficult moments.

Although we do not have great resources at our disposal, we have also tried to respond to all appeals for aid.

Just like any other great misfortune, this one has also reminded us how much we are directed one to another, and how important it is to have friends.

We particularly appreciate the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina, although not an EU member state, has been included in the EU public procurement system. I would like to use this opportunity to point out that the vaccine against the coronavirus must be available to the entire mankind.

Dear President,

There is an indisputable fact that during the past few years, a very strong crisis of multilateralism has been present at the scene. International organizations in general, including the very United Nations, have become an object of strong challenging and even dispute.

Allow me to share with you an observation how multilateral organizations, even at the time of the pandemic, have shown their extraordinary significance in today's globalized world, which is based on interdependence and a necessity for constant cooperation. The pandemic has shown that the largest problems of today can no longer be solved by one, three, or five states individually. These difficulties can only be solved through transnational, multilateral response, based on dialogue and cooperation of as many states as possible.

We were particularly able to witness this on the European continent, where a historic agreement for a package of economic recovery of the European Union worth over two trillion Euros, has indicated how the European unity is extremely strong and can serve as an example to all other parts of the world.

The strength of the European Union has also been demonstrated in the fact that it did not direct its enormous financial resources to only serve its own needs, rather it has also supported other countries, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, a country that is on its road towards the membership in the European Union.

Bosnia and Herzegovina would also like to use this opportunity to express its gratitude towards the European Union for the strong support received for its economy and the health care system, which has had an extraordinary stabilization potential.

The EU assistance package for Bosnia and Herzegovina, worth 300 million Euros in total, for purposes of resolution of the economic consequences of the pandemic, has most certainly additionally strengthened our commitment to the European integration, and, at the same time, it has secured, for the very European Union, the stability in its nearest neighborhood.

Dear President,

The end of this year will mark the 25 years since the signing of the Dayton Peace Accord, which has stopped the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina. At the moment when it was signed, this Accord seemed very frail and untenable, yet it has proven to be a very strong and resilient stabilization framework that has managed to resist numerous challenges.

The main problem of the Dayton Peace Accord is in the fact that some of its parts had not been implemented at all, while some have only been implemented partially. Annex IV, or the Constitution of Bosnia and Herzegovina, presupposed the full implementation of the entire Accord. This deficiency will have to be remedied. Dayton Peace Accord must be fully implemented; all decisions of the international courts must be respected and equal rights for all citizens must be secured in accordance with the European Convention on Human Rights. This particularly pertains to expelled persons that have returned to the places they resided in before the war.

For the past twenty-five years Bosnia and Herzegovina has been living in peace, which is of irreplaceable significance having in mind our experience of the 1990s, as well as the experience of the numerous crisis areas which have emerged throughout the world.

When we are talking about the shortcomings the Dayton Peace Accord, we should never forget that this is a peace accord, whose primary goal was not to secure the implementation of sophisticated constitutional standards, and it is quite natural that it requires an update which is only possible through a wide political consensus.

It is of high significance that all relevant political subjects in our country are deeply aware of the facts that the foundations of the Dayton Peace Accord can only be changed through a wide consensus and agreement of all.

Of course, this situation means that there can be no quick and simple changes, and, therefore, there can be no quick and simple progress that many expect and demand. At the same time, this situation guarantees to all in Bosnia Herzegovina, that they have a significant level of security and protection.

There is a general consensus in Bosnia Herzegovina about the irreplaceable significance of preserving peace, and thus, the Peace Accord on which it is based upon. This gives hope that in the future, the society of Bosnia and Herzegovina will be increasingly more preoccupied with issues of development, as it enters in a new phase of its historic road.

Dear President,

Bosnia and Herzegovina shares the concern of the UN General Assembly due to unresolved conflicts in the current crisis areas.

We offer full support to the UN Secretary-General António Guterres's call for global ceasefire, after the escalation of the coronavirus pandemic.

Even though, recently, there has been a decrease of violence in Syria, we are quite aware of the fact that the conflict continues in sporadic forms, and are particularly concerned with an extremely difficult humanitarian situation of the internally displaced persons in Syria.

We are concerned because no progress was achieved in ending the conflict in Libya, Yemen and Ukraine, and, therefore, we are calling for a more intense involvement of bodies of international community in order to achieve a permanent end of conflicts.

Bosnia and Herzegovina believes how securing permanent peace and stability in relations between Israel and Palestine can only be achieved through diplomatic efforts, within the framework of international law, and, therefore, we offer our full support to such efforts.

Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the dialogue between Pristina and Belgrade led under the auspices of the European Union and the United States of America.

Dear President,

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a serious, reliable and a resolute partner in strengthening the European security area; we actively contribute to regional efforts with the goal of strengthening stability and security of the Western Balkans.

Our country is constantly strengthening its capacities to combat terrorism, all forms of violent extremism, international crime, manufacturing and trafficking narcotics. Bosnia and Herzegovina participates in regional and international initiatives that contribute to international security, and in the past period, we made a complete turn from a country that had required international assistance in the sense of military missions, and became a country whose soldiers and police officers partake in peace missions throughout out the world.

We have good cooperation with neighboring countries on numerous issues, and we have placed the issue of relationships with our neighbors at the very top our foreign policy priorities. Our goal is to resolve open issues with our neighbors through dialogue, based on the principles of mutual respect and reciprocity and with full respect of international law.

In that respect I wish to convey the concerns of the citizens of Bosnia Herzegovina, due to the fact that some important issues, such as the issue of Agreements on State Border, have not been resolved with all of the neighboring countries. Bosnia and Herzegovina has signed the Agreement on State Border with Montenegro, yet, until today, no such agreement has been signed with Serbia or Croatia. Bosnia and Herzegovina believes that these agreements need to be concluded as soon as possible, with full respect of internationally recognized borders of Bosnia and Herzegovina and with full support and consistent implementation of the international law.

Since the last quarter of 2017, Bosnia Herzegovina has been facing an enormous problem of illegal migrations, which has significantly worsened during this year. Due to the closing of the remaining migration routes, the majority of migrants who come from the Far and Middle East are heading towards the countries of the European Union through the territory of Bosnia Herzegovina, and they pose an enormous security and humanitarian problem, and our county does not have enough resources to solve it.

Our plan is to additionally strengthen the competent institutions, dealing with this issue, to protect the border, and increase assistance to local communities that suffer the greatest burden of the crisis. In order to fully resolve this issue, we need a much greater support of the European Union, as well as cooperation with the countries the migrants originate from.

The migrants have no intention of staying in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Their goal is to go towards the Western Europe. They enter the Western Balkan region, and Bosnia and Herzegovina, from the European Union, and then, at the western border of Bosnia Herzegovina, a barrier is placed before them and they unnecessarily linger in Bosnia Herzegovina, which represents an enormous problem for us.

On the one hand, Bosnia and Herzegovina is not the final destination for migrants, and it is facing this problem solely due to its geographic proximity to the European Union as the entry point for migrants. On the other hand, Bosnia and Herzegovina understands its position within the international community and the European security area very responsibly, but we also need a stronger support from the very European Union, as well as the entire international community.

Furthermore, we are trying to sign the appropriate readmission agreements with the countries the migrants originate from. With some of the countries we have managed to achieve an agreement, and we use this opportunity to call upon other countries, whose citizens are now in Bosnia and Herzegovina, to join us in this process.

A serious social problem in Bosnia Herzegovina is the emigration of the young and educated people. As they struggle with their own democratic deficit, the developed countries of the European Union are attracting young and educated people from Bosnia and Herzegovina by offering them significantly more favorable jobs and the overall existential opportunities in their well-regulated systems.

The only way for us to efficiently fight this trend, is to build a society which will be based on the principles of equal opportunities, political stability and legal security, where it is possible for young people to plan their future.

We are slowly, but persistently, approaching this goal thanks to a particularly credible perspective of the EU membership. In that regard, we have started to implement the obligations from the Opinion of the European Commission regarding the application of Bosnia and Herzegovina for EU membership, and we are expecting the competent institutions to fulfill the entire set of obligations as soon as possible in the upcoming period.

Furthermore, it is equally important to continue fulfilling the obligations Bosnia Herzegovina has with regard to relations with NATO, by unreservedly endorsing all laws and decisions adopted by the institutions of Bosnia and Herzegovina on this issue.

Despite of the difficulties in functioning, Bosnia Herzegovina is slowly making progress, and our ultimate commitment remains to be the building of a safe, stable and prosperous state, which will, as an equal member of the international community, contribute to safety and prosperity of the global community.

Thank you.

**Uzbekistan** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 2)

**Address by Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

DISTINGUISHED PRESIDENT VOLKAN BOZKIR!

DISTINGUISHED SECRETARY-GENERAL ANTONIO GUTERRES!  
DISTINGUISHED HEADS OF DELEGATIONS!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

The seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly is being held for the first time in the history of the United Nations in a completely new format — an online videoconferencing due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Such a global catastrophe has not been observed on our planet in the last hundred years.

This calamity has vividly revealed humanity's vulnerability.

The current threatening and complex situation has proved that all states and peoples of the world are interconnected and that regular dialogue, trust and close cooperation among us are extremely important.

In this context, all of us have deeply realized the need to consolidating the mutual efforts of governments, parliaments, civil society institutions; strengthening the principles of common responsibility; coordinating international partnership accordingly; increasing the status and capacity, as well as expanding the competences of the World Health Organization.

Our goal is to jointly create fair global system that ensures basic rights, freedoms, health and well-being of every human being.

In this regard, we propose to develop under the UN auspices an International Code of Voluntary Commitments of States during pandemics.

This document should reflect each state's commitments to its citizens and international partners.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

Since the early days of the COVID-19 outbreak in Uzbekistan, we have focused all our efforts and resources to containing this dangerous disease and, most importantly, saving the people's lives.

Social protection and health systems are being cardinally strengthened to mitigate the negative effects of the pandemic; targeted support is provided to the population, sectors of the economy and businesses.

Special funds have been set up to this end.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to all our friends and partners who have generously supported during this time of trials.

We fully support the international community's all efforts to effectively combat the pandemic, including the development and widespread use of essential drugs and vaccines.

We also welcome the proposal of Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to hold a summit on the pressing issues of food security in the current context of the crisis.

DEAR PARTICIPANTS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY!

Three years ago, speaking from the high rostrum of the United Nations, I stated that Uzbekistan was firmly determined to implement radical reforms.

As a result of our large-scale measures on political, social and economic modernization of society, a new Uzbekistan is being formed.

Today, the process of democratic transformations in our country has become irreversible.

Last year's parliamentary elections demonstrated the growing political activism of the population and parties, the role of civil society institutions and the influence of the media.

The gender equality policy became a priority for us.

The role of women in public administration is growing. In our new Parliament the number of women deputies has doubled.

The human rights situation has also completely changed. The forced and child labour were fully abolished. The National Human Rights Strategy was adopted.

In response to a call from the United Nations to reduce the number of stateless persons, this year alone 50,000 of our compatriots were granted Uzbek citizenship.

The situation with religious freedom in our country has also improved dramatically.

Further strengthening the inter-ethnic harmony and inter-religious tolerance is a constant important task for us.

Comprehensive reforms to ensure true independence of the judiciary and the rule of law are being consistently implemented.

The uncompromising fight against corruption has reached a new level.

In this regard, important legislation has been adopted and independent Anti-Corruption Agency was established.

The economic reforms are being dynamically continued in our country.

For the first time, we have publicly declared our determination to reduce poverty.

We are achieving this through development of entrepreneurship and job creation; improving the investment climate and business environment; building a modern infrastructure and providing targeted social assistance to the population through training people to new professions.

In our country, where over half of the population is young, an extensive work is underway to ensure that every young person takes a worthy place in society and demonstrate their potential.



The Youth Parliaments and the Agency for Youth Affairs are operating in Uzbekistan.

In August the Samarkand International Forum on Youth Rights was successfully held under the auspices of the United Nations.

I would like to take this opportunity to once again call on you to support Uzbekistan's initiative to adopt the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Youth.

In addition, we propose to adopt a special resolution of the United Nations General Assembly on enhancing the role of parliaments in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring human rights.

DEAR FRIENDS!

The fundamental changes are taking place now in the region of Central Asia.

We have managed to create an atmosphere of good neighbourliness, mutual trust, friendship and mutual respect among the states of the region.

Our common achievement is consultative summits of the Central Asian Heads of State, which was put forth as an initiative at the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly and has been regularly held since then.

Over the past four years, Uzbekistan's bilateral trade with neighbouring states has grown almost five-fold.

During these days of trial our countries are standing by and not leaving one another alone.

Today, the Central Asian states face an important strategic task.

This is to ensure deep integration of our region into the global economic, transport and transit corridors.

In this regard, we propose to establish a Regional Centre for the Development of Transport and Communications under the auspices of the United Nations.

Today, the effective security cooperation is maintained in Central Asia.

The United Nations Global Anti-Terrorism Strategy is being successfully implemented.

We are in favour of conducting the International conference on the ten-year results and forthcoming prospects of this Joint Plan of the Regional Strategy.

As it is well-known, the ancient cultural and rich spiritual heritage of our region is of global importance.

We are ready to hold the International Forum "Central Asia at the Crossroads of World Civilizations" in the ancient city of Khiva in 2021 in cooperation with UNESCO.

DEAR PARTICIPANTS OF THE SESSION!

We see Afghanistan as an integral part of Central Asia.

The Tashkent High-Level Conference on Afghanistan in March 2018 marked a new stage in the mobilization of the international community's efforts to resolve the Afghan problem.

We fully support the peace talks among the Afghan political forces launched this year in the city of Doha in September.

We express hope that these talks will serve for bringing in peace and stability in the long-suffering land of Afghanistan.

In order to broadly involve Afghanistan in the process of economic integration in the region, we have started the implementation of major infrastructure projects such as the Surkhan-Puli Khumri power line and construction of a railway from Mazar-i-Sharif to the sea ports of the Indian Ocean.

We believe that the issues of ensuring peace and stability in Afghanistan must remain a constant focus of the United Nations.

Only together and through close cooperation we can realize all the dreams and aspirations of the Afghan people.

In this regard, it is important to work on the principle of "From instability and destruction — to peace and prosperity".

To this end, we propose to establish a permanent UN commission on Afghanistan that would address the concerns of long-suffering Afghan people.

The main task of this Commission must be to promote and facilitate the economic and social development of Afghanistan.

DISTINGUISHED HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT! Another acute problem of our time is related to global climate change. Today, every country feels the negative effects of this process.

Unfortunately, such negative developments also pose a great threat to the sustainable development of Central Asia.

I would like to once again draw your attention to the devastating effects of the drying up of the Aral Sea.

The Aral Sea region became the centre of an environmental tragedy.

To mitigate the current situation, we are carrying out an enormous work to create two million hectares of new plantations and forests, to form a layer of soil.

On our country's initiative, the United Nations Multi-Partner Human Security Trust Fund for the Aral Sea Region was established.

We hope that this Fund will serve as a base platform for the international community to provide practical assistance to the population living in a stressed ecological zone.

We propose to adopt a special resolution of the UN General Assembly declaring the Aral Sea region an area of ecological innovation and technologies.

It would be expedient to mark the date of adoption of this important document as the International Day for the Protection and Restoration of Ecosystems.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize yet another point: the continuing unrest in various parts of the world, the growing conflict and violence, environmental disasters and other modern threats are exacerbating the global problems of misery and poverty.

These problems become especially acute in the condition of pandemic.

The voice of poverty, which is getting even more alarming today, must raise concerns in entire world community and all of us.

In this regard, we propose to set the issues of poverty eradication and the fight against poverty as one of the main topics of the next session of the United Nations General Assembly and hold a Global Summit on these issues.

DEAR FRIENDS!

It is clear to all of us that the socio-economic landscape of the post-pandemic world will be completely different.

We need to work on the basis of new approaches and close cooperation against common threats to security and sustainable development.

The central role of the United Nations as a coordinating international structure needs to be further strengthened.

Uzbekistan always stands ready to develop a wide-ranging and mutually beneficial partnership with all countries of the world, as well as practical dialogue with the United Nations and its institutions.

Thank you for your attention.

**Hungary** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 3)**Address by Mr. János Áder, President of Hungary**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

Esteemed Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today marks a strange anniversary.

This year, for the first time in the history of the UN we have to hold our regular annual session in a virtual setting.

All this because of a virus that — although invisible to the naked eye — has upended our lives completely.

COVID-19 has changed the rules regulating our family, social relations and our work in an instant and has created a grave crisis.

Within a short period, the health crisis developed into an economic and later a social crisis.

Businesses in bankruptcy, jobs lost, drastic restrictive measures and increasing sovereign debt.

Who would have imagined this, say at the beginning of this year?

More and more people say that today's situation is the prototype for the anthropocene era.

Because by the beginning of the 21st century we humans have become the factor that exercises the biggest impact on changes to the planet.

We have to brace ourselves — if we do not radically change our lifestyles — this crisis will be followed by other ones, which may be even more serious than COVID.

Therefore today the most important question is, can we learn from the crisis and are we finally ready to do something in the areas, where we have known for a long time that there is a danger looming, where we have known what should be done and that any procrastination would only increase the risks and the costs.

Today we are as yet unable to defend ourselves against COVID efficiently. There is no drug, no vaccine.

There are other areas of life as well, where we have known for years what should be done.

Take water for example.

We have already spoken several times here at the UN about the water crisis unfolding in front of our eyes.

About the drama of too much water and too little water, or contaminated water.

And we all know that the majority of the UN's sustainability goals are unattainable in the absence of appropriate water policy.

Why?

- Because until every seventh person on Earth is denied access to uncontaminated water, we have no hope for increased productivity in the impoverished regions of the world.

- Until we are unable to prevent water contamination, we will still have half of all hospital beds occupied with patients suffering from diseases caused by contamination.

- Until we are able to create the conditions for sustainable water management, we will not have safer food production and we will not be able to feed those already living on the planet, let alone the newly born.

- Until we are able to transform our energy generation systems, the coal fuelled power plants will not only increase CO2 emissions, but will also consume water that would be enough to supply one billion people.

But let's see another example.

We have long been saying that the lifestyle we have created is unsustainable. Every year we are consuming more resources than what nature can replenish.

It is absurd to believe that we have unlimited supplies of natural resources — water, soil, diverse biological environment — available cheaply and until the end of time.

What is the solution? Circular economy.

Where waste — glass, plastic, metals etc. — are not garbage but recyclable raw materials.

How many times have we discussed this? Yet, we have achieved little progress.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

Hungary has never condoned fruitless debates, we have always stood up for action.

This is why we have organized the Budapest Water Summit three times already during the recent years.

The success of these events has motivated us to strive for more.

At the end of next year, we are organizing a sustainability EXPO, which — beside water management — will also deal with issues like food production, transportation, energy and waste management as well as education.

We look forward to welcoming you all.

As for the overcoming of the crisis, let me leave you with the words of Winston Churchill:

“The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”

**Kazakhstan** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 4)**Address by Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

Mr. Secretary-General,

Excellencies,

Distinguished delegates,

This year we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the United Nations in both dramatic and critical time.

The greatest challenge of our age — the COVID-19 pandemic — continues to cause deep suffering among the people around the world and has seriously affected the global economy.

In the wake of this unprecedented human tragedy, on behalf of my country-fellows I extend the profound gratitude to all medical professionals and frontline staff-members who work very hard to protect us.

The current global emergency is a stress test for all of us that has triggered health, humanitarian and socio-economic turbulence. COVID-19 has exposed our past mistakes and failures.

We have witnessed a critical collapse of global cooperation in response to this crisis, trade protectionism and political nationalism, coming close to what some have already called a state of “global dysfunction”.

The whole world is on the verge of dramatic upheavals that may lead to irreversible consequences. Lack of mutual confidence, misunderstanding of international competition, trade wars and sanctions really undermine the prospects and hopes for a better world.

Let us be frank — in the post-Cold War world we largely missed the chance to build a truly just, people-centered international system. The fate of our future generations depends on the understanding of this reality, primarily by us, the leaders of states.

Therefore, it is our moral obligation to reflect on the paradigm of building a “New World”. Now we are in a make-or-break moment for the humankind. Born a century before the UN establishment, a great Kazakh poet and philosopher Abai proposed his own formula on global interaction: “Адамзатқа не керек: сүймек, сезбек, кейімек, қарекет қылмақ, жүгірмек, ақылмен ойлап сөйлемек”. Which means: “All that the humanity needs — love, compassion, bold actions, deeds and thoughtfulness”.

In this context, allow me to share some points on our collective response to current challenges.

Mr. President,

Right after the coronavirus outbreak, the UN’s various funds, programmes and agencies have stepped forward to combat the crisis. However, the international

community obviously needs to do more. Firstly, to build a strong global health system priority must be given to upgrading national health institutions through timely and coordinated support from developed countries and UN agencies.

Secondly, we must take the politics out of the vaccine. It is not too late for reaching a COVID-19 vaccine trade and investment agreement that would protect global production and supply chains.

Thirdly, it may be necessary to revise the International Health Regulations to increase the World Health Organization's capacity, and to develop national capabilities in preventing and responding to diseases.

Fourthly, we suggest that the idea of a network of Regional Centers for Disease Control and Biosafety under the UN auspices be closely examined. Kazakhstan stands ready to host such a regional center.

Last but not least, in light of the global pandemic, launching of a biological weapons control system is becoming more acute than ever. Kazakhstan proposes to establish a special multilateral body — the International Agency for Biological Safety — based on the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention and accountable to the UN Security Council.

Distinguished delegates,

We need urgent concerted efforts for a truly global economic recovery. I join the Secretary-General's call on rescue package amounting to 10 per cent of the world economy and share his view that the response to the pandemic should be based on a New Global Deal to create equal and broader opportunities for all.

We believe that the suspension of debt repayments by the poorest countries will help reduce uncertainty. International financial institutions need to implement innovative solutions like debt-to-health system swaps.

I hope that the upcoming High-Level Meeting on Financing for Development will produce concrete measures.

Landlocked developing countries have been particularly hard-hit by COVID-19 which has severely damaged trade and supply chains.

As the current Chair of the LLDC Group, Kazakhstan has proposed a UN Roadmap to reinvigorate implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. The highest expectation of our people is practical deliverables within Agenda 2030.

We need prompt and well-coordinated steps to get back on track for an accelerated SDG Decade of Action — probably the most critical decade of our generation.

The very basic target, zero hunger is to be provided unconditionally. In this context, we note the importance of convening a Food Systems Summit in 2021.

The Islamic Organization for Food Security, initiated by Kazakhstan is ready to assist the international humanitarian campaign through the creation of food reserves.

We should renew our commitment to leave no one behind, especially women, youth, children, elders, persons with disabilities, disproportionately affected by the crisis.

The largest disruption of education systems in history should be stopped from becoming a generational catastrophe.

Civic engagement and private sector involvement are also critical for solving current pressing problems.

During past months we have witnessed strong solidarity all over the world through volunteering.

To acknowledge the role of volunteers, I propose the United Nations to proclaim an International Year of Mobilizing Volunteers for Development. In Kazakhstan I announced the current year as a Year of Volunteers.

Mr. President,

There are two more crises that are looming right behind the pandemic. One of them is the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament crisis. Kazakhstan has been the role model of a responsible state by willingly abandoning its nuclear arsenal and shutting down world's biggest nuclear test site.

However, continuous erosion of the non-proliferation regime leaves us in a dangerous position.

Kazakhstan, therefore, expects all Member States to join its appeal to nuclear powers to take necessary and urgent measures to save the humankind from a nuclear disaster.

In this respect we appreciate an active role played by relevant UN institutions including the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization.

We believe that legally-binding negative security assurances should be given to every non-nuclear-weapon state. That is why we urge all P5 countries to ratify the respective Protocols to the Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zone Treaties, including Semipalatinsk Treaty.

Another existential crisis for our civilization is the climate change. It is not only a dangerous problem in itself, but is also a "threat multiplier". The climate emergency is a race we are losing. But the post-COVID recovery gives us unique opportunity to put environmental protection at the forefront of international agenda. We must unite around the UN's six climate positive actions.

Kazakhstan is very vulnerable to the various effects of the climate change. The tragedies of Aral Sea and Semipalatinsk Nuclear Test Site, the rapid melting of glaciers, and desertification threaten not only Kazakhstan and Central Asian region, but also the entire world.

Although Kazakhstan is highly dependent on fossil fuels and has a long way to go to meet Paris 2030 targets, our commitment to develop a decarbonized economy has no alternative.

We will reduce our greenhouse gas emissions by 15 per cent by 2030 through economic overhaul and industrial modernization.

And yet, in next five years we will plant more than two billion trees. To address these global crises, we need to restore an atmosphere of trust between Member States and strengthen multilateral institutions. Lack of trust between nations has become toxic for international relations.

It is a moral duty to demonstrate our commitment to the basic purposes and principles of the UN Charter.



Due to the immensely growing demand for confidence-building, Kazakhstan aims to transform Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia into a full-fledged organization for security and development in Asia.

The world community should increasingly promote an ideology of tolerance, mutual understanding and cultural diversity. It is a key to countering hatred and intolerance.

We once again stress the need for creating a unified coalition to counter another global challenge — international terrorism.

We invite all countries to join the Code of Conduct for Achieving a World Free of Terrorism.

Kazakhstan was among the first to repatriate our women and children from war-torn Syria and Iraq. It was not an easy decision, but absolutely necessary one.

It is our strong belief that the United Nations must lead the global effort to overcome the pandemic, accelerate recovery and improve prospects for global governance.

Therefore, each and every UN agency should reinstate its efficiency and relevance to the tasks ahead of us.

We have no alternative but to live up to the great challenge of building a more robust and forward-oriented UN.

The criticism of the United Nations is not always fair. The UN does exactly as much as the political will of the Member States allows.

Excellencies,

Though different, each of these three crises is in fact a governance challenge. To achieve truly just and people-centered world, measures at the international stage should be accompanied by the dedicated efforts at the national level.

Kazakhstan is determined to build an economically strong, democratically advanced and human-oriented “Listening State”. Therefore, we conduct political and economic reforms that are expected to give a boost to the development of our society to meet up the expectations of our people.

We have decriminalized defamation, adopted new laws on political parties and on the peaceful mass meetings.

To fulfill a fundamental right to life and human dignity we decided to join the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights on the abolition of the death penalty.

Another priority is ensuring equal opportunities for women and youth, protection of children.

We have reduced our Gender Inequality Index value by two times and have introduced a mandatory 30% quota for women and youth in election party lists.

We have helped 4.5 million fellow-citizens who temporarily lost their income during pandemic having allocated for this goal \$1.1 billion. Over a million people have received food and household packages. It was an unprecedented measure in our part of the world.

Regional cooperation has always been our main focus and commitment. Central Asia is undergoing rapid transformation through significant expansion of regional cooperation in various fields.

No doubt that a prosperous, strong and united Central Asia is beneficial both for regional and global stakeholders.

As to regional stability, the rational use of transboundary water resources is instrumental. We thus propose the establishment of a Regional water and energy consortium.

To coordinate development agenda in the region we intend to institutionalize a UN-led regional SDGs Center in Almaty.

Mr. President,

We must remember that in crisis comes an opportunity. We can build back for a better, greener, more efficient, fair and inclusive world. The emphasis must be shifted on the root causes, preventive measures, and increasing the efficiency of our limited resources.

All the efforts should be guided by the moral imperative — to Put People First.

Kazakhstan will always remain a strong supporter of the UN and will actively participate in fulfilling our collective aspiration for a better and happier future.

Thank you for your attention.

**Saudi Arabia** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 5)**Address by His Majesty King Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud, King of Saudi Arabia and President of the Council of Ministers of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

The Kingdom's Statement in the UN General Assembly 75th Session

Your Majesties, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies, Mr. President of the General Assembly, Mr. Secretary General

Distinguished Attendees,

May God's peace be upon you,

At the outset, I would like to extend my sincerest congratulations to Mr. Volkan Bozkir for having been elected President of the 75th session of UN General Assembly, wishing him success in fulfilling his duties.

I also would like to extend my thanks to his predecessor Dr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, president of the previous session for the great efforts he exerted. I also would like to note and commend the distinguished work undertaken by the Secretary General Mr. António Guterres to improve the performance of the UN institutions in a manner that achieves its objectives and meets the purpose of its charter.

Distinguished Attendees,

Today, I speak to you from the birthplace of Islam; the home of its revelation, and the Qibla for Muslims. I share with you a message in which we rely on the teachings of our noble religion, our Arab culture, and our common human values, which call for coexistence, peace, moderation, and solidarity among the nations and peoples of the world to confront the extraordinary challenges to humanity.

Today, the world is facing a tremendous challenge in the form of COVID-19 pandemic and its health, humanitarian, and economic repercussions which compel all of us to stand together in order to face the common challenges to our world. As president of the G20, the Kingdom has coordinated international efforts by holding a Leaders' summit last March to coordinate the global efforts to combat this pandemic and curb its humanitarian and economic impacts. During the summit, the Kingdom announced its pledge of \$500 million to support the efforts of combating the pandemic, and reinforce emergency preparedness and responses. The Kingdom continues to promote global response efforts to confront this pandemic and address its repercussions.

The Kingdom is one of the largest donors in the field of humanitarian and developmental aid. The Kingdom provides this support to the peoples of the world irrespective of their political, ethnic, or religious affiliation. During the past three decades, the Kingdom provided more than \$86 billion in humanitarian aid benefiting 81 countries.

Distinguished Attendees,

My country, ever since the foundation of this organization, has been in the forefront among the nations working to achieve international peace and security. It has been consistently working to mediate and reach peaceful solutions to disputes, as well as seeking to prevent conflict and support security, stability, development, and prosperity.

However, the Middle East has been afflicted with major security and political challenges that undermine the security of its peoples and the stability of its countries.

Our region has been suffering for many decades by attempts of the forces of extremism and chaos which seek to impose their malign views and policies in order to hijack these countries' present and future, paying no heed to the aspirations of the peoples of the region for development, prosperity, and peace. In the Kingdom, we chose a path for the future through our Vision 2030 which aspires to create a robust economy and a community which interacts with its surrounding and contributes actively to the progress and civilization of humankind.

In its regional and international spheres, the Kingdom advocates a policy that relies on respect for international laws and principles, and continues working to achieve security, stability, and prosperity in its region, while supporting political solutions to conflicts and combating extremism in all of its forms and manifestations.

Distinguished Attendees,

The Kingdom's hands were extended to Iran in peace with a positive and open attitude over the past decades, but to no avail. The Kingdom received several of Iran's presidents and other senior officials, among the Kingdom's efforts to seek ways to build relations based on good neighborliness and mutual respect. The Kingdom welcomed the international efforts to deal with Iran's nuclear program, but time and again, the entire world witnessed how the Iranian regime exploited these efforts in order to intensify its expansionist activities, create its terrorist networks, and use terrorism, and in the process squandering the resources and wealth of the Iranian people for the purpose of its expansionist projects which produced nothing but chaos, extremism, and sectarianism.

The Iranian regime, in line with its hostile attitude, targeted oil facilities in the Kingdom last year in blatant violation of international laws. By doing so, it assaulted international peace and security and proved its disregard for the stability of the global economy and the security of oil supplies to the international markets. The Iranian regime also continues, through its surrogates, to target the Kingdom, launching, to date, over 300 ballistic missiles and more than 400 armed drones (UAVs) in a stark violation to UNSC resolutions 2216 (2015) and 2231 (2015). Our experience with the Iranian regime has taught us that partial solutions and appeasement did not stop its threats to international peace and security. A comprehensive solution and a firm international position are required to ensure fundamental solutions to the Iranian regime's attempt to obtain weapons of mass destruction, and its ballistic missile program, and its interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and its sponsorship of terrorism.

Distinguished Attendees,

The Iranian regime interfered in Yemen by supporting the coup carried out by its surrogate, the Houthi militia, against the legitimate government. This has led to a political, economic, and humanitarian crisis from which the fraternal people

of Yemen are suffering. This coup is a threat to the security of the countries of the region and the sea lanes vital to the global economy. Furthermore, the Houthi militias impeded the flow of humanitarian aid to the Yemeni people. They also obstructed the efforts to reach a political solution in Yemen and rejected efforts to deescalate the situation, the latest of which was the ceasefire announcement made by the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen last April in response to the UN's request, and in order to allow the efforts to combat the COVID-19 pandemic in Yemen to proceed. Instead, they continue to target civilians in Yemen and in the Kingdom.

The Kingdom will not hesitate to defend its national security, nor will it abandon the fraternal people of Yemen until they regain their complete sovereignty and independence from Iranian hegemony. The Kingdom will continue to provide humanitarian support for the people of Yemen, and it will continue to support the efforts of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for Yemen in accord with the GCC Initiative, the outcomes of the Comprehensive Yemeni National Dialogue, and UNSC resolution 2216.

Distinguished Attendees,

Terrorism and extremist ideology pose a major threat to the entire world. Together, we have made remarkable progress in the past few years in combating extremist organizations, including substantially rolling back ISIS strongholds in Iraq and Syria through the efforts of the global coalition. Similarly, the forces of the Coalition to Support Legitimacy in Yemen were able to deliver important strikes against Al-Qaeda and ISIS in Yemen.

To achieve success in our battle against terrorism and extremism, we must intensify our joint efforts by facing this challenge comprehensively. This includes combating the financing of terrorism and extremism. The Kingdom has supported many international entities that contribute to reinforcing the joint efforts to combat this challenge. The Kingdom supported the UN Counter-Terrorism Center with a contribution of \$110 million and established the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology (Etidal) in Riyadh. The Kingdom also hosts the International Terrorist Financing Targeting Center.

Distinguished Attendees,

We in the Kingdom, due to our position in the Muslim World, bear a special and historical responsibility to protect our tolerant Islamic faith from attempts by terrorist organizations and extremist groups to pervert it. Islam that equates the killing of an individual with the killing of all people is undoubtedly innocent of all the crimes and atrocities committed in its name by the forces of terrorism and extremism.

The terrorist and extremist organizations find fertile ground to sprout and spread in countries where there are sectarian divisions and weakness or collapse of state institutions. If we intend to win in our battle against terrorism, we must not waiver in facing the countries that sponsor terrorism and sectarianism, and we must stand firmly in the face of these countries that promote transnational extremist ideologies, which rely on false political slogans to hide their extremist, chaotic, and destructive nature.

Distinguished Attendees,

Peace in the Middle East is our strategic option. Our duty is to spare no effort to work together towards achieving a bright future where peace, stability, prosperity,

and coexistence among all the region's peoples prevail. The Kingdom supports all efforts to advance the peace process. The Kingdom introduced peace initiatives since 1981. The 2002 Arab Peace Initiative provides the basis for a comprehensive and just solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict that ensures that the fraternal Palestinian people obtain their legitimate rights, at the forefront of which is establishing their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital. We support the efforts of the current U.S. administration to achieve peace in the Middle East by bringing the Palestinians and the Israelis to the negotiation table to reach a fair and comprehensive agreement.

While we follow with concern the developments in Libya, and while we call all of our Libyan brothers to sit at the negotiation table and unite to preserve the territorial integrity and safety of Libya, we condemn the foreign interventions in Libya. We also support a peaceful solution in Syria that maintains its territorial integrity and call for the departure of militias and mercenaries from it.

We also stand by the fraternal people of Lebanon who are experiencing a humanitarian catastrophe as a result of the explosion at the Port of Beirut, which occurred as a result of the hegemony of Hizbollah, a terrorist organization affiliated with Iran, over the decision making process in Lebanon by force of arms. This led to disabling the constitutional state institutions in Lebanon. In order for the fraternal people of Lebanon to achieve their aspirations of security, stability, and prosperity, this terrorist organization must be disarmed.

Mr. President, Distinguished Attendees,

From this podium we call for the intensification of global efforts to confront the great challenges facing humanity in the areas of climate change, poverty, organized crime, the spread of epidemics, and other challenges which require that we strengthen our cooperation to work for a bright future so generations to come may live in stability, peace, and security.

May God's peace be upon you.

Thank you Mr. President.

**North Macedonia** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 6)

**Address by Mr. Stevo Pendarovski, President of the Republic of North Macedonia**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

Distinguished President of the United Nations General Assembly,

Distinguished Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Esteemed Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honored to have the opportunity, for the first time, to address, on behalf of the Republic of North Macedonia, this global forum, which this year, due to the circumstances in which we meet, is unique — for the first time, and I sincerely hope for the last, without our personal presence, at the headquarters of our organization.

This 2020 is undoubtedly one of the most difficult years that humanity is living in recent history. In just a few months, the pandemic, in addition to taking nearly one million lives, has left far-reaching consequences in almost every area of our lives, which will take years to fully recover. COVID-19 caused tectonic changes in the order we know, but also provided us with a realistic insight into the national capacities of public health for dealing with crises of planetary dimensions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

COVID-19 is just another in the whole spectrum of crises we face as humanity and none of them is fully isolated from the others. The health crisis is both economic and social because it causes poverty, and poverty is fertile ground for extremism and conflict. Conflicts threaten human rights and freedoms and cause humanitarian catastrophes and waves of refugees. This vortex of crises and threats generates fear, uncertainty and mistrust and polarizes the relations between states, but also within states, and finally undermines multilateralism, which today is more needed than ever.

2020 should be a turning point for all of us. Today, instead of the existing static order created after the Second World War, we need a functional and dynamic system of shared rules and principles that we believe in, adapted to the new times. We need a new model of active, inclusive multilateralism, recognizable by solidarity between nations and humanity among people. In this context, one of the great tasks of the United Nations is to help us keep our focus and keep our collective consciousness and conscience for the global good awake.

When it comes to our shared goals, let me recall the words of the former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, who said that the purposes of the Charter “are expressions of universally shared ideals which cannot fail us, though we, alas, often fail them”. In other words, our organization can be as effective as its Member States allow.

Therefore, in order to overcome this period, we need solidarity between the states, which shall not be reflected only in the field of health. We must also be in solidarity with the future that we need to build together.

Esteemed Excellencies,

The tragedy caused by COVID-19 should not be used to raise geopolitical tensions and strengthen the geopolitical rivalry among the great powers. Science must stay aside from the logic of profit, but also from the destructive effects of propaganda and misinformation. Policies focused on quick results always have a short-term effect. If we treat crises in isolation from each other, we will only alleviate the symptoms without curing humanity. An integral approach is therefore necessary. The pandemic is also an opportunity to restructure economies, technologies and lifestyles, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. We will not eradicate poverty only with short-term financial assistance to the poorest, but through systematic adaptation of those people to have a dignified life and equal opportunities to work, earn money, start families. If we do the opposite, the gap between rich and poor will widen and inequality will still be passed down from one generation to the next.

We see that a new generation of inequalities related to education, technology and climate change is already approaching, which will surely result in new, huge divisions within the societies. We already see that in young people. While some, disappointed by the lack of prospects, leave their countries, others flee to instant gratification and superficial values.

Member States must continue to strive for universal education for all, because education is the most powerful guarantor of human rights and freedoms.

The 25th anniversary of the World Conference on Women reminds us that it is necessary to continue our efforts to reduce inequality between men and women, which is still a reality in many parts of the world. Moreover, we need to continuously strengthen tolerance for different lifestyles and protect these groups from the widespread violence against them.

Our economic and technical-technological development must become climate neutral. In doing so, we need to focus on developing and supporting innovative environmental approaches and sustainable development strategies. Unfortunately, in order to repair the economic damage caused by the pandemic, many governments and companies are already making compromises at the expense of the environmental and climate agenda. By doing so, they only protect the unsustainable economic model of development based on fossil fuels and the use of underpaid labor.

If we hope that new technologies can continue to build on our old habits, we will only worsen the situation. We must learn, acquire new, sustainable habits that will be adequate to the new technologies.

It is clear to all of us that the time for action is very short. We have only 10 years left to implement the ambitious Agenda 2030. Even before the pandemic, we had difficulties in implementing some of its key goals. Now, for their implementation, we must simultaneously mitigate the economic and social consequences of the pandemic that is still present. To win this race against time, instead of half-effective measures that only delay the consequences, we need bold and long-term solutions that will surely outlive the governments that have passed them.



Dear Friends,

The promotion of peace and the prevention of conflicts, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law, have no alternative. Terrorism and violent extremism threaten us all. The Republic of North Macedonia joins the Secretary General's call for a global truce and full respect for international humanitarian law in these extraordinary circumstances. My country, within its capabilities, is an active participant in UN peacekeeping missions, but also within regional organizations such as the OSCE, the European Union and the missions of the North Atlantic Alliance. In this context, we support the efforts for a new nuclear arms control treaty and believe that the efforts of our strategic partners to include new nuclear forces therein is an important contribution to greater efficiency in preventing a new race for armament.

As a small country in South-East Europe, we have brought additional stability to the region by resolving, through the mediation of the UN, the complex dispute with our neighbor Greece. Now we are implementing in good faith the agreed, which will benefit both our countries and the region as a whole. At the same time, we are ready to resolve all open issues through dialogue of equal subjects, seen in the Good Neighborliness and Cooperation Treaty with our neighbor, the Republic of Bulgaria, which serves as a significant example thereof.

Unfortunately, our region still faces unresolved political and historical disputes that have the potential to take us back to the 1990s. The solution to these problems lies only in overcoming historical myths, the way out is certainly not in the ideologies of the 19th century for ethnic and religious domination.

In this context, it is of utmost importance that investments are not reduced to investing only in economies. Democracy, which after the end of the Cold War we were convinced had no real alternative, is today under fierce attack on populist and authoritarian tendencies. If we want to maintain the moral superiority of democracy over other models of political governance, we must invest in it, especially among the young generations. In this sense, one of the fundamental challenges before us is to invest in the education about democratic values in order to suppress the awakened radical ideologies, such as neo-fascism, ultra-nationalism and racism. It is a task for the states and formal education, but, not less for the system of non-formal education, as well as for the civil society.

To be successful, this battle is fought on multiple fronts simultaneously. Every country, every nation and every organization can contribute. But preconditions for achieving the goal are effective international cooperation and global solidarity, for which we need the United Nations, reformed and adapted to the new reality.

With all its shortcomings, this organization remains the only truly global, neutral and legitimate platform for cooperation. Regarding the need for its thorough reform, the challenges we all face can only be solved with more, not less multilateralism, which, in addition to governments and states, will include the private sector, international governmental and non-governmental organizations, academia and associations of young people, women and the marginalized, who rightly seek truth, justice and equality.

In the spirit of multilateralism, the Republic of North Macedonia will continue to fulfill its international obligations and support the work of the United Nations and

its specialized agencies in creating and implementing public policies on issues of global importance.

On our decisions today, at the peak of the pandemic, depends how our world will look like after the pandemic. This is a rare opportunity, supporting the world organization and supporting each other, to take steps towards creating a more peaceful and just world in which faith in humanism, freedom, solidarity and respect for human dignity will be restored. It is clear that only by investing in the United Nations will we be able to build a better world for both present and future generations.

Thank you for your attention.

**Ghana** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 7)

**Address by Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

Mr President, Secretary General, a year ago, we were all looking forward to what, we were sure, would be the grand celebrations at this year's General Assembly to mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. Instead of the anticipated major gathering for the celebrations, we have been forced to stay at home, and employ technology to make our addresses to the Assembly.

It is not only these celebrations that have had to be adapted to changed circumstances; our world has been turned upside down, and we have all been forced to learn new ways of doing things.

It would have been implausible to suggest, but we have learnt not to shake hands or hug our loved ones. For many people, the most difficult thing to deal with in these uncertain and unsettling times has been the silence forced on churches, mosques, temples and other places of worship. Singing in groups has become a dangerous activity, and a major item which is preoccupying the attention of world leaders is how to send and keep our children in school safely. All the sacred economic rules by which we have been urged to conduct our affairs in the past century have been thrown out, at least for the moment. Indeed, all our best laid plans have turned out to be of no use, when faced with the ravages of an unknown virus. We, in Ghana, have, however, chalked modest successes in trying to defeat the virus through resolute actions by my Government, the cooperation of the Ghanaian people, and the grace of the Almighty.

Mr President, the lessons are clear: we all fell together and looked into the abyss together. Even as we closed our borders and shut airports, the reality dawned on all of us that we had to rely on each other to be able to get out of the trouble we were in. We have all gone down together, we should all rise together.

If the answer to this pandemic lies in finding a vaccine, that vaccine should be made available to the whole world, rich and poor alike, developed and developing, all races and all beliefs. The virus has taught us that we are all at risk, and there is no special protection for the rich or a particular class. For as long as the virus exists, whatever medical solutions that might be found should be made available for all in aid of our common humanity.

We are told by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that COVID-19 has brought in its wake "a significant reduction in the financing available to developing economies", again, with the Organisation estimating that "external private finance inflows to developing economies could drop by \$700 billion in 2020 compared to 2019 levels, exceeding the immediate impact of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis by 60 per cent". The restructuring of the global financing architecture, to enable access to fresh capital by developing nations, now more than ever, is of immediate necessity, if the gains chalked in transforming their economies are not to be eroded, and the standards of living of their peoples are not to be dangerously lowered.

Now is the time for this much discussed and much analysed institution of ours, the United Nations, to rise to the occasion.

One of its agencies, the WHO, has been in the eye of the storm during this crisis, and all of us have to learn the lessons that have emerged. Yes, we should have arguments about the UN and its agencies and their roles, but, after 75 years, the arguments should be like the ones we have in our families, and not about their very existence.

We should correct the longstanding injustice that the current structure and composition of the UN, particularly the Security Council, represents for the nations of Africa. Established in those far-off days of 1945, membership of the Council does not presently reflect the realities of the 21st century. The time has come for the adoption and endorsement of Africa's Common Position on UN Reform, as set out in the Ezulwini Consensus, so we can create a modern United Nations fit for purpose in our time.

We should also focus our attention on the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals, especially as we mark the beginning of the Decade of Action to deliver the goals and targets of Agenda 2030. Mr President, as co-chair of the SDG Group of Eminent Advocates, Ghana believes that the effective implementation of the 17 SDGs remains critical to making the multilateral system relevant in addressing the global challenges we face.

Indeed, one such is the threat to the consolidation of democratic governance, especially in Africa, in the face of turbulent conditions prevailing in several parts of Africa. As the newly-elected Chairperson of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), I say that one immediate test confronting the Community is the political situation in Mali, following the coup d'état that ousted President Ibrahim Boubacar Keita, which has been compounded further by the activities of terrorists and violent extremists, who are in control of large swathes of that country and some parts of the Sahel Region. We have learnt, most often through bitter experience, that terrorism and violent extremism are not restricted to particular geographic locations or jurisdictions, as the impact of a single terrorist incident in one part of the world resonates throughout the world. It is incumbent on the UN and, indeed, all Member States to lend their support to the efforts being made by ECOWAS to restore normalcy to Mali, and help us defeat the scourge of terrorism.

Mr. President, the importance of technology has been reinforced in the time of the pandemic. Virtual meetings are now part of our normal lives, young people have graduated in virtual ceremonies, and we might never go back to some of the many conferences that we used to attend, and it is obvious that technology is the future.

Ghana, therefore, welcomes and endorses the Secretary-General's recommendation, as contained in the Roadmap on Digital Cooperation, to ensure that no one is left behind. How else would we all have maintained a semblance of keeping in touch in the past six months, but for technology?

The political season is at its height here in Ghana, as we prepare for presidential and parliamentary elections in December. Like everything else in our world today, even the politicking has been affected by the pandemic, and we cannot campaign for votes in the style to which we are accustomed. We are having to rely on technology to find ways of popularising our messages in the time of COVID-19.

It is a matter of great pride to me that, in spite of the difficulties in conducting an election during a pandemic, I am able to state that all Ghanaians are agreed that we have to work together to ensure that the elections will be transparent, free, fair, safe and credible. This will be the eighth election since we embarked on constitutional rule in our Fourth Republic in 1992. Each of the elections has seen an improvement on the previous one, and we are looking forward to this year's passing off peacefully, with characteristic Ghanaian dignity. We are keenly aware of the reputation that Ghana has built as a tolerant and working democracy, and we have every intention to nurture and improve upon it.

Paramount in everyone's consideration is the Ghana Project, which aims to modernise all aspects of our lives, and bring prosperity to our land. I have no doubts whatsoever that, at the end of the elections, we shall be proud of ourselves, Africa will have good cause to be proud of us, and the rest of the world will find lessons to learn from us.

Last year, 2019, was an extraordinarily exciting year for us in Ghana. It marked the 400th anniversary of the start of the barbaric Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and the arrival in America of the first captured slaves from West Africa.

To mark this tragic anniversary, we declared 2019 the 'Year of Return', and extended a welcome back to the African continent of the descendants of the slaves who constitute the bulk of the black population in the Americas and the Caribbean. The invitation was enthusiastically taken up, and a great time was had by all.

We have every intention to keep a welcome mat laid out in Ghana for members of the African Diaspora. We, in Ghana, live with the grim reality that the majority of the abducted slaves from the continent were transported to the Americas and Caribbean through the forts dotted along our coastline. We owe it to their descendants to find a safe haven in Ghana, if they should need it.

This responsibility means we have to make Ghana secure and desirable both for her present-day citizens and for those in the Diaspora that might want to come back either for a visit or stay.

I extend the best of luck to you all from Ghana, and look forward to a healthy and happy world.

I thank you for your attention.

**Mozambique** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 8)**Address by Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

Mr President of the 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly;  
Mr Secretary-General of the United Nations;

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Excellencies Heads of delegations;

Ladies and gentlemen!

I am highly delighted to address, on behalf of the Mozambican people and on my own behalf, the international community in this General Debate, which takes place at a so historic and symbolic time of the celebration of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations.

For the Republic of Mozambique, this celebration coincides with the 45th anniversary of the acceptance, and therefore, accession of our country, as a legitimate and fully fledged member of this Organization, which gives us our honourable place in the international community.

I would like to recognise His Excellency Ambassador Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, President of the 74th Session of the General Assembly, for his performance and I congratulate You Mr Volkan Bozkir, President of this Session of the General Assembly and I express my country's willingness to work together for the success of your tenure.

I warmly congratulate Mr António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his tireless commitment to upholding the ideals enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations; by placing the United Nations in the lead of collective efforts to overcome contemporary challenges, including its initiatives, aimed at addressing the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr President,

Excellencies!

Today's world is markedly different from the one that existed when the UN was founded. There have been significant improvements in our collective well-being. Social and human development indicators have improved substantially. Life expectancy increased, mortality and morbidity reduced, the number of Member States almost quadrupled from 51 to 193 countries, including Mozambique. Efforts to empower women are now a deepening reality.

The theme of this General Assembly faithfully reflects the essence of the United Nations and is a call for renewal of the vision for an integrated and cooperative world, where nations express themselves in an open manner and act in a coordinated way in promoting sustainable and inclusive development, taking the 2030 Agenda as their banner.

Mozambique, therefore, upholds the assumptions of “common but differentiated responsibility”, as well as internationally agreed development goals, in the light of the Paris Declaration on the Effectiveness of Development Aid”.

All this shows that multilateral cooperation remains the best approach to addressing the challenges and mitigating the suffering of the people who are the main reason for the creation of the United Nations.

Multilateralism within the United Nations is also key if we take into account that the world economy, especially that of developing countries, has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and its restoration requires global, integrated and concerted interventions.

Nationalism and isolationism in the face of a pandemic are, as far as we are concerned, a prescription for failure to respond to this and other infectious diseases of an unpredictable nature.

Other global phenomena and challenges calling for the United Nations’ led multilateral intervention, include terrorism, climate change, cybersecurity, public health, research and development, trade and industrialization.

In the global village in which we live, national and international issues are increasingly less discernible. The transnational nature and interconnection of these phenomena require leadership that recognises that, in today’s world, our interventions must take into account the intrinsic relationship between the national, regional and global citizens.

Mr President,

Excellencies!

Mozambique welcomes and reiterates its support for the Actions of the Secretary General, aimed at reforming the United Nations, in the areas of peace and security, peace operations, development and management of the organization.

Nevertheless, we are concerned about the lack of progress in the inter-governmental negotiations so that the reform of the Security Council will yield results in line with the 21st century.

The reform has the merit of placing international peace, security and stability as catalysts for the global development agenda, as well as making the UN more representative, efficient and transparent, based on the contemporary geopolitical situation, which will render the decisions of this body more effective and legitimate.

So once again we call on the international community to take advantage of this historic moment of our universal organization’s 75th anniversary to combine efforts to a sustainable solution to outstanding security issues.

Mr President,

Excellencies!

The Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals are instruments that fuel the hope of billions of people around the world in achieving the long-awaited progress and well-being of all peoples. In this context, Mozambique submitted in July 2020 its first Voluntary National Report on the Sustainable Development Goals, which shares achievements based on the aspirations of the Mozambican people, in

compliance with this international instrument reflected in our Five-Year Government Programme 2020-2024.

“The Future we want” lies in the actions of the present; the “United Nations we need” depend on our posture and responsible action, today and tomorrow. Only with a collective approach and humanism, we will successfully implement the agenda of inclusiveness that we have chosen of “leaving no one behind”.

It is in this context that the Government of Mozambique promotes peace-building, the preservation of human rights, social justice, gender equality and equity, the inclusion of young people and people with disabilities in development programmes, cementing the unity and sharing of benefits, which is salient feature of our governance.

With regard to climate change, due to its geographical location, Mozambique has been cyclically affected by extreme events. Every year, the country has suffered cyclones, floods and droughts and memories of Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in March and April 2019 are still fresh.

More than a year later, we continue efforts to rebuild and recover socio-economic damage, combined with adaptation and resilience measures, in the light of internationally accepted practices under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to which we have been a party since June 2018.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our gratitude to the international community for the support provided during and after the cyclones.

Mozambique continues to promote sustainable management of biodiversity and ecosystems and natural resources, with the purpose of adding value to the integrated local development of communities. In this regard, the promotion of conservation areas, in national territory, continues to deserve our special attention.

On the other hand, we have sought to expand access to electricity for domestic and industrial consumption, through clean and renewable sources, whether it is thermoelectric power, natural gas powered plants, wind and solar power, in addition to hydropower, in order to ensure the achievement of the universal access target by 2030. At present, all 154 district headquarters are connected to the national power grid, and the electrification programme for administrative posts is underway.

Recognising the role of agriculture to this end, the Government decided to allocate 10 per cent of its annual budget to this sector for the first time, in line with the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security adopted by the African Union in 2003.

It in this regard that we launched the Integrated Management Programme for Agriculture and Natural Resources — SUSTENTA, which promotes the socio-economic integration of the Mozambican population.

Mr President,

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, officially announced by the WHO in December 2019, took the world by surprise. It is a health scourge with a high degree of spread and lethality, with greater severity in developing countries, particularly in Africa.



COVID-19 has transformed the dynamics of trade, professional and social relations among human beings in all spheres of life, both in urban and rural environments.

This scenario requires the mobilisation of additional financial resources to compensate for the economic slowdown, given that the scourge of the pandemic still prevails around the world and in our country, in particular.

While response measures to COVID-19 continue, we take this opportunity to thank the bilateral and multilateral partners of the international community for the multiple support that has enabled us to prevent and contain the spread of the new coronavirus and embark on what we call the “new normal”.

Excellencies!

The massive efforts we have been making in the framework of peace and security consolidation, as well as in the implementation of the socio-economic development programme, aligned with the 2030 Agenda, have been put to the test by terrorist acts and criminals in some districts of Cabo Delgado province, and by armed actions by allegedly dissident RENAMO groups in some parts of Manica and Sofala provinces. in the central region of the country. Terrorists heinously kill people, cause displaced people, destroy housing and socio-economic infrastructure, plunder community property and keep children and women in captivity. As a consequence of these phenomena, more than 1,000 people have been killed, and some 250,000 people are internally displaced in other districts within the country.

In the face of terrorist attacks, the Government has responded firmly, on the one hand, with the support of local people, through actions to defend sovereignty and territorial integrity, as well as to the protection of people and their property. On the other hand, the Government has mobilized humanitarian assistance for the internally displaced people and promotes socio-economic development activities for the communities.

It was under these efforts that we recently launched and operationalised the Northern Region Integrated Development Agency (ADIN) with the aim of promoting multi-sectoral actions with a view to the integrated socio-economic development of the provinces of Niassa, Cabo Delgado and Nampula.

Aware that the terrorist actions of which the country is a victim have links with international groups that are also involved in transnational organized crime, we have sought to address this phenomenon in cooperation with other countries and regional and international organizations.

In this context, we welcome all initiatives and partnerships that will go a long way in complementing our ongoing efforts to curtail the harmful actions of terrorists in our country.

As part of the implementation of the Peace and Reconciliation Agreement between the Government and RENAMO, we are implementing decentralization and the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process of RENAMO's remnant armed elements that has already covered about 1,000 ex-combatants.

We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude for the role of the United Nations and the international community, particularly the dynamism of the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy.

Mr President,

Ladies and gentlemen!

As we conclude our remarks, we reaffirm our firm belief that international security and peace making and maintenance, the preservation and respect for human rights and the promotion of sustainable development, only find fertile ground to flourish, in the common approach and collective action of all stakeholders in the world. We have said so with great humility and willingness to serve our people and to contribute to the prosperity of humanity.

We want, with actions to contribute to the “Future we want”, to shape the “United Nations we need”, and “therefore, renew our commitment to multilateralism”, and valuing the most precious commodity of the universe, LIFE, and Quality LIFE.

Let us therefore revisit our global commitment to the consolidation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, keeping in mind the main recipients of these efforts, namely “We The Peoples”!

Happy Celebration to the United Nations!

Thank you very much!

**Iraq** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 9)

**Address by Mr. Barham Salih, President of the Republic of Iraq**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Arabic]

In the name of God the clement and the merciful,

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Your Majesties, Honours and Excellencies

Allow me to convey to you our greetings of peace from the city of peace, Baghdad.

I am delighted to greet you on behalf of the Republic of Iraq, a founding Member of the United Nations. I wish the General Assembly every success in its current session.

This is the first time in the history of the United Nations that the General Assembly is meeting virtually. It is a consequence of the current COVID-19 pandemic — a cross-border threat that threatens our life and means of life, as well as our economies and communities in general. This virtual meeting is a real symbol of the radical changes in our way of life and how we communicate.

We are amid a historic paradox as we meet and communicate at a time when we are called upon to socially distance. We are hindered by the pandemic but our persistence to live makes us work hard to face it. The pandemic in any city or village on the globe is a continued threat to the entire world. It compels us to work in solidarity and cooperation among States and communities regardless of our differences. That will enable us to eradicate the pandemic or, at least, to curb its effects.

This pandemic also behoves the developed nations to cooperate by sharing experiences and information in order to combat it. Developed nations must help developing nations in order to create a healthy environment that will allow them to combat the pandemic and limit its harmful effects on our communities and our lives.

Moreover, we are all responsible for combating misinformation about the pandemic. Indeed, ignorance and misinformation jeopardize the lives of millions. Early planning plays a crucial role in guaranteeing equity in the distribution of a vaccine when it becomes available. We will need to prevent its market distribution from becoming a purely commercial act in order to allow the poorest countries to have access to the vaccine for all their citizens.

Given our limited resources owing to the circumstances in which we find ourselves, Iraq is combating the pandemic and trying to curb its effects with a series of measures and precautions. Despite these efforts, we still have much more to do, notwithstanding our limited capabilities and weak infrastructure, in the realm of medical care and medical services.

Before and after the emergence of the pandemic, Iraq faced another scourge that is no less dangerous — that of terrorism and corruption. We succeeded in

vanquishing military terrorism, while liberating our cities with strong will power and sacrifices made by our army forces, the popular crowd and the Peshmerga, with the support of the international coalition and our neighbours.

Nevertheless, the fight is still going on against terrorism, transnational extremism and sleeper cells in the deserts of our country.

We cannot underestimate the threat posed by terrorism and the possibility that it may re-emerge or that the terrorists may reorganize. We believe that any relaxation in our response to terrorism or any preoccupation with regional conflicts would allow obscurantist forces to regroup and gain strength. Similarly, if we surrender in the fight against rampant corruption or with regard to interference in the domestic affairs of our sovereign States, that will hinder efforts to combat terrorism and extremism.

Against this backdrop, we hope to receive aid from all friendly countries in the international community in order to locate smuggled funds and identify corrupt people who smuggle money for financing outlaw and extremist groups. Corruption is a scourge suffered by many countries. It has stripped many Iraqis of their country's resources. For many years, corruption has contributed to the destruction of Iraq. The Iraqi people are bitter and angry about the impact of corruption.

Last year, when I spoke before the General Assembly, I called for the creation of an international coalition against corruption and for the recovery of pillaged money. It would be a coalition similar to the International Coalition Against Terrorism. Today I reiterate that same appeal. We cannot eradicate terrorism if we do not dry up its financing. That is the only way to do it. We also need to eradicate corruption, which is the very basis of policies related to violence and terrorism. Corruption destroys State economies and hinders our people in their efforts to achieve progress and prosperity.

We must now address the crime of genocide and the massacres of the Yazidi people in Iraq. These acts were aimed at ending that people's existence. For this reason, the international community must stand shoulder to shoulder with Iraq to ensure that such crimes are not committed again in the future.

A few days ago, I attended a meeting of Iraqi women — more specifically Yazidi, Shi'ite Turks of Iraq and Shabak citizens — who survived barbaric acts and the atrocities of terrorism. I heard them express the pain they continue to endure more than three years after the liberation of their cities. These women continue to endure the psychological and physical trauma caused by genocide, forced displacement and physical and moral torture to which they are subjected. They continue to live in camps. That is why we must strive to ensure the return of displaced persons and refugees to their towns and villages. It will require great effort on our part and on the part of our friends and the international Organization.

Iraq has experienced more than 40 years of war, suffering, blockades and terrorism. We have suffered more recently from the sharp drop in oil prices on the global market and from the impact of the economic havoc caused by COVID-19. The drop in oil prices has coincided with the pandemic threat. As a result, we have had to suddenly face major challenges.

Approximately one year ago, Iraq also experienced a popular uprising, during which all citizens clamoured for change that would enable the aspirations of Iraqis to be met. They called for active dialogue with regard to the State's foundations, managing the country's affairs and their rights. Reforms have started in the country

but we need time to achieve the desired results. Measures already under way which demonstrate that peaceful and constitutional change away from violence. That is what the Iraqis want.

Against this backdrop, a new Government was formed this year. It is led by Mustafa Al-Khidimi. The Government was formed in response to the calls for reform heard during the popular uprising. Following our experience of authoritarianism in Iraq, we can now say that the current situation, the status quo, cannot continue. The Iraqi people wish to usher in a new political era so that they can combat the structural imbalances in Iraqi power mechanisms that have existed since 2003.

Iraqis want good governance. In response to the public will, the new Government shoulders heavy responsibilities. First, we need structural reforms in the political, economic and management spheres. We must combat corruption and corrupt individuals — another facet of terrorism.

Among the basic tasks the new Government must discharge is the holding of early elections next year. These elections must be fair and transparent based on new electoral law. They must be more representative and fairer and meet the demands of major national popular uprisings. They must meet the legitimate aspirations of Iraqis and their desire for democracy. Iraqis aspire to a life of freedom and decency. Power must belong to Iraqis. They must speak up. The Government must emanate from them and safeguard their interests and meet their demands.

The Government is also called upon another task that is not less important — that is, to have monopoly over weapons by preventing their possession and use in unlawful contexts. Weapons must remain in the hands of Iraqi State institutions. We must also pursue our inquiries into crimes committed against protesters and members of the security forces. The fight against groups operating outside of the law and the issue of arms control are part of a tireless struggle waged by the Iraqi State against anarchists and extremists. This is not an easy task. However, we must continue work towards peace within our societies and ensure Iraqi sovereignty.

The latest communiqué released by the Shi'ite supreme authority, Ayatollah Ali Sistani, following his meeting with the Representative of the Secretary-General in Iraq, clearly outlined these various duties to reform the course of the ongoing political process and rid it from corruption and weaknesses. With that in mind, we hope to receive the support of the United Nations in its coordination with electoral authorities. We also hope to receive technical assistance, which will guarantee fair elections and ensure the prevention of manipulation, forgery and extortion. Iraqi citizens must not be influenced in their electoral choice.

Our national goal is to establish a strong State capable of imposing the rule of law and upholding the rights of its citizens. We do not want Iraq to become an arena for conflicts or the settling of scores of others on its territories. We have endured enough wars, siege and terrorism with attacks on our sovereignty. An independent and sovereign Iraq will be a meeting point for the common interests of the peoples and countries of the region based on economic and security cooperation in order to combat terrorism and extremism.

We look forward to enjoying the effective support of our neighbours and the international community for our national endeavour, which will have a great impact on the future of Iraq, the region and the world.

In that context, Iraq stresses its position on the need to resolve the Palestinian question. The rights of the Palestinian people must be achieved by establishing its independent State. That would help to achieve stability of the region and the entire world.

Today I recall our martyrs, who have sacrificed their lives for freedom and for the fight against terrorism. I commend our young people who, day after day, demonstrate their determination to live a free and decent life. We optimistically look towards the future. Let us continue to support our young people as they walk the path of freedom, rule of law, sovereignty and justice.

In conclusion, I reiterate our gratitude to the United Nations as we mark its seventy-fifth anniversary. There is no alternative to the Organization, which brings us together despite all our differences, especially at a time when we face transnational challenges, such as pandemics, climate change, food security-related problems and the issue of migration. All of these issues can be addressed only through the United Nations and its Charter.

There is no doubt whatsoever that the global order has failed over the past 75 years. We recall such bitter experiences as the genocide in Rwanda, the wars and massacres suffered by the Iraqi people and the ongoing crises in Syria and Libya. We must learn from the past. We must ensure that the Sustainable Development Goals can evolve. We must strive for reform within the United Nations so that the Organization can meet the peoples' aspirations.

Thank you for your kind attention. We pray to Almighty God that our next meeting will be held in a pandemic-free world but also in a world free of any other virus, such as hatred, corruption, war or terrorism.

May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

**Finland** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 10)

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

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

Mr President, Secretary-General, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me congratulate Mr. Volkan Bozkir for the election as the President of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. You can count on Finland's support, as you lead this important body during these exceptional times.

And the times are exceptional indeed. At the start of this year, nobody could have foreseen that we are not able to gather in New York this September. The COVID-19 pandemic has hit all of us hard. Extending around the globe, it is affecting every continent and state, all people, and all areas of life.

A pandemic is by definition a global challenge. It requires a global response. No country is able to combat this common enemy alone. No one is safe, until all are safe.

An effective global response can only come from all of us together. From the United Nations. I would like to reiterate our unwavering support for the UN system in general, and the World Health Organization in particular, for their efforts to manage the fight against the pandemic. I also would like to express my appreciation for the strong leadership Secretary-General António Guterres has shown during this crisis.

Mr. President,

Although the COVID-19 pandemic is far from over, it has already taught us a number of important lessons. Firstly, it has shown that we have to take health security much more seriously. Before the next pandemic emerges, we need better prevention and better preparedness. In this work, the Global Health Security Agenda can provide the WHO with valuable support.

Secondly, it has unfortunately revealed how we are tempted to react to immediate threats — nationally, not internationally. When this pandemic broke out, our initial reaction was not to unite behind multilateral efforts. Instead of a much-needed global response, we witnessed a series of national responses. Faced with a completely new situation, this may have been understandable. But it does raise concerns on how we will be able to combat other global challenges.

Thirdly, however, and this is more encouraging: the past six months have also proven our capability to radical measures when needed. In order to contain the pandemic, governments, societies and individuals were suddenly prepared to change their behavior. As soon as the magnitude of the threat was perceived, unconventional solutions were sought.

This gives us hope. Where there is a will, there is a way.

We must not lose sight of the even more persistent existential threat to humanity. Climate change. Our lives may have been on lockdown this year, but climate change has not stopped for a moment. The urgency of bold and swift climate

action is growing by the day. Our commitments to the Paris Agreement must prevail. We must redouble our efforts for their implementation.

We must make a virtue out of necessity. As the entire world now needs a recovery strategy, we have to make sure that we choose a road towards a sustainable future. Instead of returning to our unsustainable habits, we truly have to “Build Back Better and Greener”. The Secretary-General’s six principles for “Building Back Better” have our full support. All recovery measures must be assessed from the perspective of their climate and environment impacts. The Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda and the Convention on Biological Diversity need to guide our way forward.

Finland is ready to do its share. The Finnish Government stands firmly behind its aim to make Finland climate neutral by 2035, and thus the world’s first fossil-free welfare society. We will continue to integrate sustainable development into our state budget. We are determined to transform Finland into a socially, economically and ecologically sustainable society during this decade.

And we continue to work actively in international partnerships. The Coalition of Finance Ministers for Climate Action, led by Finland and Chile, has grown to include more than 50 countries. This cooperation helps countries to integrate climate considerations into economic, fiscal and financial policies.

Mr President,

Precisely when the demand for global solutions is rising, our ability to provide them is weakening. Multilateralism suffers from inward-looking nationalism and great-power competition alike. The institutions we have built together over decades are under growing pressure. International agreements, norms and principles are increasingly challenged and interpreted in ways which weaken both their potential and their legitimacy. Ultimately, if respect for the commonly agreed rules disappears, there will be not much left of a rules-based order.

We need to reverse this trend. More than ever, we need effective multilateral cooperation. More than ever, we need the United Nations. It is not only the common responsibility of all of us — the member states — to make it stronger. It should be obvious that it is our common interest, too.

It is equally obvious that all international institutions need to adapt to changing circumstances. New actors and new technologies create new kinds of challenges. Old structures and old instruments alone will not be sufficient to respond to them. But discarding existing frameworks would create a dangerous vacuum.

Nuclear weapons are becoming a particularly worrying example. With one agreement after the other lapsing, we soon risk losing even the last elements of nuclear arms control. It would be of fundamental importance for the nuclear weapons states to find a way to build mutual understanding and trust. Also in this regard, we support the idea of a closer dialogue between the permanent members of the Security Council. And it does not stop at arms control. At the end of the day, the entire UN system cannot function unless the P5 countries are able to work together.

Excellencies,

As any global crisis, the COVID-19 pandemic, too, can have negative effects on peace and security across the world. It can intensify existing conflicts, stall peace



processes and wake up dormant tensions. But it can also offer opportunities for peace. The Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire was a strong appeal for conflict parties to lay down their weapons. And as this year marks the 20th anniversary of resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security, we should further emphasize an inclusive approach to peacebuilding.

In addition to conflict resolution, we must invest more in conflict prevention. Every conflict avoided is one conflict less to be resolved in the future. Finland advocates the use of mediation for both purposes. We are ready and willing to offer our good services in this regard. Finland also remains committed to the peacekeeping operations and special political missions of the UN.

Ladies and gentlemen,

For the rules-based order, the rule of law is essential. All steps towards its consolidation in international relations have meant progress for humanity. Silence and looking away only empower perpetrators and let them escape justice. We need to end impunity for the gravest crimes. This should apply to all, including the strong and the powerful.

No government should use the crisis as a pretext to violate human rights or to limit democratic and civic space. No government should adopt measures that undermine the respect of the rule of law and of international commitments.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most progressive document ever on the rights of women and girls, was adopted twenty-five years ago. Unfortunately, this anniversary is not the only reason why it is so topical this year. The pandemic has hit women particularly hard.

The harsh economic and social implications for women have reversed the progress achieved during the last decades. The attempts to undermine women's and girls' rights, especially sexual and reproductive health and rights, continue.

In order to get back on the right track, we must live up to the commitments we have made. In addition to the Beijing Declaration, this also applies to the Istanbul Convention, a ground-breaking legal instrument addressing violence against women.

For Finland, advancing women's and girls' rights and gender equality is of fundamental importance. In the Generation Equality process, Finland has a leading role in bridging the digital divide between genders.

In the broad value base of Finland's foreign and security policy, human rights are at the forefront. This, and our long-term commitment to promoting human rights, is why my country is seeking a seat at the Human Rights Council from 2022 to 2024.

Secretary-General, Mr. President,

At 75 years of age, the Charter of the United Nations remains a remarkable blueprint for the future — for a more peaceful, more sustainable and more just world. But the promise comes with an important condition.

In its Article 2, the Charter states: "All Members, in order to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from membership, shall fulfil in good faith the obligations assumed by them".

As much as our environment has changed over time, this principle continues to be true. Only fulfilled obligations lead to rights and benefits. Pacta sunt servanda. Agreements must be kept.

**Kyrgyzstan** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 11)

**Address by Mr. Sooronbai Zheenbekov, President of the Kyrgyz Republic**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Russian]

Secretary-General, Ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Kyrgyz Republic, I would like to congratulate you on the occasion of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. It is impossible to imagine the world without the UN today. The Organization has become the most important tool for resolving social, economic, financial and cultural issues. UN agencies, funds and programmes are vital and effective partners for developing States. On behalf of the people of the Kyrgyz Republic, I thank the United Nations for supporting all our reforms.

Mr. President,

The theme of today's debate accurately reflects the current alarming situation in the world. The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us how closely interconnected we are. I express my full support to the UN Secretary-General for calling for a global ceasefire and mobilization of international efforts against the pandemic. To date, more than 44,000 cases of the disease have been reported in Kyrgyzstan and, unfortunately, we lost 1,063 citizens. We declared 30 July this year a day of mourning in our country. Thanks to the unity of the people of Kyrgyzstan and the heroic work of our doctors and volunteers we were able to significantly reduce the spread of the virus. The assistance provided to us by the WHO, the United Nations and its swiftly established Fund, as well as international donors, was essential. The support of our allies and strategic partners was important. Ongoing assistance is crucial for us. And universal access to the vaccine is key.

Distinguished participants,

The pandemic has impeded the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and significantly exacerbated the external debt crisis. We welcome the decision of the G20 and the international financial institutions to suspend debt payments. In May this year, at the UN high-level event, we proposed that a mechanism be used for deep debt restructuring in exchange for sustainable development projects. We hope to receive strong support for our initiative.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Kyrgyz Republic supports the efforts of Secretary-General Guterres to reform the Organization. Enhancing the effectiveness of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council is of particular importance. We attach great importance to security and economic development, the protection of human rights, the rule of law and democracy. Kyrgyzstan has put forward its candidacy for the Human Rights Council and the elected membership of the Security Council for the coming periods. I hope for broad support for our candidacy.

Mr. President,

The Kyrgyz Republic, as a depositary of the Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty, supports the strengthening of approaches to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Terrorism and extremism are also a serious threat to our peace. The UN should play a central role in coordinating the efforts of the international community's in combating the terrorist threat. We are committed to the effective implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We welcome the appointment of a Regional Coordinator for the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism in Bishkek. We stand ready to support him.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Kyrgyzstan has made commitments to achieving Sustainable Development Goals 7 and 13. In November last year, we ratified the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Kyrgyzstan sees the development of a green economy as the most important step in the implementation of these commitments. We strive to be a country with environmentally-friendly products and clean energy. Kyrgyzstan is focused on gradually reducing its consumption of traditional energy sources. We consider it important to use our water and energy potential through the construction of hydroelectric power plants and our participation in the CASA-1000 international project. This will contribute to the accumulation of water resources for the irrigation needs of our neighbours and the sustainable development of the entire region. The Kyrgyz Republic needs the support of the international community to adapt to the negative impacts of climate change.

Mr. President,

Climate change reduces the volume of glaciers and water resources of Kyrgyzstan. This will lead to a shortage of clean water and pose a threat to public health. It could lead to land degradation and economic risks. In this regard, we advocate the implementation of projects aimed at studying the problem of melting glaciers and their protection. We also believe that it is extremely important to preserve mountain ecosystems in areas where glaciers form. Kyrgyzstan has launched a number of global initiatives in this area. We hosted two global forums on protecting the snow leopard and its mountain ecosystems. A resolution on the role of the international community in preventing the radiation threat in Central Asia was adopted. In August last year, the Group of Friends of Mountainous Countries was created. Today it includes 23 States. It was also important to preserve biological diversity. That is why Kyrgyzstan proposed at this year's session of the General Assembly a new draft resolution entitled "Nature knows no borders: transboundary cooperation is a key factor in the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity". We are counting on support for our initiative.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Kyrgyz Republic attaches special importance to regional cooperation in Central Asia. Cooperation among our countries is developing dynamically. We actively participate in the regional dialogue platforms at the highest level to resolve existing issues. One of the main tasks is to remove barriers to economic cooperation in order to improve the well-being of our peoples. The development of a system of transport and communications corridors, logistics centres and terminals is vital. We must recreate the main routes of the ancient Great Silk Road. The construction and launch of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railroad will be a meaningful contribution to connecting Asia with Europe.

Mr. President,

Kyrgyzstan is committed to strengthening the rule of law and human rights. The strategic document that defines Kyrgyzstan's development path is its National Sustainable Development Strategy, covering the period until 2040. Its main thrust is the formation of a State governed by the rule of law and ensuring the rule of law in the interests of every citizen. With international support, we in Kyrgyzstan are conducting large-scale judicial reform.

Projects on regional development, the provision of clean water and digitalization of public services are being successfully implemented. On 4 October this year, Kyrgyzstan will hold the next parliamentary elections. International observers, including those from the OSCE, the SCO and the CIS, have been invited to attend. We intend to make every effort to ensure that the elections are transparent and competitive and that we use modern technology.

Thank you for your attention.

**Palau** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 12)

**Address by Mr. Tommy Esang Remengesau Jr., President of the Republic of Palau**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies, alii from the Republic of Palau.

Please allow me to begin by congratulating His Excellency Volkan Bozkir on his election as President of this historic 75th session of the General Assembly. I also wish to express Palau's thanks to His Excellency Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for his leadership of the Assembly over the past year, guiding us through these unprecedented challenges.

Mr. President,

Some nineteen years ago, I had the privilege of addressing this Assembly for the first time as President of the Republic of Palau. In January, I will complete my public service, having served as President for sixteen of those years, and I will return to being a fisherman in Palau's pristine waters. In my final address to the General Assembly today, I want to reflect on the difference these last two decades have made, and on the many benefits Palau has enjoyed from its relationship with the United Nations.

When I addressed the 52nd session of the General Assembly, we were meeting two months after the horror of the 9/11 attacks. My message then was one of unity, of recognizing a new spirit of cooperation that globalization was fostering in response to 9/11. I said then:

“While we remain shocked, saddened and deeply offended by the events giving rise to the new unity, we must acknowledge and nurture whatever good those events can be turned to. We now have the ability to see the clear advantages of close cooperation on matters which affect us all.”

In a way, this call remains apt today. We meet not in the shadow of terrorism, but in the shadow of global pandemic. We do not see human evil in this pandemic, in the way we did in the perpetrators of 9/11. But the challenge of our response is not so different: to craft closer cooperation between nations large and small, rich and poor; to unite in the face of a shared crisis in a way that might have seemed unlikely a year or two ago.

In 2001, I emphasized that:

“There is only one system in which we exist, and the related understanding that any act or condition within that system affects each of us, although in varying ways and degrees. In such a system, problems are best addressed through coalition-building and a consensus driven approach, and process of give and take, involving the widest possible range of participants.”

This is no less true today than it was in 2001. We took up many opportunities for coalition-building after 9/11: on terrorism, on the Millennium Development Goals and on advancing the doctrine of the responsibility to protect. Other challenges remain and have intensified, especially those challenges to the health of our planet.

Our method in addressing this ecological crisis must also be to turn towards coalition-building, a consensus-driven approach and to form new partnerships for enhancing ambition and effective implementation. We must act in solidarity with each other because it is a shared future that we face together, which we cannot address if we are divided.

Our immediate shared future is, of course, the pandemic, and I wish to extend our condolences at the loss of life suffered by so many around the world to this virus.

In Palau, we have been fortunate to remain free of COVID-19 cases. But we are certainly not free of the consequences of this pandemic. Sometimes we hear people say that health is more important than money, and that is certainly true. But a national economy is not “money,” it is the system that determines quality of life, and that delivers critical public services. It is the environment, healthcare, education. It is food on the table.

This pandemic has put Palau into a level of isolation we have not known for many, many years. We struggle with disruptions to supply chains for food and essential medicines. We struggle to connect patients with life-saving medical treatment, for which we previously relied on off-island providers in larger countries. We struggle to keep families united, to keep college students in school, and to keep family breadwinners working. Private sector unemployment is approaching 50%, and it will take years to recover what we have lost in months.

This pandemic highlights a feature of multilateral development we have been pointing out for many years now. The truth is, Palau’s high-income categorization is, in many ways, unrealistic. It does not match the facts on the ground or reflect our tremendous vulnerability as a small economy. This has to be addressed, because the current rules deny us help we desperately need. The unified response from the international community should extend to our small island circumstances. This means access to concessional finance and to innovative financial support, so that we too can prepare to recover from the economic crisis that the pandemic has brought. To rebuild the fiscal space for investing in sustainable development that the pandemic has wiped out.

We know that this pandemic is far from over. And small States cannot also be left out in the race to seek an effective vaccine. In a global community, parts of the world cannot be made safe in isolation. Vaccine hoarding will harm us all. Palau’s recovery from the economic crisis of COVID will not be possible without sharing in this process to develop a vaccine. As a result, Palau will be participating in the COVAX Facility being coordinated by GAVI and partners, as our best shot to pooling resources and supporting equitable access to a vaccine, if and when one becomes available. Meanwhile, we will also continue to work with our close friends in the United States, in close partnership with the US Centers for Disease Control.

We cannot let this individual threat distract us from the long-term threats we continue to face. Our long-term health, development and prosperity depend on repairing our relationship with nature. This is especially the case in responding to our ocean emergency. Marine pollution, overfishing and acidifying and warming seas are taking their toll on the health of our ocean. And our human prosperity depends on a healthy ocean.

At the beginning of this year, Palau reached a new milestone by implementing the Palau National Marine Sanctuary. We are protecting 80% of our Exclusive

Economic Zone as a no take protected area, echoing our ancient tradition of a “bul”, a moratorium on fishing in order to sustain fisheries for the long-term. And we will be developing an artisanal domestic fishing sector in the other 20% of our EEZ, to diversify our economy, sustain jobs and improve access to healthy seafood.

Palau is a large ocean state, and we are acting in accordance with our responsibilities for stewardship over our EEZ. But the ocean covers the majority of our planet’s surface. We hope that Palau’s actions will inspire ambition elsewhere. We are all ocean people, even if we do not live near coasts. All of humanity depends on the ocean for food, for climate regulation, for trade, for security, and for so much more.

The High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which I co-chair, has been building a blueprint for this ocean ambition. While the Panel’s work has been underway long prior to the pandemic, its analysis highlights how investments in key ocean economy sectors provide a way to “build back bluer” from the pandemic, with benefits for jobs, the environment, and human health. These include protecting coastal and marine ecosystems such as mangroves; investing in sewage and wastewater infrastructure for coastal communities, and in zero emission marine transport.

At the end of this year, the Ocean Panel will launch our recommendations on transformative actions that we need to take to transition to a sustainable ocean economy. We cannot let this opportunity to rebalance production and ocean protection escape us.

To complement these actions, it is also vital that negotiations on a high seas treaty are completed next year. We need to close this governance gap on the high seas, so that we are able to effectively protect the ocean beyond national jurisdiction.

Additionally, at next year’s Convention on Biological Diversity COP15, the ocean must also not be neglected. The Global Biodiversity Outlook released last week starkly warns that we have not been successful in reaching the targets set forward a decade ago in Aichi. Significant implementation gaps remain. As we set a new framework for the conservation of nature over the next decade, we need to act with greater urgency, and with greater solidarity for implementation of these targets in developing countries.

At least 30% of the ocean needs to be protected by 2030. The role of coral reefs also needs to be appropriately recognized. But for this framework to be effective, it must learn the lessons of the past decade: that goals must be supported by adequate resources.

While the climate COP26 may also have been delayed by the pandemic, this cannot delay increased climate ambition, and support for the implementation of increased ambition. Responding to the climate emergency is of existential concern, and the momentary drop in emissions this year cannot be allowed to generate any complacency about global progress. The climate finance commitments made by developed countries cannot be shirked during this pandemic, because to do so is to undermine the ability of the most vulnerable to mitigate and adapt to climate impacts. The Green Climate Fund needs to continue its work on simplified access for the most vulnerable, such as small island developing states.

In Palau, our preparations to reach our NDC target of 45% renewable energy generation are progressing. Solar power and a supporting microgrid will soon reduce



our miniscule emissions, but also serve as a form of adaptation, increase our energy security and resilience, and reduce the volatilities of imported fossil fuels. With the right support in implementation, we can go further in bringing forward an enhanced NDC before COP26. We are ready for the energy transition in Palau. But we need the right partnerships to deliver on our ambition.

As the current impacts of the climate emergency worsen, they are generating more security threats to vulnerable countries, especially small island states. We welcome Germany's initiative to convene a Security Council debate on the climate emergency this year. We reiterate the call of the Pacific island states for the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Climate and Security to integrate these concerns into the Council's agenda.

Time and time again, Palau has emphasized the need for effective partnerships to support sustainable development. This is especially true as we begin the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs, and it is the unique role of the United Nations to facilitate these partnerships. Our guiding frameworks, such as the SAMOA Pathway have already been agreed. What is needed is the support for implementation.

In Palau, a tangible expression of this support is in the partnerships with multiple friends for infrastructure development in our "Global Village" conference facilities in Koror. These facilities have been progressively upgraded over the past year, in partnership with UNOPS, and which I will officially open next week. Durable, quality infrastructure is a cornerstone of sustainable development. While Palau is an island, the partnerships that have made this Global Village possible remind us about the solidarity shown by friends all over the world.

Since my first address to the General Assembly as President in 2001, I have reiterated Palau's call for Taiwan to be allowed to participate in international organizations. We regret that this was denied again at this year's World Health Assembly. At the very moment when the world needed to come together to respond to the pandemic, we failed to do so. And I do mean that we failed. Taiwan, a public health leader that has implemented one of world's most effective pandemic responses, was left out of the global response to this pandemic, and that made the world less safe.

In this pandemic, Taiwan has generously shared its experience and expertise with Palau, including critical support for establishing on-island testing capabilities, and PPE procurement. The effectiveness of Taiwan's control over the pandemic has been recognized by many others, and if included in international health coordination mechanisms, can also share these lessons with the rest of the world. As such, Taiwan is one of the only places on earth that is safe enough for quarantine-free travel with COVID-free nations like Palau. And we are currently working together to create the world's first safe bubble economy.

On many other international issues and organizations, such as in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the International Civil Aviation Organization, Taiwan can also make meaningful contributions to strengthening collective action. Taiwanese residents and journalists have been unjustly barred from accessing UN premises, limiting their ability to engage with the UN's agenda and work. We urge others in this Assembly to join us in recognizing that Taiwan Can Help in responding to so many of our shared challenges. This includes in implementing the 2030 Agenda, where we often underline the need to leave no-one behind. The

23.5 million people of Taiwan should not be left behind, and it is time for Taiwan's exclusion to end.

Palau, of course, holds a special relationship with the United States. Palau's bond with the United States is written in its Compact of Free Association, but it is written even more deeply in shared history, shared culture, and common values. We share the American priorities and values of freedom, democracy, individual rights, and a rules-based international order. In these turbulent times, we share its firm commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific, which we reaffirmed by hosting the US Secretary of Defense last month. We seek new opportunities to deepen this relationship for mutual benefit, including for the purposes of regional security and diversifying our economic activities.

The enduring friendship of Palau and the United States is an advertisement for the rules based-international order. In a rules-based international order, states of all sizes, all cultures, and all regions can thrive together.

This commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region is also shared with Japan, which has been a historic partner, and a historic development partner, of Palau. Japan's technical assistance to Palau, especially in infrastructure development, reaches every corner of Palau, and we look forward to this continuing under their new government. I want to express a personal note of thanks to Prime Minister Abe, who has been a consistent friend of Palau and our region, and to wish him a healthy recovery. Japan's ocean initiatives, especially on marine plastic litter, also show a commitment to transitioning towards a sustainable ocean economy.

We were delighted to welcome Australia's first resident Ambassador to Palau earlier this year. Now, as I speak, Australia's commitment to regional security is being demonstrated through the training and handover of the PSS Remeliik II, a new contribution to our coast guard as part of Australia's Pacific Maritime Security Program.

In the past few years, South-South cooperation has also taken on increased importance for Palau. In particular, the Government of India, through the India-UN Development Partnership Fund, and in partnership with the UN Office for South-South Cooperation and UNOPS, has provided invaluable support to improving our healthcare system, as well as a rapid response to pandemic preparations.

Our Global South partners continue to expand, with a new award to Palau from India, Brazil and South Africa's Poverty Reduction Facility, to support the revitalization of education facilities. This solidarity between some of the world's largest states, and Palau, one of the world's smallest, is a powerful demonstration of a commitment towards the UN's values and the vision of the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. President,

As one of the youngest members of this organization since we gained our independence in 1994, Palau's lived experience tells us about the importance of multilateralism. In this 75th anniversary year of the United Nations, we know that this multilateralism is fragile, precious, and must be actively defended. All have a part to play in it, and no-one can opt-out if we are to all benefit from it.

As the leader of a small state, I am proud of Palau's contribution to the United Nations and our multilateral agenda. To building consensus around shared norms, and to actively participating in our shared institutions. We were among

the first countries to ratify the Paris Agreement and the Nuclear Ban Treaty, after actively contributing to their negotiation. We were champions of a standalone goal on oceans in the 2030 Agenda, and of including tobacco control among the targets for Goal 4 on health. We have emphasized the critical value of partnerships for sustainable development and peace. The sovereign equality that each of us exercise in this Assembly is a responsibility that we take seriously. And I hope that you will agree that Palau has lived up to this responsibility.

This has been my final contribution to our annual General Debate. But be in no doubt that Palau's contributions to the work of the UN is just beginning.

Thank you, and Kom kmal mesulang.

**Moldova** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 13)

**Address by Mr. Igor Dodon, President of the Republic of Moldova**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Mr. Secretary General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Allow me to congratulate Mr. Volkan Bozkır on his election as President of the current session of the General Assembly and to wish him every success in his important term.

At the same time, I express my appreciation to Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for the activity he performed as the President of the previous session.

Mr. President,

Our participation in the proceedings of the General Assembly session is a privilege, even though the pandemic forces us to switch to the virtual regime. I believe the current session of the Assembly provides a good opportunity to celebrate together the 75th Anniversary of the creation of the United Nations and to reaffirm our common commitment to the values and principles enshrined in the UN Charter.

Some politicians paraphrased Voltaire, saying that if the United Nations did not exist, it should have to be invented. We fully subscribe.

Seen in retrospect of 75 years of its activity, the UN proved that it has no alternative globally, neither in terms of legitimacy and normative impact, nor in terms of its full engagement in solving international problems and crises, the way it had been emphasized in the recently adopted Declaration of celebration.

We hope that with the fulfilment of the reform package, especially of those targeting the UN development system, the Organization will give dynamism to our efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I take this opportunity to personally thank the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for the launching and implementation of these complex reforms, which redefine the role and weight of the UN in the contemporary world. From this perspective, we consider it important to state during this session the continuous commitment and firm support of the Republic of Moldova for the United Nations.

Mr. President,

We live the challenge of an unprecedented year considering its breadth, complexity, and number of lasting crises. The coronavirus pandemic became one of the biggest challenges after the Second World War, triggering the current global crisis. The pandemic affected every country, generating devastating economic, social and political effects.

The Government of the Republic of Moldova, with the support of development partners, has focused on immediate priorities meant to support the healthcare system by purchasing essential medical equipment and materials. The fight against COVID-19 requires coordinated and transparent action at the global level. We also emphasize the importance of enhanced international cooperation, with manifested solidarity. We support the imperative need to ensure an universal access to treatment and vaccines, when they become available.

In the light of the above, we reiterate that the Republic of Moldova fully supports the agenda of the UN Secretary-General through the UN Global Crisis Response Plan, targeting the most disadvantaged social groups. We also welcome the creation of the Special Fund to support response and recovery measures for the fight against COVID-19 of low- and middle-income states, as a critical tool in addressing the crisis of the national healthcare systems and the economic and social consequences caused by virus.

Mr. President,

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains in our common focus and has an important roadmap towards a prosperous and peaceful world, where everyone can enjoy one's rights, living a decent life in safety.

After five years of implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, the Republic of Moldova presented, in July, the first Voluntary National Report, which represented an exercise to map progress, challenges, and opportunities, to identify solutions and to accelerate its development.

By increasing the degree of prosperity, through the efforts of territorial reintegration of the country, by consolidating the rule of law, modernizing the social and economic infrastructure, we will generate, consequently, multiple opportunities for assertion, opportunities for involvement and active participation of every citizen.

Over the last year we managed to achieve positive changes in the fight against corruption and we keep on working effectively on the justice reform – these are essential elements to ensure the much-needed momentum for our advancement. In order to increase the social protection of the citizens, we resorted to the indexation of pensions and allowances twice a year. The ambitious national road infrastructure rehabilitation program is in full swing. The recently initiated constitutional reform also aims at ensuring the sustainable development of the Republic of Moldova.

I use this opportunity to express the deep concern of the Republic of Moldova in relation to the climate change and natural cataclysms. Our country fully shares the opinion that the conservation and rational use of biodiversity, especially the equitable distribution of benefits from the exploitation of genetic resources, are indispensable tools in advancing the implementation of the Agenda for Sustainable Development-2030 and the Vision for Biodiversity-2050.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

This year we mark the 25th anniversary of the World Conference on Women in Beijing under the sign of action for inclusion and equality. The Republic of Moldova, along with 189 other nations, has adopted the General Declaration and Platform for Action on the Status of Women and their Equal Participation in All Areas of Public and Private Life.

Thus, we initiated several important reforms to ensure decent working conditions, eradicate poverty, expand social services for women, protect the health of the mother and child, strengthening the child protection system, building a peaceful and inclusive society.

The Republic of Moldova achieved a significant progress in terms of women's participation in the decision-making process. Our national law-making body and other important executive state institutions are currently led by women. The Republic of Moldova will continue to invest in human capital as a condition for progress.

Distinguished audience,

Conflicts and crises of varying intensity continue to be a threat to peace, security, and development around the world. The Republic of Moldova supports the UN Secretary General's call for a global ceasefire. In the context of a global crisis, armed conflicts aggravate the situation and intensify the destructive effect of the armament race.

At the same time, the Republic of Moldova expresses a deep concern regarding the scale of the armament race through the excessive accumulation of conventional weapons and nuclear weapon modernization programs. We regret the persistent uncertainty of the situation related to the existing disarmament and control agreements of strategic armaments. On the background of emergence and escalation of increasing armed conflicts, we note globally enlarged military spendings and the weapons trading. In this respect, the international climate, marked by the use and threat of use of force, accentuates the insecurity of the international environment.

Over recent years, the Republic of Moldova has expanded its contribution to the peacekeeping process, fully ensuring the substitution of the positions allocated to our country in international peacekeeping missions, in strict compliance with gender criteria and in the spirit of the Security Council resolution on Women, Peace and Security.

In this context, we believe that the UN Security Council, in particular its permanent members, must prove a greater responsibility and commitment to the objectives and principles of the Organization.

Mr. President,

We are witnessing interventions into the security balance in the world and, especially, in the Eastern Europe, where the Republic of Moldova is located. Despite our efforts, we note the lack of tangible progress in overcoming lasting conflicts.

Since 1992, both within the UN and OSCE, as well as within other international platforms, the Republic of Moldova constantly addressed the issue of the Transnistrian conflict settlement. Despite our efforts, we must certify that the Transnistrian conflict still remains unresolved. The reasons could be explained by the lack of appropriate political will of some actors involved, by the existence of "underwater" economic interests of some circles in different countries of the region we belong to, but also by the strongly pronounced geopolitical character of the Transnistrian problem.

In this regard, we emphasize the importance of a constructive approach of all actors engaged in the well-known 5+2 format and mandated to identify the final solution to the conflict. I am convinced that the guarantor states and the observers will put further efforts to quickly identify a comprehensive, peaceful, and viable

solution. It will be based upon respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova within the internationally recognized borders, with the adoption of a special status for the Transnistrian region and the guaranteed political, economic and social rights of the population in this region.

Over the recent years, we have focused on issues that require priority actions. These include ensuring and guaranteeing free movement throughout the country, creating a single economic space and promoting confidence-building measures.

We regret that the pandemic generated by COVID-19 has created new obstacles to the free movement of people, goods and services between the two banks of the Nistru river. They have a negative impact on human rights, strain the situation in the Security Zone, and delay progress in the negotiation process.

The adoption of a final political decision and the signing of relevant documents on complete settlement of the Transnistrian conflict is to be based exclusively on initiatives and proposals formulated directly by the Republic of Moldova, but not on those developed abroad. Therefore, we will put all the necessary efforts to ensure that a first draft of the Basic Parameters and Principles of the final settlement model is developed quickly and submitted in the first half of the upcoming year to all participants and stakeholders of the 5+2 format to be discussed and, deeply hoping, to find the common denominator for a solution of the conflict.

In this context, we call for a strengthened UN cooperation with the OSCE in managing peacekeeping operations, ensuring respect for and promoting fundamental human rights in conflict regions, facilitating mediation and conflict resolution. We rely very much on OSCE as a stabilizing factor at the regional level.

At the same time, we believe that the necessary preconditions exist for the resumption of the bilateral dialogue with the Russian Federation in order to identify a solution regarding the Cobasna stores. About 20 thousand tons of already obsolete ammunition remain stationed on the territory of the Republic of Moldova.

We are fully aware of the fact that the restoration of the territorial integrity and the functioning of the Republic of Moldova as a unitary and indivisible body are decisive in building of a modern, prosperous, and successful state.

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen

Historically, the Moldovan state had an important feature: our country was formed on the crossroads of various civilizations, cultures, languages, religions, and geopolitical interests. Therefore, the multi-ethnic, multicultural nature of the country's development has been and remains the main feature of Moldova. A respectful, good-neighbourly attitude towards the linguistic differences of other ethnic groups has become the basis of existence of the Moldovan state and an important condition for its successful development. Living in peace and harmony on this land, representatives of different cultures, languages of communication and confessions have been working for the good and strengthening of the country, contributing to the development of Moldovan statehood for more than 660 years.

For my part, as President, I want to emphasize the leadership of Moldova is making every effort to preserve the atmosphere of friendliness, mutual assistance and respect for people of different ethnic origins, languages and religions in our country. As a result, almost every citizen of Moldova speaks several languages fluently, constantly discovers the peculiarities of the culture of different peoples, the



Russian language has a special status as a language of interethnic communication, and this is an unconditional competitive advantage for realizing the capabilities of our citizens in the modern world.

We also believe the Republic of Moldova can successfully develop as an independent, sovereign, democratic, rule-of-law state actively pursuing a policy of permanent neutrality, based on desire of the Moldovan people for peaceful coexistence with other peoples and states of Europe and the world. We are confident that the permanent neutrality of Moldova, enshrined in the current Constitution, is the basis of our national, energy and information security, a guarantee of sustainable, long-term economic development and prosperity of the country.

We are sincerely grateful to the United Nations, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and other international organizations and partners that consistently support the Republic of Moldova. The dynamic development of Moldova with the assistance and large-scale support of international partners will contribute to strengthening the dialogue between the countries of our region and Europe as a whole.

Mr. President,

Three years ago, I declared a balanced foreign policy as an important condition for ensuring the sustainable development of the Republic of Moldova.

Moldova is a small country with a peaceful people. Obviously, there's no way we may try to fight someone. We want to work to quickly modernize our country and maintain mutually beneficial relations with the entire international community. Being a neutral state, we will not engage in the support of one state against another. Respectively, we do not admit to joining sanctions against our partners for development. I reiterate that, according to the Constitution of the Republic of Moldova, we are a neutral state and, therefore, we will not join any political-military bloc, either in the West or in the East.

Over recent years, Moldova's foreign policy has been aimed at maintaining friendly relations and international partnerships, especially with our direct neighbours — Romania and Ukraine.

A balanced foreign policy is crucial for ensuring the sustainable development of the Republic of Moldova, protecting it from contemporary geopolitical fluctuations.

In the West, our political relations and cooperation with the EU are guided by the Association Agreement signed in 2014 on strengthening the rule of law, democratic institutions, respect for human rights. Naturally, the European Union is a strategic partner for the Republic of Moldova in all areas of state' and Moldovan society's life.

Indeed, Moldova is a European country due to its history and geographical position. We are an integral part of the Eastern European region. At the same time, the Republic of Moldova has a pronounced interference with the Eurasian space. By signing in 2018 the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Eurasian Economic Union, the Republic of Moldova obtained observer status in this organization — a fact that allows us to follow closely the evolution and prospects of this promising regional organisation. Over recent years we have managed to restore the strategic partnership with the Russian Federation.



Thus, one of our priorities is developing good political and economic cooperation with partners within the free trade areas of the European Union and Commonwealth of Independent States.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

The 75th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations gives us a special opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to the goals and principles of the Organization. At the same time, the unity in action, solidarity and international cooperation, intensified in the fight against COVID-19, will help us cope with this important test of humanity's resilience.

Thank you!

**Algeria** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 14)

**Address by Mr. Abdelmadjid Tebboune, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Arabic]

In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate

Mr. President of the General Assembly, Mr. Secretary-General, Your Majesties, Your Honours, Your Highnesses, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to address this august Assembly on behalf of a new Algeria that is eager to build a democratic system that reflects the aspirations of its people. Indeed, the Algerian people have proven themselves to be exemplary in the defence of the values of freedom and justice.

At the outset, I would like to express my wishes to His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkir as he assumes the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, following His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, who ably managed the previous session. I also wish to commend the tireless efforts of Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Our Organization, which was founded in the wake of a horrific human tragedy, has experienced both successes and failures in the face of an increasing number of various international challenges. Those challenges have revealed many flaws in the international system, especially in light of the current health circumstances.

Our belief in the need for a strong international organization leads us to reaffirm the necessity to advance the comprehensive reform of our Organization in order to improve its performance and enhance its efficiency. In that regard, Algeria reiterates its adherence to the position of the African Union in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. We call upon the need for reaching prompt solutions through intergovernmental negotiations on the issue of equitable representation in the Security Council and expanding its membership, *inter alia*.

In the fifty-eight years since it became a State Member of the United Nations, my country has endeavoured to defend international peace and security through its foreign policy based on the principles of promoting peaceful solutions to conflicts, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, respect for their sovereignty and unity, while respecting the rights of peoples to self-determination and to manage their resources. We are proud of the results we have achieved, which further affirm that Algerian diplomacy has played a central role in the resolution of many arduous crises along with regional and international conflicts. Our foreign policy continues to be aimed at serving that noble objective.

Based on that approach, Algeria has worked — and will continue to work — on rapprochement between the stakeholders in Libya. We call on our Libyan brothers to engage constructively in the political process under the auspices of the United Nations in order to overcome the current crisis and meet the aspirations of the Libyan people. We condemn any foreign intervention that undermines the

sovereignty of the country. Algeria welcomes the recently announced ceasefire and calls on the parties to translate it into actions without delay.

My country is closely following the delicate situation in Mali, our neighbour and brother, and looks forward to a swift restoration of the constitutional order through a consensus-based transition that enshrines the will and aspirations of the Malian people for security, stability and development. We are convinced that the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, borne out of the Algiers process, remains the ideal framework for tackling the challenges of political governance and economic development in Mali with the wise and sincere support of the international community.

Turning now to the Palestinian Question, which remains the sacred and main issue to Algeria and its people, we wish to reiterate our steadfast support for the Palestinian people in their just cause and inalienable rights. We call for the establishment of their independent, sovereign State with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital. We believe that resolving the Palestinian question is key to stability in the Middle East.

With regard to Western Sahara, we regret the obstacles hindering a settlement to the issue, in particular the stalled negotiations between the two parties to the conflict and delays in appointing a new envoy for Western Sahara.

Algeria calls for the implementation of relevant Security Council resolutions, especially those concerning the holding of a self-determination referendum in Western Sahara, which has been postponed for over 29 years; the swift appointment of an envoy of the Secretary-General; and the resumption of negotiations between the two parties to the conflict, aimed at fulfilling the aspirations of the peoples of the Maghreb and Africa for development and integration.

Algeria renews its commitment to fighting terrorism and violent extremism, which it considers to be a grave threat to peace, security and development in the world. We call for promoting international cooperation against corruption and money-laundering while implementing the relevant international agreements, in particular those concerning the retrieval of funds stolen from the people.

In line with our commitment to fostering and strengthening international peace and security, my country is actively involved in international efforts in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. Algeria has suffered and continues to be severely affected by the nuclear tests that were conducted on its territory during colonial rule.

The complete elimination of nuclear weapons remains, in our view, the only way to rid humankind of the risks such weapons pose. Algeria also attaches a great deal of importance to environmental issues and renews its commitment to all relevant agreements. Despite our limited resources, we are also making great efforts at the national level in that regard, for example by including environmental aspects in State public policies. Turning to the historic responsibility of developed countries on this issue, we renew our call for strengthened technical and financial support for developing countries in order to address the environmental threats they are facing.

Algerian women took part in the national revolution for liberation and anti-terrorism. They have played a pivotal role in the national reconstruction process promoted by Algeria, which also pays particular attention to young people and their participation in public life.

The difficult circumstances imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic have not deterred Algeria from striving to implement the Sustainable Development Goals. In that connection, my country is currently finalizing a national framework for indicators to measure the progress made towards achieving those Goals. We are also working on integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into our annual budgetary laws in the near term and creating a legal framework aimed at facilitating and enhancing the work of all stakeholders involved in that process.

Algeria is steadily making progress towards strengthening the pillars of democracy, the rule of law and social justice following a democratic change achieved by a peaceful and civilized protest movement, resulting in presidential elections held in December 2019. Those elections reaffirmed the sovereignty of the Algerian people and its freedom to choose and to make its own decisions. Algeria has made great strides in its political, economic and social reforms in recent months, despite the challenging health situation, in order to build a new, strong, secure and prosperous Algeria.

In that context, Algeria will organize a referendum to be held on 1 November on the draft reform of the Constitution in order to determine the foundations of a democratic political system that will guarantee the protection of rights and freedoms and ensure a balance between the various branches of government. The chosen date is highly symbolic and represents our respect for the sacrifices of the martyrs who died so that a free and independent Algeria could live.

In conclusion, I would like to appeal for unity and solidarity so that we may overcome our differences and tackle the difficult situation the world is facing in order to enable our countries and our peoples to continue on the path towards stability, security and development.

I thank you for your kind attention. May peace and God's mercy and blessings be upon you.

**Honduras** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 15)**Address by Mr. Juan Orlando Hernández Alvarado, President of the Republic of Honduras**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Spanish]

Heads of State and Government,

Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the United Nations General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session,

Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Greetings to you all.

Seventy-five years ago, 51 countries signed the Charter of the United Nations, hoping to rid the world of war and ensure respect for the dignity and fundamental rights of people with justice, social progress and freedom.

As a founding Member State, Honduras has supported these lofty goals from the very beginning.

We were all moved by the consequences of the two great World Wars and sought, back then, to show the best of our human species by uniting in this global forum, creating this Organization, which is the largest international organization in the world today. In the same way, now that we are immersed in a new global crisis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we must seek new ideas and new consensus and to be more creative and wiser in order to make the purposes and principles set forth in 1945 a reality.

I myself, as a survivor of this disease and as a leader of a developing nation struggling to beat the pandemic, would like to express our concern about the consequences of the emergency situation we are grappling with today. The multifaceted impact of the crisis has affected our generation in an unprecedented way in terms of health, education, migration, basic services, human rights and the economy, particularly in those most vulnerable countries. That has caused great social damage, with medicine and food shortages and job losses, and now the monumental task of rebuilding our economies looms. We must maintain the balance between protecting health and prioritizing life. We must restore confidence in our peoples, who are asking themselves “What next?”

These global crises are likely to continue, along with social unrest around the world, not only due to the threat of greater public health problems but by conflicts over land ownership, food, water and political ideologies, inter alia.

Before I continue to address this issue, which is our main focus here today, I would like to speak about certain notable achievements worth mentioning that we as a Government have realized together with the Honduran people:

Today, Honduras has managed to reduce the number of violent deaths by almost 60 per cent. Not only have we ceased to be one of the most violent countries in the world but, by joining forces, for the first time in history we have been able to

confront our internal fearsome criminal and bloodthirsty structures, despite them having sufficient muscle and economic power to destabilize a nation. We did so without fear and fully aware of what we were dealing with.

Honduras wishes to acknowledge and express its gratitude to the United Nations system for its support in our struggle to protect our people — one of the many crucial areas in which we have worked together. I take this opportunity to remind you of our request in recent years for non-State organized groups, such as gangs and drug traffickers, to be recognized by the United Nations as terrorist groups.

Over the past 75 years, we have heard magnificent orators in this forum and great speeches written by the top intellectuals from every country; we have seen great leaders in their finest attire speaking the best turns of phrase; however, we have not been able to avoid wars, prevent inequality, eradicate poverty or eliminate many endemic or epidemic diseases.

Over the past 75 years, I do not believe that we have fully achieved the altruistic goals set out when this Organization was created, not least all the purposes and principles that were established in 1945.

The pandemic has laid bare the true inequality that exists in our world. At a time when we are all looking to acquire medicines, hospital supplies, equipment or the much sought-after vaccines, only a few countries will be first in line with broad access to them — and they will not be those most in need.

We have also seen how, when medicine is in short supply, the producing country withholds production. The same thing happens with medical equipment: in some countries, production has been appropriated for their exclusive use, while sales to other countries are prohibited. What about all the other nations? Will people just be left to die? What about the vaccines? Who will have access to them? Is there already a list of countries for that?

In our particular case, we received certain recommendations from the World Health Organization at the beginning of the pandemic that we considered to be most timely and useful. Support from the PAHO in relation to the acquisition of medical supplies and equipment also served us well, but there were occasions on which we did not agree with their recommendations, for instance when we were told that the use of face masks was unnecessary. Nevertheless, we decided to provide masks to our entire population and continued to make our own decisions based on our own experience.

We consider our doctors and health workers, who have been fighting this pandemic on the front lines, to be heroes. They have risked their lives and worked tirelessly on a daily basis over the past six months. Precisely on the basis of their experience, they have been able to identify some medicines that, in practice, have yielded promising results and are cheap and freely available in our country. Thanks to two treatments in particular, known as MAIZ and CATRACHO per their Spanish acronyms, we have been able to reduce the mortality rate from 9 per cent at the beginning of the pandemic to 3 per cent or lower. Furthermore, thanks to the Fuerza Honduras programme, which helped to provide each municipality with the required medical equipment and logistical support, we have been able to offer free health care to those in need through stabilization and triage centres, as well as medical teams conducting home visits.

We will never tire of thanking our heroes fighting on the front line: our doctors, our health workers and our security and relief personnel.

When technology and science exist to anticipate certain situations, especially if information concerning a global health threat is available, then that information must be shared with all countries in a transparent and timely manner, thereby preventing such information from being manipulated to benefit the interests of particular nations. For example, it was very helpful for our doctors to receive and share information from and with doctors in Europe and the Americas. Had this not happened, we would have considered it a crime against humanity. It is also the obligation of all States participating in the system to put such sensitive information with a direct impact on human life at the service of the world, whether through the World Health Organization or directly to other countries.

If the pandemic does not change our attitude towards others, then nothing will. The virus has attacked us all equally — it does not discriminate between rich and poor. The disease has reminded us in the harshest way that, in the end, we are all vulnerable humans, members of the same species, even if we speak in different languages, wear different clothes or live in different parts of the world. That is something upon which we must reflect.

I also believe, with all due respect, that it is high time we review the entire United Nations system. We must urgently seek its greater efficiency and effectiveness so that it may achieve the purposes for which it exists.

This Organization must generate the knowledge and information necessary to prepare us for what lies ahead. We need a permanent, forward-looking analysis, with the best resources and technology, so that we do not continue blindly moving forward. Our peoples deserve equal access to health, technology, information and education. In view of what is happening today, it is imperative that the Sustainable Development Goals agreed upon in 2015 be revised, updated and reconsidered in line with the new reality we are experiencing today.

Meanwhile, we must strive to avoid excessive and inefficient bureaucracies. For example, at the beginning of the pandemic, we sought the support of the United Nations Development Programme in launching a digital wallet project that would allow us to make transparent economic transfers to those most in need of an income in our country. Several months have now passed and, although I spoke personally with some of the system's senior official, the process has not yet been completed and those affected are still awaiting assistance.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The events of the past, present and future have been, are and will be highly contingent upon climate change. New epidemics arise from changes in the environment, as do the scarcity of resources and hunger. They all share a common genesis in a lack of respect for nature and the plundering of our natural resources. It is now necessary that we move from theory to facts and from fine, eloquent words to hard-hitting statements of reality: climate change has been an emergency for several years and yet the famous Green Climate Fund funding is nowhere to be found.

We have been seeking and waiting for that funding for several years now, to no avail. By the way, does anyone know where it is, or why it has not materialized? Why has that funding not reached the countries that need it most, like ours?

I wish to recall that Honduras is one of the three most vulnerable countries to the effects of climate change in the world. Every year, we are affected by drought, heavy rainfall and floods and diseases that damage our crops, such as coffee and grain, which have severely suffered in recent years as a result of extreme weather. That has had a terrible impact on the economy and the health of our people. Coffee prices, for example, are now improving a little in comparison with previous years, but that demonstrates only the volatility of a sector that is the livelihood of millions of families in the world.

An illustrious citizen of the world once said: "Insanity is doing always the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

We must do something soon to translate words into deeds and rhetoric into action in that and all other areas. Is no one bothered by this? Is no one's conscience troubled that, year after year, things remain the same? It bothers me! I am certain that I am not the only one who is troubled and uneasy, and for everyone's sake, I must say that we still have time.

Mr. Secretary-General,

Climate change, natural disasters and epidemics affect our economy, and those problems are not always the fault of small countries, but, by affecting the economy, they prevent us from complying with the parameters imposed on us by financial bodies. It is only fair that such events and phenomena be taken into account so that the most vulnerable and poorest countries are not be punished with bad ratings. Tailored focus must be provided to address to their specific needs, as well as unique approaches to achieve economic and social growth.

It is time for us to talk seriously about the financial relief that we must receive from our international creditors, by which I mean the multilateral lending agencies. So far, they have not been up to the task of dealing with this colossal tragedy and the response needed for financing, establishing moratoriums and addressing the collapse of our economies has been poor.

As we believe that it is necessary not only to provide criticism, but also solutions concerning a comparable global challenge, we respectfully propose that the Secretary-General convene a select group of world leaders, who have been successful in the areas of economic development, health-care systems, education, small businesses, and applying technology to the new reality facing the world, among others, to help create a plan or a road map. If we all succeed, we all win.

It will only be then that the United Nations System will be able to say that it rose to the occasion and that our generation will have served our children and our children's children.

Farewell.



**Lebanon** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 16)

**Address by General Michel Aoun, President of the Lebanese Republic**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

Your Excellency, Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the General Assembly,

Your Excellency, Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations,

Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me to thank you, Mr. President, for chairing this historic seventy-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly. I would have loved to congratulate you in person rather than through the video-teleconference technique that was imposed on us by the current global health situation. I would also like to extend my acknowledgment to H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande my recognition of his efforts in directing the last session of the General Assembly, especially with the disruption of the organization's work as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak.

I wish to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, for his continuous efforts as head of this international organization, and for his endeavors to support Lebanon after the Beirut Port explosion on August 4. He organized the Beirut Support Conference on 9 August, to mobilize donor pledges and provide basic relief assistance, at the commendable initiative of French President and friend Emmanuel Macron. Moreover, on my own behalf and on behalf of the Lebanese people, I wish to extend our thanks to all Heads of State who participated in the conference and offered support, as well as to all brotherly and friendly countries, governmental and non-governmental organizations, which rushed to provide aid and assistance.

In particular, I wish to thank His Holiness Pope Francis, who dedicated a universal day of prayer for Lebanon. All of his assistance has had a huge positive impact on our country and our people. Practically, it provided urgent medical and food relief, along with reconstruction materials. Morally, his great solidarity made our people feel that they are not alone, but rather have in this world brothers and sisters in humanity who did not hesitate to support it.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Beirut is trying today to rise from its ruins. Indeed, with the solidarity of all the Lebanese people and your support, it will heal its wounds and rise as it has done over and over again throughout history. The earthquake-like explosion that hit our capital left a deep scar on the Lebanese conscience. Indeed, the pictures of the victims, the pain of the injured, and the tears of those who lost a beloved one, will never be wiped away.

Material damages are unprecedented. The Port of Beirut, the vital crossing for economic activity in Lebanon, was not only destroyed, but around 200,000 residential units were also damaged. Many of them are uninhabitable. Almost 300,000 people

lost their homes, with winter approaching. In addition, the infrastructure, the power grid and the water network have been tremendously devastated.

The fallout will not only affect economic activity, but will also cause a sharp increase in poverty rates — already at 45 per cent before the blast. The World Bank estimated economic losses from the explosion at around \$3.5 billion, material losses at around \$4.5 billion, and urgent reconstruction needs at around \$2 billion.

Beirut was declared a disaster-stricken city. The Lebanese Army has undertaken the management of emergency relief in collaboration with other UN agencies, the Red Cross, licensed NGOs, and volunteers.

It has conducted survey operations to determine the damages and assess needs and priorities. The Army received local and international aid, sorted it, and distributed it. It has been very keen on adopting the strictest criteria of probity and transparency.

As for the next phase, the Army is dedicated to reconstruction. Its advanced emergency cell oversees the reconstruction of the partially affected residential and commercial units. However, the greatest problem is the totally demolished neighborhoods and facilities. There is a tremendous need for support from the international community to rebuild them. The soundest solution may be to divide the devastated area into geographical zones and let every country that wishes to help commit to a specific zone and undertake its reconstruction directly.

In the course of the investigation, all Lebanese want to know the truth and see justice done. We have forwarded the blast file to the Judicial Council, the highest penal judicial body in Lebanon. A judicial investigator has been appointed and is carrying out his probes and procedures. Immediately after the blast, we asked for international technical assistance to help provide us with satellite pictures at the moment of explosion, discover the itinerary and history of the ammonium, nitrate-loaded vessel from its departure to its arrival at the Beirut Port, and analyze the soil, materials, and anything else that might unveil what happened. Indeed, teams came from several countries and conducted the necessary research. We are still waiting for information about the mystery of the ship and for satellite pictures to clear the ambiguities in this part of the investigation. The results will end up in the Judicial Council under Lebanese sovereign jurisdiction.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lebanon is in the middle of an unprecedented crisis. Calamities have erupted all at once — a severe recession due to the economic and financial situation, the COVID-19 crisis and its repercussions, and finally the Beirut Port disaster. Lebanon's very core has been stricken from both a humanitarian and economic point of view. The situation is extremely critical.

In addition, the Syrian displacement crisis has been lingering for ten years. Although Lebanon is not an asylum country, and its Constitution does not accept final settlement, it has dealt with the displacement problem based on humanitarian principles and international law, in particular the principle of non-refoulement.

Nevertheless, today, amidst Lebanon's successive crises, the number of displaced amounts to one-third of its population. The displacement has exacerbated the economic, social, health and humanitarian problems of the host community. Lebanon demands intensified endeavors for the safe and dignified return of the displaced, without linking it to a political solution in Syria, especially since most

of the Syrian territories have become safe. The Lebanese Government seeks help to implement the plan it had adopted for the return of the displaced Syrians now that circumstances for their return are more favorable.

Pending the desired return, and confirming the principle of common responsibility and burden sharing among States, Lebanon repeats its call on donor countries to honor their pledges and find a mechanism to follow-up on their commitments. The latter need to double their financial contributions, and provide direct assistance to Lebanese governmental institutions and host communities, in line with Lebanon's response plan adopted in collaboration with the United Nations.

Lebanon has made a commitment to the international community to carry out a package of administrative, financial and economic reforms aimed at facilitating the economic recovery to which we all aspire.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Lebanon welcomes the Security Council resolution extending the UNIFIL mandate, interpreting it as a strong and unifying message of support to preserve stability therein. It lauds UNIFIL's sacrifices and grants priority to preserving the safety of its personnel and ensuring their protection. Lebanon highly appreciates the close and continuous cooperation between the Force and the Lebanese Army.

In this context, Lebanon reiterates its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1701 (2006), because we believe that it will consolidate the foundations of stability and security in South Lebanon and benefits the entire region's stability. Any violation thereof will further complicate the situation. Therefore, Lebanon again calls on the international community to bind Israel to its full obligations in this respect. Israel must cease its land, sea and air violations of Lebanese sovereignty and stop trespassing in Lebanon's airspace, using it to strike Syrian territories. The international community must also urge Israel to cooperate fully with UNIFIL, demarcate what remains of the Blue Line, and immediately withdraw from Northern Ghajar, the Shebaa Farms and the Kfarshouba Hills.

Lebanon emphasizes its absolute and full rights in its territorial waters, its natural oil and gas resources, and all of its maritime borders according to international law. It looks forward to the role of the United Nations and the friendly countries to help ascertain its rights. It specifically requests US mediation for the necessary negotiations to define and delineate its maritime borders according to international law and in a manner which preserves Lebanon's sovereignty and rights to its resources.

Today, seventy-five years after the inception of the United Nations Organization, and in light of increased dialogue about solutions in the Middle East, we reiterate our attachment to the principles on which this organization was founded. Most notably, we commit to the inviolability of internationally recognized borders. We underscore that any negotiations, regardless of their formula or the party conducting them, must take into account sustainable solutions sponsored by concerned parties and in various UN resolutions, notably in Resolution 194, which guarantees Palestinian refugees the right of return. In this context, we would also like to recall the 2002 Beirut Peace Initiative.

On the first centenary of the proclamation of Greater Lebanon, we can only affirm that the Lebanese people, in all their diversities, continue to keep Lebanon great and unified, without division or partition.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is the first time in the history of the United Nations that the General Assembly session is held virtually because an invisible virus has prevented us from meeting together and has compelled us to communicate through the video-conference technique. There is no doubt. The world after Covid-19 will not be the same as before. We hope that it will be a more humane world. We all stand united in helplessness from the loss of loved ones and the lack of oxygen.

Lebanon and its people experienced great sympathy after disaster struck Beirut. Many countries and people rushed to express their solidarity and extend a helping hand. Perhaps our world has reclaimed its morality out of Lebanon's suffering, and that humanity has regained some of its stature in a materialistic world, which venerates the right of force and injustice.

The theme for this year's meeting is: "Reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism through multilateral action." This is an encouraging signal for the future we want and for the United Nations we need. It can be summarized with one expression: "Solidarity for good".

Thank you.

**Slovakia** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 17)

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

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Mr. Secretary General,

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our unusual gathering today proves that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic changed the world as we know it. But this online form is an evidence we can adapt and act.

75 years ago, this organization was built on a simple idea that the benefits of cooperation always prevail over selfishness and conflict. Today, we need this idea to become a reality more urgently than ever.

The COVID-19 pandemic has quickly become a truly global threat. And it is far from over. But we already learned a lesson: We cannot go back to business as usual.

The COVID crisis exposed our weaknesses and vulnerabilities. Those already on the brink of poverty have been left poor. Those with difficult access to health care have found themselves helpless. And those with limited access to education have lost their hope for better future. Even stable and developed states faced great economic and social difficulties.

One of the most important lessons that we learned during the first months of COVID-19 is that ordinary people can achieve extraordinary things if they are led by SOLIDARITY and compassion. People around the world understood that responsible behaviour can save lives, even if it meant limitation of their own comfort. That they need to take their share of responsibility in protecting themselves and the others. I would even dare to say that this pandemic crisis brought the best out of us.

It is our responsibility as leaders to apply the same among nations. That's why we need true globalization of compassion. In concrete terms: we must not allow the development and production of vaccine and medical supplies to become yet another global competition. Because these are essential, life-saving commodities. And as such, their provision should be a sign of humanity, not a matter of economic profit. That is why we need to share information and foster partnerships among scientists, manufacturers and governments. And to provide to vaccine to anyone on this planet, regardless, whether they can afford it or not.

If we are to be successful in averting any crisis, we need RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP. Because ultimately it is the responsibility of governments and political leaders to make decisions that are based on facts and knowledge, and not on political calculations or selfish interests of those in power. Because the opposite — incompetence, disinformation or populism — has fatal consequences.

Responsible leadership also means willingness to see the common global interest. To preserve the best of existing architecture of international organizations and

regimes of cooperation. Because these are often the drivers of effective solutions. I know that their work is not always perfect. But instead of resenting or defunding them, we need to find ways of how to improve them.

And finally, the TRUST. The confidence of citizens in what their governments are doing is right. People need to know that they are protected and are not lied to.

The guardians of these principles must be the free and independent media, renowned experts and scientists, and active civil society. And our responsibility is to create an environment where they can work freely. If we are to attack them, we undermine our own ability to solve problems collectively. And we make our societies more vulnerable, including to disinformation and hoaxes, which have proven to be especially dangerous when they are related to health issues.

That is why we must not allow any crisis to become an excuse for suppressing human rights and liberties. We must make sure that any limitations must be proportionate, time-limited and legally sound. And these principles must be applied universally.

Unfortunately, this is not always the case. Too often we see situations in the world, when people are intimidated, beaten or even threatened on their lives. Just as we recently saw in Belarus, or in the case of Alexei Navalnyj, and in many other cases. And only because they stood up for their rights. The spread of authoritarian disease is a threat to all of us.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is one more remarkable lesson from COVID-19. We often hear that certain changes are impossible, or that it takes years to make them. This time, it was different.

It is the experience of how much and how quickly we can achieve if only we are willing to realise the common threat, change our behaviour and work together in order to prevent it. If we did it vis-a-vis COVID-19, we can do it also when it comes to other global threats, as well.

Most notably the climate change, which is undoubtedly the greatest threat to our common future. Experts estimate, that by 2100 the climate change will be five times as deadly as COVID-19. We have been able to organize ourselves and create over 20 parallel teams worldwide to develop anti-COVID vaccine, because we lacked the so much needed knowledge. In climate change, we all know what to do. We just need to show a genuine will and act together, as one. To make it a real priority. And to let the science, innovations, but also solidarity and compassion lead the way.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let's make this lesson from COVID-19 the basis for our action in the future. Just like 75 years ago, the lesson of two world wars led to the universal commitment among nations to solve their disputes peacefully and to work together.

Let us renew this commitment among us, and even take it further — along the mentioned principles of solidarity, responsibility and trust, and with the same resolve to act as we have shown during the current pandemic. Then, we can change any threat — be it COVID-19 or climate change — into an opportunity for the benefit of all.

Thank you.

**Kenya** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 18)

**Address by Mr. Uhuru Kenyatta, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Defence Forces of the Republic of Kenya**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

President of the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly, H.E. Volkan Bozkir,

Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. António Guterres,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am, indeed, delighted to participate in this 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, despite the unusual circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Let me, take this opportunity Mr. President, to thank you and to congratulate you on your election and I wish you a productive and successful 75th session and assure you of Kenya's full as well as constructive support.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate your predecessor, H.E. Professor Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for ably steering the 74th Session of the General Assembly during this very very difficult season. He ensured that, notwithstanding the difficulties of the pandemic, the work of the United Nations continued.

Mr. President,

The 75th Anniversary is a moment to reflect on the journey that we have taken. It is a moment to introspect, to establish if the anchor still holds or if our community of nations has become unanchored by the challenges of our time.

This is an occasion to reflect on our world and its institutions; have our relations and institutions been refined by experience and the passage of time or have our institutions become battered and left not fit for purpose.

At 75, the United Nations is older than most of its Member States and more importantly older than over 96 per cent of our global population. A clear majority of the global population today cannot relate to the circumstances of its founding. Yes, the United Nations in its birth "brought rules and hope for a world in ruins" that was seven and a half decades ago, but what does it bring to the world today?

Seventy five years ago, delegates from fifty nations who had endured immense disruption and suffering, seized the opportunity to chart a bold new course for mankind. They were determined to save future generations from the scourge of war and in so doing they gifted us a timeless Charter that has remained our shared framework of international cooperation.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,



On this occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, “We the People of the United Nations” must rekindle the Idealism, Will and Spirit of the San Francisco conference that founded our great organization.

Today, mankind is confronted by complex, multifaceted and gravely serious challenges. Across the world, we are witnessing constant disruptions that are generating great anxiety, uncertainty and unpredictability. The COVID19 pandemic best defines the challenges of our time; a challenge that affects us all, a challenge that we can only overcome if each of us succeeds.

The COVID19 pandemic and other contemporary challenges including the climate and biodiversity crisis that we face, our growing geostrategic tensions, social as well as economic inequalities, the crisis of legitimacy and governance as well as the vulnerabilities of our digital world, have, indeed, redefined the imperative for multilateral action.

Kenya believes strongly that if we remain anchored in multilateralism and with unity of purpose, if we are much more agile in embracing change and positive transformations, if we remain rooted in a rule-based international system and act innovatively and selflessly, we can transcend our challenges and secure lasting peace and prosperity for all.

This firm persuasion is born of our own experience and evolution of as a nation.

Much like the United Nations, our country was founded on the ideals of liberty, unity, rule of law, democracy and participation of the people, grounded on human dignity, equity, social justice, inclusiveness, equality, human rights and good governance. I believe these are all shared global values and Kenya acknowledges that we have had our challenges in meeting this but that doesn’t change the vision that we have for the future.

All these issues have worked for us in our domestic context and I believe that they will serve the United Nations well and we are confident that our community of nations, can do far much more collectively than any one country could ever do alone.

Excellencies,

The theme for our 75th Assembly namely, “The Future that We Want; the United Nations that We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism”, is most appropriate and indeed timely. It speaks not only to the urgent need to review our actions at both the national and global levels, but also responds to the pressing demand for effective multilateral action, within a rule-based international system.

Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic should give fresh impetus to our collective efforts to strengthen international cooperation. This global pandemic has deepened unfortunately existing inequalities, hitting the poorest and most vulnerable communities the hardest. It has created an unprecedented synergy of challenges and demonstrated the limits of our institutions.

There is, therefore, an urgent need to improve readiness in the area of global crises management. But more importantly, to effectively take urgent, coordinated and collective measures to build resilience that would insulate our societies and our economies against the adverse effects of such pandemic and crisis.



In Kenya, we have had to undertake special and targeted efforts. A national multi agency team on COVID19 is in place to ensure such appropriate interventions. We have revamped and expanded our national and county health care systems. The interventions that we have taken have targeted the old and the vulnerable, the unemployed and our youth and specific programmes to keep them healthy and productively engaged. We have also recognized that this pandemic has in itself produced the challenges of gender inequality and more so gender violence.

We have introduced financial and tax interventions to keep the economy and businesses viable and solvent. And like everyone else, introduced social health measures including cessation of travel, social distancing, the wearing of masks and improved hygiene for all.

And this has been achieved to the best of our abilities within an environment of constitutional civil liberties and rights to prosperity and development of all our citizenry.

At the continental level, Mr. President, working with the African Union, I have been involved personally in guiding collective continental actions, together with other Heads of State and Government, who are members of the African Union Bureau. We adopted a continental COVID-19 mitigation strategy, which has had great success in coordinating continental efforts to prevent severe illness and death from COVID-19; as well as minimizing social and economic disruptions.

Excellencies,

What we have learnt in the past six months is that no Country and I repeat again no country can manage a crisis of this magnitude, on its own. We have had to work collectively in order to build back better.

We, therefore, call upon the global community to enhance cooperation and assistance to developing countries in vulnerable situations so as to bolster their economies and health care systems; and to achieve Universal Health Coverage as envisioned in the 2019 UHC political declaration.

Mr. President,

This Assembly is the pinnacle platform for debate on matters of global political concern. At no time in our recent history have global developments been as concerning as they are today.

Global geopolitics and competition between global powers have complicated and severely undermined the global response to the COVID19 pandemic. Indeed, they have caused severe anxiety and undermined coordinated responses to an economic and social character that would have left us in a stronger position as a global collective.

Excellencies,

As President in Office of the Organisation of African, Pacific and Caribbean States, an organization comprising 97 countries, some of whom are most vulnerable and poorest, I have become acutely aware of global geopolitics and competition that is not focused on helping us better build, a stronger, safer, healthier and more prosperous world.

What is equally important is that even after addressing the acute phase of the pandemic, we must all remain collectively committed to global recovery. Developing countries seeking to have the existing debt moratorium refined and extended to December 2021, and an early replenishment of the IMF Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust (PRGT) and the World Bank International Development Association (IDA) as well as an early decision on the Special Drawing Rights.

Excellencies,

I am confident that we have the answers to the challenges we face. The SDGs are a model for multilateral action, which capture the common aspirations of mankind; to end poverty, protect our planet's biosphere and to ensure prosperity for all.

The challenges that confront us today only serve to underscore the need to reaffirm our commitment to the implementation of the SDGs particularly with regard to fighting poverty and inequality; but also our shared responsibility to effectively contribute to this common vision.

Mr. President,

Turning to Climate Change, I believe Kenya's stance on Climate Change and the Environment is known to all. Climate Change can unpackage our efforts to attain the SDGs. Kenya acknowledges the disproportionate impacts of climate variability in Small Island Developing States as well as states with fragile ecological environments.

In this regard, Kenya was honoured to co host the United Nations Secretary General's Climate Action Summit in September of last year, which resulted in landmark commitments as well as initiatives.

Similarly, the interdependent crisis of the biodiversity loss, an ecosystem degradation requires urgent and collective action. Our global home that was teeming with millions of species of God-given creatures, both great and small, is slowly dying. Kenya once again calls for urgent collective action to halt the decimation of our biodiversity.

We must find a global balance between human beings and other creatures on our earth. We must put harmony between people and nature. Our world is yearning for us to stop its ruin! In this regard, we in Kenya look forward to the upcoming Biodiversity Summit that shall be held later.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As host to the United Nations Environmental Program, and the UN-Habitat, of which we are proud, Kenya calls for the expansion of the two Programmes' their viability to harmonize, and to domicile all environmental and human settlements issues, in their rightful place which is at their Headquarters.

Kenya remains committed to continue offering the global community a conducive environment to declare the mandate of these two important UN organizations, UNEP and UN-Habitat.

Let me also remind all of us, Mr. President, that Kenya and Portugal will co-host the Second UN Ocean Conference in the second quarter of 2021. We welcome you all to participate at the highest level in Lisbon, as we strive to harness science and innovation, to scale up our conservation and the sustainable use of our oceans and blue economy.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me pause at this moment to sincerely thank each and everyone of you for electing Kenya to the Security Council for the 2021-2022 term. The vote was an overwhelming affirmation of the trust and confidence that many Members have in Kenya.

I wish to assure you that Kenya will deliver on our commitments to the Council, under the mandate of the African Union. We will work closely with all member states to ensure that the Council discharges its mandate in an inclusive, responsive and consultative manner because peace is a collective effort.

Mr. President,

Kenya has been a frontline state in global efforts to confront terrorism and violent extremism. We have consistently advocated for the need to build partnerships for a strategic and operational approach to prevent and to combat violent extremism not just here in Kenya or our region but globally.

And even as we struggle with all the other challenges of development and cooperation, we cannot afford to take our eyes off the ever present danger of the existential threat of terrorism.

Kenya was honoured to have hosted the first ever African Regional High-Level Conference on Counterterrorism and Prevention of Violent Extremism in July last year. Kenya also welcomes the envisaged establishment of a UN Counter-Terrorism Programme Office here in Nairobi.

As a country that has long contributed to global peace keeping operations, it has been our experience that cooperation among various stakeholders, a clarity of mandate, appropriate training and equipping of troops, an integration of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peace building measures, the participation especially of women, as well as the periodic reviews of the effectiveness of missions, greatly strengthens peace keeping operations. Kenya will continue to advocate for inclusive, meaningful triangular consultations between the Security Council, the UN Secretariat and troops and police contributing countries.

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Even though the world has made great progress since the creation of this great body, the United Nations 75 years ago, our present challenges may appear dispiriting and the journey ahead seem daunting and arduous. But existence is like a marathon of global proportions.

I come from a country of marathoners; and I, therefore, appreciate the demands of endurance, teamwork and persistence in conquering the road ahead. Together, I believe we can win this race, mankind can triumph and secure peace and prosperity in a greater biodiversity for present and future generations.

Finally Mr. President,

The Secretary-General's recent appeal for a global ceasefire also includes a humanitarian call for the roll-back of international sanctions and to reinforce the

efforts of vulnerable, fragile and conflict-affected countries, to deal with the impact of COVID-19. I state today that Kenya stands behind this initiative.

In this connection, I wish to make a special appeal for an end to the economic and commercial as well as financial embargo against Cuba, sanctions against Zimbabwe and Sudan. The United Nations provides us a platform, a platform to resolve age old differences and unburden ourselves of these antiquated conflicts.

It is also Kenya's desire to see, at this critical and historical juncture, an inspiration for peace between Palestine and Israel.

Kenya calls for renewed and genuine international efforts to find a just and lasting solution to the conflict, based on the existence of two States, the State of Israel and the State of Palestine, within the framework of the relevant United Nations pronouncements.

I want to thank all of you for your attention. Thank you and God bless you all.

**Namibia** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 19)

**Address by Mr. Hage Geingob, President of the Republic of Namibia**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

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

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government,

Your Excellency António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

I wish to extend warm congratulations to you and the people of the Republic of Turkey, on your election as President of the 75th session of the General Assembly. I assure you of Namibia's support and cooperation during your tenure as President of the General Assembly. I express great appreciation to your predecessor, His Excellency, Professor Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, son of Africa, for his outstanding stewardship of the work of our organisation, particularly during a very difficult and trying period. I am also privileged to express my admiration and appreciation for the performance of our Secretary General during this challenging period the world is facing.

The 75th Anniversary's theme — "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism – confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action" — reminds us of our shared humanity and the reality of an interconnected world. As we face the COVID-19 pandemic and its devastating effects, we should reaffirm our collective commitment to cooperate in a world governed by international law and a multilateral system in which no one should feel left out.

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered the trajectories of our socio-economic livelihoods, and our interactions with one another. While not perfect, multilateralism and rules-based order are essential tools in strengthening governance, protecting civil liberties and the fundamental rights of the people we serve in our respective countries. An effective, rules-based multilateral system is our insurance policy against existential threats such as wars, nuclear proliferation, pandemics and climate change. It is therefore of utmost importance that we continue to defend multilateralism at all cost.

Mr. President,

The COVID-19 pandemic has plunged the world into an acute health and economic crisis, the severity of which has not been seen in a century. It has disproportionately affected some countries more than others, exposing and exacerbating vulnerabilities and inequalities within and among countries. The adverse socio-economic effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, compounding existing challenges such as high debt burdens, reduced fiscal revenues, capital outflows, and lack of adequate and sufficient access to financial markets, does not bode well for the future of developing countries. This is due to the fact that the unfolding crisis could halt or reverse gains in poverty eradication, food security and inequality. It is why

this health emergency should lead to an even deeper sense of urgency and impactful multilateral solidarity. The world needs it more than ever before.

In this respect, we commend the UN Secretary-General, H.E Antonio Guterres, for the launch of the \$2 billion multi-partner Trust Fund for COVID-19 Response and Recovery. While we also acknowledge the debt relief initiatives announced by the IMF, the World Bank and the G20, I encourage all our partners to facilitate their emergency lending mechanisms and accelerate technical support to even so-called Higher Middle Income Countries such as Namibia. This is vital to ensure access to social protection and basic services, sustainable economic activity, and protection of jobs and incomes.

Mr. President,

Namibia commends the World Health Organisation for all its targeted efforts in fighting COVID-19, including the global development of a vaccine. This vaccine, once developed, should become a global public good, accessible to all, freely and equitably. Namibia stands ready to partner in such development for the benefit of our citizens and the world at large.

Environmental degradation is a persistent and growing problem and, quite literally, a deadly threat to the security of our peoples. The COVID-19 pandemic has diverted resources from Climate Change and related mitigation efforts. The people of Namibia continue to suffer major environmental disasters such as floods, drought and water scarcity. We therefore should ensure that we rededicate ourselves to commitments of the Paris Agreement. As a member of the High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, Namibia reaffirms its commitment towards tackling the great challenges that the world's oceans face, ranging from global warming, ocean acidification, marine pollution, including plastic pollution, and unsustainable exploitation of its living marine resources. We commend the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Norway, Her Excellency Erna Solberg, for developing this outstanding initiative and look forward to working with Norway and the other members of the Panel, to address these challenges.

Mr. President,

When I addressed this august Assembly one year ago, as a member of the African Union Committee of 10 on the Reform of the United Nations Security Council, I expressed my desire to see the marking of the 75th anniversary of the United Nations as an opportunity to conclude the reform of the United Nations Security Council. Namibia reiterates that the African continent wishes to see a reformed Council, which is reflective of its Common African Position as outlined in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. I take this opportunity to welcome and thank those who have expressed support for the Common African Position. As we prepare to mark the 20th anniversary of resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security — a resolution which was adopted under the Namibian Presidency of the Security Council in October 2000 — we must celebrate the achievements thus far, while also recognizing that many challenges still remain. I look forward to the opening of the International Women's Peace Centre in Namibia next month. The Peace Centre is intended to become an institute of excellence for mediation and conflict prevention to support and ensure that women are given adequate tools to contribute to humanity's future.

Mr. President,

The 17 interconnected Sustainable Development Goals and their promise to leave no one behind by 2030, ring hollow for the peoples of Palestine and Western Sahara, who still remain under occupation. They are left behind. As a nation that has experienced the outpouring of international solidarity during the dark days of our struggle for independence, we wish to express our continued support for the right to self-determination and freedom of the peoples of Palestine and of Western Sahara. We also hope that the search for the UN Secretary-General Special Envoy for Western Sahara will be concluded very soon. Furthermore, we express our support for a settlement that will bring a just, lasting and comprehensive peace between Israelis and Palestinians. Despite the political and diplomatic setbacks, in particular continued threats of annexation of Palestinian territory, we remain hopeful for a fair and comprehensive peace solution that will guarantee the rights of all Palestinian peoples and ensure their return to their homes, while safeguarding peace and security to the Israeli people as well.

As the world combats the COVID-19 pandemic, some Member States face more obstacles in combating this virus than others, including those which have sanctions imposed on them. In support of the pursuit of economic development, unity and prosperity for the sister country of Zimbabwe, I once again call on the lifting of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe. President Emmerson Mnangagwa has been pursuing reforms that will enable the people of Zimbabwe to get on a path of sustainable development and peace. Therefore, the continued sanctions undermine these efforts to develop the people of Zimbabwe.

Mr. President,

Namibia reiterates her deep concern over the continuation of the extraterritorial economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed on the people of Cuba. We continue to express our support for the Government and people of Cuba and call for the unconditional lifting of the embargo, and for respect of the sovereignty of Cuba. In the spirit of creating a more just, peaceful and caring world in which we foster peaceful and harmonious coexistence amongst all nations, Namibia looks forward to the day when relations between the United States of America and Cuba will be restored fully.

For the past 75 years, the United Nations has distinguished itself as a champion for equality and unity. At this critical time, when we are faced with a multitude of challenges that threaten our future, we look upon this great organisation to once again, provide the definitive answers to our problems. Therefore, let us embrace one another and pull together in the spirit of multilateralism, in the interest of defeating Covid-19, in the interest of achieving the SDGs and in the interest of safeguarding global peace and the human dignity of every man, woman and child in the world.

I thank you.

**Liberia** (see A/75/PV.6, annex 20)**Address by Mr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia**

*Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 6th meeting of the General Assembly*

His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkır,  
President of the Seventy-fifth United Nations General Assembly  
His Excellency Mr. António Guterres,  
Secretary-General of the United Nations  
Excellencies, Heads of State and Government;  
Ambassadors;  
Heads of Delegations;  
Distinguished Delegates;  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am honored to have the opportunity to address this 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, on behalf of the Government and People of Liberia.

Before I begin my address, I would like to pay homage to all the frontline fighters who have paid the ultimate sacrifice to save the lives of others during this COVID-19 period. I also say a special “thank you” to all the public health institutions and organizations throughout the world that are working tirelessly to bring an end to this dangerous virus that has taken the lives of so many millions in such a short time.

I now extend my deepest sympathy and condolences to the bereaved families of all those who lost their lives to this deadly disease. May their souls rest in Perfect Peace.

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

I congratulate His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkır on his election as President of the Seventy-fifth (75th) Session of the United Nations General Assembly and assure him of Liberia’s fullest support in the discharge of his commendable duty. We have no doubt, Mr. President, that you will lead this august body successfully and fulfill the expectations and the confidence reposed in you during these difficult times.

Please also allow me to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, for the able manner in which he administered the affairs of the 74th Session of the General Assembly.

Let me also commend His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his enthusiasm and personal dedication to the work of the United Nations; and for his foresight in devising innovative responses to the challenges of this deadly COVID-19 pandemic.

MR. PRESIDENT, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

The theme chosen for this year’s General Debate, “The Future we Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism



— Confronting Covid-19 through Effective Multilateral Action”, could not be more appropriate, as the United Nations commemorates the Seventy-Fifty Anniversary of its founding amidst the ravishes of a global pandemic that has infected nearly Thirty Million of the citizens of most of its member states, and killed almost One Million persons globally in just over six months.

On behalf of the Government and People of Liberia, I extend warm appreciation to all member countries of the United Nations and to all international organizations for the global solidarity we have seen in the face of COVID-19.

The world has stood together. Rich countries and poor countries have all been affected and are working together to eradicate this scourge. COVID-19 has taught us that as countries, whether rich or poor, developed or undeveloped, we are all united by our common humanity. We must all rise above normal divisions to work for a better, fairer and more united world.

Your Excellencies, Africa has been hit hard by the pandemic, although the continent has not seen the number of deaths and affected persons as has been the case in many advanced countries. We can only attribute this to the MERCY OF OUR ALMIGHTY GOD, who has made sure that predictions of massive numbers of deaths on the continent of Africa did not materialize.

In Liberia, we were able to build on our previous experience six years ago with the Ebola Viral Epidemic, and I am proud to say that the Government and its development partners have mounted a robust National Covid Response that seems to have contained COVID-19 for the time being.

As a result, only about 1,320 Liberians have been affected by COVID-19 to date, of which approximately 1,213 of these have fully recovered, with some 82 Liberians falling to the epidemic.

I therefore want to extend special thanks to our bilateral and multilateral partners for the strong support Liberia received to deal with the COVID-19 emergency and help sustain the Liberian economy. The Government has now developed a Post-Covid Economic Recovery Plan that prioritizes short term actions and investments in key sectors such as agriculture and tourism, as a means of reducing the impact of COVID-19 but also providing the basis for economic recovery.

YOUR EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Without a doubt, the United Nations remains today as the most important forum for peace, conflict resolution, the prevention of war, and the settlement of disputes between nations of the world, as well as the premier international organization for serving the needs of all mankind through its various humanitarian agencies. Nevertheless, the world has changed considerably since it came into existence after the Second World War, and the configuration of powers which obtained when its Charter was first written and upon which its decision-making structures were based, has witnessed many significant transformations over these past Seventy-Five years.

There is therefore an urgent need to review, refocus and readjust the priorities of the United Nations so that it can become more relevant and more effective in meeting the challenges that are today presented by new global alliances and realities. In this regard, more attention has to be paid to inclusiveness of the most vulnerable in our societies, whose special needs require a new and different mind-set.

As part of this process of re-evaluation, the United Nations adopted in 2015 a set of 17 Global Goals to be met by 2030. These Sustainable Development Goals, as they are commonly called, are intended to serve as a roadmap for our collective efforts to bring peace and prosperity to all mankind.

We are already five years into the 15-year Agenda, and with only 10 years left, it is already clear that we will have to redouble our efforts and accelerate our actions in many areas if we are to attain any or all of these lofty goals by the end of this decade.

DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

My Government has taken many measures since the 74th General Assembly to deal with the persistent socioeconomic problems that continue to beset our country.

For example, our closure of schools in order to contain the COVID pandemic have seen an unprecedented recent increase in rape and Sexual and Gender-based Violence perpetrated upon young women and girls who have had to stay at home.

In response to this epidemic within the pandemic, we recently convened a National Conference which involved all Sexual and Gender-based Violence stakeholders. This resulted in the validation of a comprehensive roadmap intended to mitigate the incidence of this menace in our society. Based on the recommendations that emanated from the roadmap, my Government has declared rape as a National Emergency, appointed a Special Prosecutor for rape, set up a Sex Offenders Registry, and established a National Security Task Force on Sexual and Gender Based Violence.

On the issue of ending Female Genital Mutilation, for the first time in our country, traditional leaders have agreed to take ownership for ending this harmful practice. This has resulted into a first-of-its-kind suspension of the activities of all traditional bush schools in Liberia, where this harmful practice is carried out.

In addition, we recently passed into law the Domestic Violence Act; a legal instrument that seeks to abolish all forms of violence meted out against women, children and men.

Also, to call attention to the persistence and prevalence of corruption in our society, a National Anti-Corruption Conference was recently held, which was attended by all stakeholders, in an attempt to find practical and lasting solutions to this age-old problem.

EXCELLENCIES, DISTINGUISHED LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

We believe that the maintenance of world peace and security is of paramount importance for global growth and development. Every nation without peace is fragile, and has an uncertain future. Therefore, as we chart a new course for shared prosperity, we must reaffirm our collective commitment to multilateralism. As we confront these new challenges, multilateralism, international cooperation, and global solidarity will become increasingly important in addressing the complex problems that we now have to solve.

Excellencies, Distinguished Heads of States and Colleagues, we must all continue to work together as a global community to confront disease and epidemics, fight poverty and prevent wars. As a Founding Member of the United Nations, Liberia avails itself as a strong partner in meeting these global challenges.

I thank you.