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General debate

## 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 afternoon of Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly (see A/75/PV.15). 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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**New Zealand** (see also A/75/PV.15, p.2)

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations, Craig John Hawke**

*Delivered in person on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

*E ngā mana, e ngā reo, Rau Rangatira mā o te Ao, Ngā māngai o ngā whenua ake, Huri rauna I te Ao, Tēnā koutou katoa mai Aotearoa.*

My opening remarks were in Te Reo Māori, an official language of New Zealand and the language of the indigenous people of Aotearoa New Zealand. While geographically remote, New Zealand is deeply connected to its region and to the rest of the world. That connectedness drives us to seek common purpose with the countries in the Assembly Hall — the common purpose of a more prosperous, sustainable and peaceful world for all.

For New Zealanders, diversity is strength. We strive for a more equal society and value strong institutions that promote fairness and deliver for all people. We are a country founded on the Treaty of Waitangi — *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* — which requires a genuine and sustained partnership and a search for shared solutions. We still have work to do at home, but these values guide our approach to global cooperation. Our connectedness also means that New Zealand relies on global cooperation and on multilateralism. At the heart of that is the United Nations. We invest in this system not only because it is the right thing to do, but because it helps build a safer, more prosperous and more sustainable future. Our security and prosperity are the peace and prosperity of every other country.

Our interdependence with other nations has never been more evident as our countries have tackled the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. New Zealanders believe in inclusiveness, equality and a sense of community, beliefs that shape our approach to tackling the pandemic. Our response has been science-based and precautionary. We responded rapidly to each outbreak and New Zealanders have played their part in preventing widespread community transmission. The management of the New Zealand border continues to be our key line of defence.

While we are all learning to live with the impact of COVID-19 domestically, we must also focus on its impact globally. To defeat the virus globally, we will need to be at our collective best. We have to pool our best ideas, think innovatively and share our best people and resources. We need to invest in and trust each other. We support the World Health Organization and the role it played in coordinating an early response. The international system has responded well in addressing the early health, humanitarian and development effects of COVID-19, but the need for international cooperation goes beyond that. We must work together to develop and distribute a vaccine on an equitable basis. To achieve that, New Zealand has joined the COVAX Facility. This will ensure that COVID-19 vaccines can be equitably distributed to every country participating worldwide. By supporting COVAX, we also demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that vulnerable communities everywhere, including in the Pacific, receive the vaccines they need. No one is safe until we are all safe. We encourage other countries to support vaccine multilateralism and ensure the unimpeded, fair and equitable distribution of COVID-19 vaccines worldwide.

COVID-19 and its secondary impacts are having a disproportionate effect on the world's most vulnerable groups. Millions of children are out of education with no ability to learn from home, and millions have missed life-saving vaccinations. Ethnic minorities are dying from COVID-19 at a disproportionately high rate. Many working in the informal economy, particularly women, lack access to social safety nets. And there has been a concerning increase in gender-based violence. While a vaccine would return some normality to our lives, it may take years to recover from the socioeconomic effects of the pandemic. But we have an opportunity to mitigate them. We must work together for a global economic recovery that protects the most vulnerable, creates jobs and maintains supply chains and open markets. We must ensure that the recovery respects and promotes the human rights of all. We must recommit to the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. And we should rally behind the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire so we can all focus on prevention and recovery.

Where we live, in the Pacific, the socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic have been and will continue to be particularly damaging. The outlook is challenging. Many small island developing States depend on tourism sectors that have been drastically affected by closed borders. Those countries also face significant constraints to ensuring economic resilience, and the pandemic has amplified those challenges. The international community must ensure that appropriate concessional financing is available to small island developing States to support their response to this economic shock. New Zealand is committed to working with the international community and supporting Pacific island countries to withstand the most damaging effects of the pandemic.

But in all crises there are opportunities. Our opportunity today is to build back better — to rethink how our economies can work for the many, not just the few, to better focus on the most vulnerable and to rebuild our societies to prioritize tackling the defining challenge of our generation — climate change. Many of the things I have said about COVID-19 apply equally to climate change, but there will be no vaccine against the latter.

The threat of climate change is more real in the Pacific than in any other region in the world. Some of the most climate-affected nations in the world sit within our region. Sea-level rise poses an extreme threat to many Pacific islands. They are paying the price for our collective inaction and their fate is in our hands. They rely on the United Nations and its Member States to make political decisions and commitments to protect their future. The full implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change is critical. Moreover, it is time for a global reset aimed at a greener economy. We must stop fossil-fuel subsidies and divert those billions of dollars into transitioning to clean-energy generation. It is time to rethink how our societies can simultaneously focus on the well-being of our people and of our environment.

The critical importance that biodiversity plays in ensuring the welfare of our people, the economy and the environment will be highlighted tomorrow in the high-level summit on biodiversity. Biodiversity all over the world is in serious decline. The time for action is now and New Zealand is stepping up. We have launched *Te Mana o te Taiao*, the Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy, to guide the way we protect and restore nature. We urge all others to join us in increasing our ambition on biodiversity protection. It is one of the best investments we have in our future.

New Zealand will continue to advocate for advancing gender equality and women's empowerment. We were the first country in the world in which women won the right to vote. Our top three constitutional positions are all held by women and we currently have our third woman Prime Minister. We are proud of our gains, but mindful of the continuing gap. On Thursday, we will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the fourth World Conference on Women. The Beijing Platform for Action remains as relevant today as it was 25 years ago, and we recommit to completing the unfinished work. To achieve the commitments set out in Beijing, we must protect the rights of all women and girls. Collectively, we need to do more to eliminate gender inequalities. Realizing gender equality is everyone's responsibility. It is simply non-negotiable and we will not rest until it is achieved.

At recent events marking the seventy-fifth anniversary of the atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, we recalled the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons. The testing of such weapons has also had a disastrous impact in the Pacific region. We know that no State or organization can prepare for the unimaginable suffering in the wake of a nuclear holocaust, and if we cannot prepare, we must prevent. That is why New Zealand signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We urge all others to join that landmark treaty and we welcome its imminent entry into force. The Treaty's global prohibition on nuclear weapons is a necessary step on the way towards their total elimination. As we will also emphasize in New Zealand's statement to be delivered later this week on the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, it is time for global negotiations involving all nuclear-weapon possessors to take place in order to enable us to achieve nuclear zero.

In conclusion, it was out of the devastation of the Second World War that nations pledged to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Now, in 2020 more than ever, the international community must step up collectively and in the common interest. Since 1945, New Zealand has championed the United Nations and the wider international system. Today we recommit to playing our part in ensuring that the multilateral system collectively responds to our shared and urgent challenges. New Zealand urges all other Member States to do the same. *Nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou ka ora ai te iwi*. That translates as "With your food basket and my food basket, the people will thrive." Stay safe, everyone.

**Democratic People's Republic of Korea** (see also A/75/PV.15, p.4)**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to the United Nations, Song Kim**

*Delivered in person on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Korean; English interpretation provided by the delegation]

On behalf of the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. I am confident that under your able stewardship the session will be very fruitful.

The Assembly's current session is taking place in unprecedented circumstances. The world pandemic has claimed more than a million precious lives and plunged the whole world into extreme anxiety and chaos. The delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to take this opportunity to offer its deep sympathies and condolences to the bereaved families whose loved ones have lost their lives and to the Governments of all the countries that have suffered enormous human and material losses due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We would also like to express our firm solidarity with all the medical workers of every country, and to the World Health Organization and the other international organizations that are sparing no effort in their sacred cause of preventing the spread of the pandemic and saving humankind.

Today's stern reality, in which COVID-19 is becoming ever more serious as the days go by, demands that the Governments of all countries display effective leadership with a sense of their heavy responsibility for the safety of their people's lives. Thanks to the far-sighted leadership of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which maintains a people-first policy as its political philosophy and guiding idea, the situation combating the epidemic in our country is now under safe and stable control. During the early stages of the COVID-19 outbreak, Chairman Kim Jong Un of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, with extraordinary wisdom and determination, ensured that pre-emptive, timely and strong emergency measures were taken to prevent the entry and spread of the pandemic. In response to the rising number of global infections, the State is now taking a series of measures to block the virus from entering the country. All our citizens are adhering strictly to the anti-epidemic regulations while remaining on high alert. The Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will not tolerate even the slightest carelessness or compromise, but will further strengthen the State's emergency anti-epidemic measures until the danger of the pandemic crossing its borders is completely eliminated, thereby firmly safeguarding the safety of the people and the security of the State.

Building a peaceful world without war has always been the goal of the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. In the past few decades we have done everything possible to safeguard peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in the region. That notwithstanding, the nuclear threat to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea continues unabated, along with all sorts of hostile acts taking place before our very eyes. It is an undeniable reality today that cutting-edge

military hardware, including stealth fighters, continues to be introduced into the Korean peninsula and that nuclear-strike weapons of all kinds are aimed directly at our country.

The conclusion we have drawn is that peace never comes of its own accord or through the mere wish of one side; nor is it granted by anyone else. In today's world, where high-handedness based on strength is rampant, genuine peace can be safeguarded only when one possesses the absolute strength needed to prevent war itself. Since we obtained a reliable and effective deterrent to war in our self-defence by tightening our belts, peace and security on the Korean peninsula and in the region are now firmly assured.

Based on its reliable guarantee of safeguarding the security of its State and people, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is now directing all its efforts towards economic construction. It is a fact that we badly need an external environment favourable to building our economy, but we cannot sell off our dignity, which we have defended because it is as valuable as our very lives, in the mere hope of a brilliant transformation. That is our steadfast position. At the historic fifth plenary meeting of the seventh Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea held in December of last year, Chairman Kim Jong Un put forward a vision aimed at breaking through the difficulties facing our socialist construction by confronting them head-on through self-reliance.

Great projects are being completed one after another, on a basis of self-reliance and self-development, to celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party of Korea and its brilliant labour achievements. At a time when the world was in despair as it was drawn into the catastrophe of the pandemic crisis, we in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea were launching the construction of Pyongyang General Hospital as a modern medical service facility for the people, and we have now dynamically propelled its construction into the final stage. Although this year we suffered considerable losses, owing to unexpected natural disasters, we are striving vigorously to repair the damage caused by floods and typhoons by ourselves and to stabilize our people's lives as quickly as possible. The manoeuvres of hostile forces to stifle the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, along with numerous other difficulties, will continue to hinder our progress. However, the people will also further intensify their struggle to overcome them and open up a road to prosperity through their own efforts.

It has been 75 years since the United Nations took its first step. Humankind, together with the United Nations, is looking back on the 75 years that have passed and at the same time is envisioning a better future. The main theme of this general debate, namely "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism — confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action", reflects the demand of an overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations that we build a peaceful and prosperous world on the basis of multilateralism. Multilateralism makes it possible to achieve peace and security and sustainable development by establishing cooperative relations among Member States based on the recognition that they have different ideas, systems, cultures and values. That should be encouraged and promoted, as it fully aligns with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The time is long gone when an individual country could hold sway over international politics, unilaterally imposing its will on the world, and multilateralism

has become an irresistible global trend. The future that humankind wants is an independent world, free from domination, subordination, aggression or interference, where the sovereignty and equality of all countries and nations are ensured. The United Nations is needed to achieve that purpose. The United Nations should firmly adhere to the principles of sovereign equality, mutual respect, impartiality and objectivity. It should have zero tolerance of high-handedness and arbitrariness, and it should eliminate biased practices and double standards in all its activities in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

In that context, we categorically condemn and reject the economic, trade and financial blockade of Cuba, an economic genocide that has continued for decades in gross violation of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and an infringement on sovereignty. We strongly demand that it be terminated immediately. We extend our unwavering support to and solidarity with the Syrian people in their struggle to regain the Israeli-occupied Golan and defend its territorial integrity, as well as to the righteous cause of the people of Palestine to establish their own independent State with East Jerusalem as its capital. We also extend our support and solidarity to the Government and the people of Venezuela in their struggle to reject the interference of foreign forces and defend the sovereignty of their country.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea will develop good-neighbourly and fraternal relations with all countries across the world that respect its sovereignty and are friendly to it, and will make a determined effort to safeguard peace and security in the region and the world at large.



**Uganda** (see also A/75/PV.15, p.5)

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations, Adonia Ayebare**

*Delivered in person on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

I have the honour to orally present a written address by His Excellency Mr. Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, to the general debate of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session.

“I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, and to assure you of Uganda’s full support. I would like to thank His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for his exceptional leadership of the Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, particularly during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic period. I would also like to pay tribute to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, for his dedication and commitment to the work of the United Nations, and to express my solidarity to all countries that are fighting the COVID-19 pandemic and my condolences for the lives they have lost.

“Uganda welcomes the theme of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly. The United Nations is a fitting forum for speaking with one voice on the global pandemic. This session is a timely reminder of the vision, shared principles and commitments agreed on at our sustainable development summit, held in New York from 25 to 27 September 2015 (see A/70/PV.4). When we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we pledged to ensure that no one would be left behind by taking explicit action to end extreme poverty and curb inequalities. As we celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, we therefore need an Organization that is fit for the purpose of addressing global challenges. It is through effective multilateral action that we can mitigate the multifaceted impacts of the unprecedented COVID-19 crisis and accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In that connection, Uganda reiterates its commitment to multilateralism. We see multilateralism as a means to address complex and newly emerging threats and challenges such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected every member of the international community in an increasingly interdependent world.

“Uganda, like many countries around the world, has had to respond to the onslaught of the pandemic. We viewed COVID-19 as a fearless foe of human life that had to be confronted. Our approach to dealing with it prioritized the protection of human lives. As a first pragmatic step to ensure that the country responded adequately and mitigated the impact of the pandemic, the Government developed guidelines and standard operating procedures to align and standardize its response. We combined systematic testing, tracing, quarantining and treatment with restrictions on movement and contact, aiming to suppress transmission of the virus. We combined all of those measures with a widespread media campaign to sensitize the public. The Government has also continued to strengthen its national health system as part of its commitment to universal health coverage and to ensuring that health facilities handling



COVID-19 patients are well equipped with the necessary supplies in order to support efficient and effective case management. Through those deliberate and targeted decisions, Uganda has been able to prevent mass coronavirus infections within the country. The Government has also prioritized sustainable recovery from the pandemic in its national COVID-19 response strategy.

“In addition to its incalculable health and human toll, the pandemic has left an indelible mark on the global economy. Across the world, countries are suffering from the sudden shock to their economies. But beyond the immediate challenges of the current crisis, there is a need for a greater focus on recovery from the epidemic. The impact of COVID-19 can be mitigated if we act immediately and collectively. We applaud the efforts of various international and regional organizations, such as the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the African Union (AU), the Commonwealth, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and the East African Community (EAC), among others, in dealing with the pandemic.

“We commend the international community for the support it has given so far in dealing with the pandemic. The decisions in April of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank Group, and the Group of 20 to immediately suspend 76 countries’ debt-service payments for one year was laudable. However, the agreed suspension of debt is not enough to ensure that they can respond and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic or navigate its devastating social and economic effects. We call for more action on comprehensive debt-relief packages, particularly debt cancellations by multilateral and bilateral creditors, in order to enable us to obtain the funding we need for our COVID-19 pandemic response.

“I am glad to inform Member States that key sectors of Uganda’s economy, especially agriculture and information and communications technology, have endured through the COVID-19 pandemic. Production levels increased, exceeding pre-COVID-19 levels. Coffee exports continued to surge despite the coronavirus pandemic, with the figures for April 2020 showing growth compared with the previous year. Uganda has been able to stand up and weather the storm because of the appropriate actions we took as a Government, including pursuing the right policy on promoting private-sector-led growth.

“The COVID-19 crisis has taught us a few lessons and shown us areas for reflection. First, it demonstrates how interconnected and interdependent our world has become. Secondly, we have seen that we must embrace the digital age and adopt more digital technologies for both production and services, such as banking, retailing and learning, as well as public services. Thirdly, many industries and institutions have shown the ability to adapt and redirect themselves. In Uganda, for instance, clothing factories are making masks, universities have started making ventilators and sugar refineries are manufacturing hand sanitizers.

“Uganda has demonstrated its commitment to scale up national efforts towards the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals. In the wake of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, we realize now more than ever the need to remain focused on critical efforts to achieve the overarching Sustainable Development Goal of

eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions and spur socioeconomic and political development.

“Progress has been registered in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as reflected in our second voluntary national review report, which was presented at the 2020 High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. In that regard, Uganda adopted its third five-year national development plan for 2020/21 to 2024/25 under the theme of “Sustainable industrialization for inclusive growth, employment and wealth creation”. The plan emphasizes key interventions in broad transformative categories for implementation, including environmental protection, governance and industrialization, working closely with development partners and other relevant stakeholders, particularly in the context of building back better in the work of recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. It prioritizes the elimination of the silo approach to service delivery and enhances synergies across sectors and among other actors in the implementation of national sustainable development priorities and policies.

“Climate change remains one of the greatest challenges of our time. We continue to witness climate-change disasters across the globe that result in considerable loss of life and property. It is clear that no country is immune to such disasters. Addressing climate change calls for effective and bold multilateral action from all of us. Uganda, for example, has continued to experience prolonged droughts, melting ice caps on its highest mountain, Mount Rwenzori, floods, erratic rainfall and landslides. We recently experienced the impact of intensive and prolonged rainfall that increased the levels of major bodies of water and caused flooding in several areas of the country. The Government will continue to invest in climate adaptation and mitigation measures that include expanding access to and consumption of clean energy in order to enhance production, as well as increasing forest and wetland cover, in line with our ambitious nationally determined contributions. Those investments will enable us to halt, reduce and reverse environmental degradation and the adverse effects of climate change, as well as to improve the sustainable use of natural resources for inclusive economic growth.

“Mobilizing the means of implementation for mitigating and adapting to the effects of climate change, including resilience, remains critical, particularly at the international level. In that regard, Uganda will support bold action proposals at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, scheduled for 2021, in the areas of mitigation, adaptation and financing. We therefore urge developed countries to fulfil their financial commitments in line with the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to provide \$100 billion annually by 2020 to assist developing States parties in both mitigation and adaptation. We also continue to witness an increasing trend in biodiversity loss, with wildlife and other living species endangered and at risk of extinction. We all rely heavily on the planet for our livelihoods. In that regard, we should therefore reaffirm our determination to protect the planet from degradation, including through sustainable production and consumption and the sustainable management of natural resources so that it can support the needs of present and future generations.

“As the United Nations commemorates its seventy-fifth anniversary, Uganda joins the community of nations in acknowledging the legitimacy,

convening power, normative impact and undeniable successes that our shared vision can achieve. Much, however, remains to be done in order to further strengthen international cooperation in achieving the three interrelated and interdependent goals of global and regional peace and security, sustainable economic development for all and the advancement of human rights and dignity.

“This seventy-fifth anniversary year also marks the end of the third International Decade for the Eradication of Colonialism, at a time when 17 non-self-governing territories remain on the books with regard to the implementation of the declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. The unresolved question of Western Sahara remains the single issue standing in the way of the total eradication of colonialism on the African continent. Uganda therefore joins the international community in underscoring its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including those of equal rights and the self-determination of peoples.

“The General Assembly approved the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of the operational activities for the development of the United Nations system and the repositioning of the United Nations development system in 2016 and 2018 respectively, in order to make the development system more strategic, accountable, transparent, collaborative, efficient, effective and results-oriented. That approval arose out of the need to reposition United Nations operational activities for development so that they support countries in their national efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We commend the Secretary-General for the progress made so far in implementing the approved reforms in consultation with Member States. Uganda will work within the Group of 77 (G-77) and China during the next cycle of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review to ensure that it receives appropriate policy guidance over the next four years to support countries in accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in their jurisdictions.

“South-South cooperation has continued to prove to be an important element of international cooperation in addressing global challenges in the global South, particularly during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Countries in the global South have received support from their global counterparts, which has enhanced their national as well as regional capacities in responding to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic. Cognizant of the critical role of South-South cooperation in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Uganda will continue to support the strengthening of South-South cooperation among the members of the G-77 and China and within the United Nations, in line with its principles. As host of the third South-South Summit, I look forward to welcoming the leaders of the G-77 and China to the Summit, to be held in Kampala on suitable dates in 2021.

“Uganda applauds the Secretary-General for his timely appeal for a global ceasefire during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is no doubt that the pandemic has had a global impact on all aspects of our lives, social, economic and political, and in almost all countries across the globe. Where armed conflicts and wars have continued, the pandemic has made worsening situations even more dire. Africa’s continental and subregional organizations have continued to play a critical role in conflict prevention and crisis management across

the continent. I welcome the direct partnership and engagement between the United Nations and the African Union on peace and security matters, which have accelerated in recent years. Our experience has shown that wherever the international community, and the United Nations in particular, has supported regional efforts, they have been successful. We should encourage and strengthen that partnership.

“Uganda continues to support and advance peace and security efforts in the region. We are fully aware that the prosperity and development of countries in our region and beyond are inextricably linked to peace and security. We remain actively involved in regional initiatives such as those of IGAD, the EAC, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and the AU, and are encouraged by the progress we see. We will continue to support the peace efforts under those frameworks, such as those in South Sudan, the political transition in the Sudan and the stabilization efforts in Somalia.

“The threat of terrorism remains a security challenge of our time. We should be mindful that while COVID-19 and a number of measures taken by Governments around the globe may have helped to suppress the activities of violent extremist and terrorist groups, the new normal created by the crisis can also play into the hands of violent extremists and terrorist groups. Uganda remains committed to supporting global and regional counter-terrorism efforts. In our own region, terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, Al-Qaida and the Allied Democratic Forces continue to be a threat to our common security and development. Neutralizing them requires cooperative and firm responses.

“After 75 years of the existence of the United Nations, the need to reform the Security Council is more urgent and imperative than ever. The current geopolitical realities such as the global health pandemic are compelling reasons for comprehensive reform of the Security Council. Reform will further enhance the Council’s authority and efficiency. Seventy-five years on, it is time to take bold steps to address the long-standing injustice and imbalance in the present configuration of the Security Council. We should make way for the equitable representation of unrepresented and underrepresented regions, especially Africa. African issues dominate the Council’s agenda, and yet Africa remains the only region without representation in the permanent category of Security Council members and is also underrepresented in the non-permanent category. We should demonstrate the political will to redress the historical injustice done to the African continent. We therefore urge all Member States to work to achieve progress on comprehensive reform of the Security Council.

“Finally, later this year an important election will be held for judges of the International Court of Justice, one of our Organization’s key organs. Uganda accepted the Court’s compulsory jurisdiction, without any reservations, as long ago as March 1963, when we were a new member of the United Nations family. We are proud that Judge Julia Sebutinde of Uganda, the first African woman on the Court and one who has served it with distinction, will be up for re-election for a second and final term. I commend Judge Julia Sebutinde to the General Assembly and request its support for her re-election to a second and final mandate on the International Court of Justice.”

**Togo** (see also A/75/PV.15, p. 9)

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of Togo to the United Nations, Kokou Kpayedo**

*Delivered in person on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. We also commend the outstanding work of the outgoing President, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, who contributed to advancing the Organization through his wisdom and leadership during the difficult time that we are going through. I would also like to reaffirm our confidence in and pay tribute to Secretary-General António Guterres for the skill with which he is pursuing our shared goals.

When it comes to an end, the year 2020 will undoubtedly be seen as one of the most difficult in history in terms of the public-health crisis brought about by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has spread all over the world, causing untold human suffering. It has exposed many unforeseen vulnerabilities among the international community while causing an unprecedented economic crisis. While we are deliberating here in the Assembly we are still searching for a lasting cure for this plague. I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the memory of all the victims of the virus and to commend the extraordinary work of the health-care workers from every country who have saved millions of lives.

This session is therefore taking place in an extremely unusual context in which our world is more disrupted than ever. The human tragedy that is the result is putting multilateralism to the test and urging us to act resolutely together to halt this scourge. That is why I welcome the choice of theme for this session of the General Assembly, “The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism — addressing Covid-19 through effective multilateral action”. In many ways, the theme is emblematic of the overall environment of anxiety, which compels us to be united in solidarity and more determined. The COVID-19 pandemic requires immense sacrifices of us, and our success in halting the crisis will depend on our willingness to unite our efforts to counter the pandemic and prevent our populations from falling back into extreme poverty. It is an unfortunate fact that the COVID-19 pandemic has slowed our efforts to meet several Sustainable Development Goals, including in the areas of health, hunger and decent work. It is therefore imperative that the international community adopt a concerted, global and coherent approach to respond appropriately to the pandemic. In that regard, I commend the initiative of the Secretary-General who, from the very beginning of the pandemic, launched a global response by the United Nations system to address the pandemic and guide our States to safeguard themselves against the adverse consequences of the pandemic.

It has been established that owing to the virus’s highly contagious nature, the preventive measures that we are taking today will not be sufficient on their own to counter and eventually eliminate it. Vaccination therefore continues to be the lasting solution. In that regard, my country encourages all the research that is under way throughout the world to achieve that goal. Although it is promising, we are already dealing with the issue of access to future vaccines. While it is true that

pharmaceutical companies are committing enormous financial resources to that end, we must not sacrifice our humanity to economic profit. We will therefore need to ensure that access to any future COVID-19 vaccine is equitable, affordable and not subject to market forces. Accordingly, I welcome the adoption of resolution WHA73.1 by the General Assembly of the World Health Organization (WHO), pursuant to which Member States have provided that full access to any such vaccine and other related medicines shall be timely, equitable, of high quality, safe and affordable for all. My country also welcomes the COVAX Facility initiative launched by WHO — a mechanism for the group purchase of eventual COVID-19 vaccines, coordinated by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization — which will guarantee every participating country fair and equitable access to vaccines through an allocation framework that WHO intends to set up.

The African continent, which is confronting the cruelty of poverty and endemic and cyclical natural scourges, is also seeing a worrying spread of the disease. In order to counter that, the African Union has implemented a control-and-prevention strategy, recommended by the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the cost of whose implementation alone is estimated at more than \$200 billion. It has also established the African Medical Supplies Platform to improve the provision of COVID-19-related medical equipment and supplies, access to which has become increasingly difficult owing to the strong market demand. In that regard, I welcome the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union to address the challenges posed by the pandemic. My country believes that the Secretary-General's call to the leaders of the Group of 20 to adopt a recovery plan for developing countries, as well as calls for debt suspension and cancellation, will result in action being taken.

In the framework of its COVID-19 response, after our first case of the disease was diagnosed, on 6 March, Togo set up a crisis committee, personally chaired by the President of the Republic, a national coordination response, a management committee and a scientific committee. In view of the disease's long-term socioeconomic impact, my Government has also launched a national solidarity and economic recovery fund totalling 400 billion CFA francs, or approximately \$665 million. The measures taken involve prevention through social distancing, case detection, the compulsory wearing of masks and education and awareness-raising among the population. We have also shut down various areas of the country, established a curfew, closed borders, schools and universities and banned gatherings.

With regard to health care, the Government has opened dedicated centres in Lomé and in each of the country's economic regions, trained personnel and supplied critical laboratory, medical and protective equipment. The scientific committee has developed a treatment plan. We have taken various social measures for the benefit of the population, particularly the most vulnerable sectors, in order to mitigate the impact of the pandemic — reducing the costs of water and electricity, removing taxes on basic needs, providing food distribution and subsidizing the most disadvantaged citizens through the Novissi cash transfer programme, and, lastly, supporting businesses. We would therefore like to take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks to our various partners and all who are assisting Togo in the fight against the pandemic.

As we commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations this year, it is fitting to note that our institution has made great progress in the areas of peacebuilding, respect for human rights and the promotion of truly sustainable development, despite the prejudices that have to be overcome. One of the Organization's major achievements is in the area of the promotion of peace and



security, with peacekeeping operations that have helped to save many lives and restore stability and security in a world plagued by conflicts and emerging threats such as terrorism and violent extremism. Our peacekeeping operations, in which as one of the major troop-contributing countries Togo is an active participant, have been enhanced and improved over time. This is the right occasion to welcome the fact that they are moving resolutely and increasingly towards a preventive and multidimensional approach.

In the area of development, the Organization's adoption in 2015 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is still so far the most ambitious tool for ensuring our peoples' welfare. The 2030 Agenda, which capitalizes on the experience gained from the Millennium Development Goals, integrates the three dimensions of sustainable development — economic, social and environmental — in a cross-cutting approach. The Organization has also excelled in promoting human rights. International human rights standards have accordingly flourished in various areas, especially with regard to women and children.

However, such successes here and there must not blind us to the fact that the Organization is still facing many other challenges. Only active international cooperation and international solidarity can help us deal with them effectively and successfully. We have not yet banished the spectre of war and armed conflicts in all their forms. And nowadays such conflicts have taken on a new form, driven by non-State actors and amorphous networks that fuel terrorism and religious extremism, including in the countries of the Sahel region and Central Africa. Moreover, climate change, especially the destructive weather events that we have recently seen in Africa, and the migration crisis are challenges that the Organization must meet with bold and sustainable responses if it is to achieve the ideals it was founded on.

Our peoples' expectations are high and pressing, and my country urges all States to assume their responsibility to meet them and commit to taking action, which, to be blunt, entails revitalizing and reforming our Organization, particularly its principal organs, including the Security Council, in order to make it more representative and better adapted to the demands of our time. We firmly believe that greater transparency, justice, equity and democracy, with strict respect for the sovereign equality and dignity of States, particularly in Africa, will enable the Organization to write a new chapter in its existence. To that end, we must not give in to the temptation of turning inwardly as nations. Let us rather move forward together and united in the hope of the peace and development to which our peoples remain firmly committed.



**Tanzania** (see also A/75/PV.15, p. 11)

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the United Republic of Tanzania to the United Nations, Kennedy Godfrey Gastorn**

*Delivered in person on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of His Excellency Mr. John Pombe Joseph Magufuli, President of the United Republic of Tanzania, who could not virtually join this meeting of the General Assembly owing to the ongoing general election campaign in the country. Mr. Magufuli is standing for a second presidential term in the 28 October elections. The Government of Tanzania would like to emphasize its resolve to ensure that this year's campaigns and elections are conducted in a democratic, peaceful, credible, fair and transparent manner, as Tanzania has done in all its elections without fail since 1965.

The United Republic of Tanzania extends its warm congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly. I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation in discharging your noble mandate. I also want to pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, for the excellent leadership and commitment he demonstrated during his term of office in difficult times.

It was with great sadness that in July Tanzania lost one of its great leaders, the late Benjamin William Mkapa, former President of the United Republic of Tanzania, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to everyone for their condolences.

This year's general debate hinges on multilateralism, which matches very well with our major preoccupation of ensuring that no one is left behind. We welcome and fully endorse the theme for the general debate. You are taking on the presidency, Sir, during challenging times, as the world is battling through the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which is unprecedented. The outbreak and spread of COVID-19 around the world remind us that we need to enhance solidarity within the multilateral system to confront our global challenges. The pandemic has drastically claimed many lives and disrupted the economies of individual countries and the world at large. In that context, I would like to convey our heartfelt condolences to the bereaved families and loved ones of those who have passed away and to wish a quick recovery to those who are undergoing treatment. We also appreciate all the initiatives within the United Nations system aimed at mobilizing efforts to confront the pandemic, including sharing best practices to prevent it from spreading further.

At the national level, our Government has taken concerted and decisive actions to mitigate and prevent the spread of COVID-19 that have so far produced positive results in fighting the pandemic in our country. All socioeconomic activities have now been resumed normally. Despite these successes, we cannot deny the adverse effects that the pandemic has had in our country and the world at large, especially where the least-developed and developing countries are concerned. We express our sincere appreciation to our development partners, including the international financial institutions that have complemented our national efforts to combat the pandemic through debt relief, the postponement of debt payments and the provision of grants.

In the same spirit, Tanzania further urges international financial institutions and development partners to devise mechanisms to provide resources on unconditional terms to complement the efforts of the least-developed and developing countries in the fight against the pandemic, including, but not limited to, further debt-relief measures to enable them to revamp their economies more rapidly.

As we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Organization, the United Republic of Tanzania would like to reaffirm its shared commitment to maintaining the pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, human rights and development. Tanzania's independence remains a remarkable testament to the commitment of our Organization to the ideals of the Charter of the United Nations. The United Nations was instrumental in facilitating our independence. Tanzania remains a committed member of the United Nations, and through the Special Political and Decolonization Committee has supported the liberation struggles of many fellow States in their fight to regain their independence. Over the years, Tanzania has also participated in promoting the pillars of the United Nations in matters of peace and security and in working towards the sustainable future that we are all hope to see. We are proud to have participated under the umbrella of the United Nations in peacekeeping operations. Tanzania currently has more than 2,303 peacekeepers serving in six missions, and we believe that peace and security are the cornerstone of our socioeconomic development.

There is no question that multilateralism is an important tool for collaboration among nations, as the United Nations has ably demonstrated. As we enter the Decade of Action for implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we continue to believe that the United Nations is ultimately the right platform for addressing global challenges. In implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the current Government of Tanzania has accomplished a number of achievements in various sectors. Our national economy is growing at a rate of 6.9 per cent, as compared to 6.2 per cent in 2015. However, COVID-19 resulted in a lower growth projection to 5.5 per cent, creating our need for relief to support a more vibrant economic growth projection. Inflation rates have remained stable at a single digit of 4.4 per cent, with the lowest rate recorded at 3.4 per cent in 2019. As a result, on 1 July the World Bank announced the upgrade of Tanzanian economy from least-developed to lower-middle-income status, five years before the national development vision's projection of 2025. That milestone is the result of different national measures, mainly focused on clamping down on corruption, improving public administration and the proper management of public and natural resources. It has also been made possible by the Government's reforms and partnerships with various development partners. We therefore would like to express our sincere gratitude to the United Nations and its specialized agencies, funds and programmes and other development partners.

In our efforts to integrate economic and human development, we have made progress in improving the infrastructure necessary for the provision of social services. For instance, in the past five years we have built a total of 1,769 health-care facilities around the country, ranging from dispensaries to referral hospitals. Additionally, the construction and renovation of water infrastructure has led to improved access to clean and safe water for 70.1 per cent of the population in rural areas and 84 per cent in urban areas. Rural electrification has provided a total of 9,112 of Tanzania's 12,268 villages with electricity.

Twenty-five years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform, inequality still looms large in the world. Despite the challenges that remain, Tanzania has been able to put in place various national frameworks to guide the implementation of measures ensuring gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including mainstreaming gender equality objectives in all Government policies and programmes. In terms of promoting the right to education, the Government has also overseen major construction and rehabilitation of learning and teaching facilities, as well as the provision of free education in primary and secondary schools. That has raised primary school enrolment from 1 million students in 2015 to 1.6 million in 2020. Consequently, the number of students enrolled in secondary school has also increased from 1.6 million in 2015 to 2.1 million this year.

The Government has enhanced interconnectedness and has managed to build 3,500 kilometres of roads and numerous large bridges in the past five years. Moreover, we have upgraded major ports and other transport facilities, ranging from the standard-gauge railway that runs through central Tanzania to the restoration of other railway transport facilities in the eastern corridor. Other milestones include the manufacture and refurbishing of ships to improve water transport and connectivity in areas surrounded by bodies of water. The Government has also overseen the procurement of 11 aeroplanes, of which eight are operating commercially.

In an effort to build the industrial economy in Tanzania, we have embarked on the establishment of 8,477 new industries in the large, medium and small categories. That has gone hand in hand with the construction of a major hydroelectric power plant on the Rufiji River that will have the capacity to provide 2,115 megawatts of electricity, enough to boost our energy supply for industry. Our blueprint for the industrial economy and human development seeks to address infrastructure and regulatory hurdles and thereby create a smart, functional and fair investment and business regulatory regime. I would therefore like to take this opportunity to invite and encourage international investors to come and invest in various sectors in Tanzania. We have a stable and favourable investment environment and look forward to welcoming everyone.

At this point I would like to expound on a number of issues that my Government feels require particular international attention and are therefore necessary to emphasize.

We should remind ourselves that the credibility of the United Nations rests on a well-represented and responsive Security Council. In that respect, we reiterate the Common African Position, as elaborated in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration.

On 17 August, Tanzania handed over the chairmanship of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to Mozambique. Tanzania is proud to have served SADC for a period of one year amid a number of challenges, while reaching milestones in the areas of peace and security, democracy, good governance, financial integration and social development. Those achievements reflect the commitment that Tanzania has always had and continues to spearhead in efforts related to regional integration and international relations.

On 25 October 2019, Tanzania joined other SADC countries in commemorating the day of solidarity with the Republic of Zimbabwe against sanctions in Zimbabwe. We continue to call for the removal of all forms of unilateral coercive measures

in the form of sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe to pave the way for that country's socioeconomic transformation and economic development.

The swearing-in in June of His Excellency Mr. Evariste Ndayishimiye, President of the Republic of Burundi, was the culmination of the long-awaited presidential elections in Burundi. With the elections' peaceful conclusion, Tanzania urges the international community to assist the new Government by providing much needed aid for the economic and social development of the citizens of Burundi and the region at large.

Tanzania reiterates its position of support for a stable, peaceful and prosperous Democratic Republic of the Congo. We commend the efforts made so far by the United Nations, the SADC region and the whole international community to make it happen. In that regard, we also want to stress that continued and pragmatic engagement is crucial in order to align SADC's position with the reconfiguration of the Force Intervention Brigade, so as to maintain its effective defence capability, operational effectiveness and command-and-control unit.

Tanzania has always expressed the view that the economic embargo imposed on Cuba in 1960 has outlived its relevance. We encourage both parties to engage in constructive dialogue aimed at achieving its total removal.

On the question of Palestine, we continue to support the resolution of the conflict between Israel and Palestine, which hinges on a two-State solution in which both live side by side in peace and security.

I would like to conclude by pledging to the Assembly that the United Republic of Tanzania will continue to render the necessary support to the United Nations in ensuring success in all important global agendas, including the promotion of the equality and self-determination of nations, peace and security, human rights, development, the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the United Nations reform processes. Once again, we reiterate our commitment to multilateralism and call on all Member States to embrace it for a just and better world. God bless the United Republic of Tanzania, God bless Africa, God bless the United Nations and God bless us all.

**El Salvador** (see also A/75/PV.15, annex I)

**Address by Mr. Nayib Armando Bukele, President of the Republic of El Salvador**

*Delivered on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Spanish]

I bid greetings to all the peoples of the world and express my solidarity with regard to the times we are all going through, which are of a momentous and historical scale and more challenging than we have ever experienced.

The pandemic has already claimed more than 1 million lives — millions of lost dreams, millions of people who are mourning the death of loved ones and millions of lives that will have forever been changed. We must continue working for them and prevent those numbers from increasing. God grant that my prayers be with them.

This turning point for humankind has significantly heightened our responsibility. The fate of generations will depend on the actions we take or fail to take in the days to come. And here we are in the General Assembly 75 years after the founding of the United Nations, one of humankind's great ideas.

I thank all those listening to me, who could be doing something else with their time, which is a commodity that is becoming increasingly precious and scarce. I especially thank the Salvadorans both outside and inside our country for allowing me to be here and work for them. And, above all, I thank God, as all that happens is because of Him.

A year ago in the same General Assembly, I mentioned the urgent need for it to change its format and said that if it failed to do so, the Assembly would become irrelevant. Subsequently, the format of the General Assembly has changed slightly, but it has changed. The change was caused by a historic pandemic, but it has changed. What are the results of the change? The Assembly has become even more irrelevant. This year it has become so irrelevant that its relevance has not even been discussed.

For the vast majority of the world's population, it is as if it did not exist. Not only do most people not watch these speeches, they do not even recall that the General Assembly exists. And depending on their age, some may be unaware that it ever existed. In order to test that theory, over the past several days, I asked people of every walk of life and age questions about the General Assembly. Most of them did not even know the Assembly was in session, and the minority of people, who did know, did not even know the theme or who was going to speak. If you do not believe the results of my experiment, ask the first person you see after watching this speech.

I say this as a proponent of self-criticism, given the fact that, as President of El Salvador, I am a member of the General Assembly and, as a human being, I am a firm believer in the potential for this tool to do good.

However, as I warned the General Assembly last year, the world has already changed and continues to change increasingly rapidly, and whoever fails to change runs the risk of disappearing. Today's world is very different from the world of just a few years ago. In no moment in recorded history, has society changed and continued to change to such an extent in such a short time.

And what have we the General Assembly done? We merely send video-recorded statements, as we have been forced to make a change in response to the pandemic instead of a courageous change to build the future we want. That change alone is insufficient, and the world will continue to change, whether we do or not. To some, these words may sound harsh, but it is my high regard for the founding principles of the United Nations and the Assembly that compels me speak them.

I want it to change so that it survives. I want it to change so that we as humankind can use this great tool. I want it to change so that all of us together have a hand in changing the world and our shared destiny, not only the General Assembly, which risks becoming irrelevant.

As the year comes to an end, we continue to reel from the effects of one of the greatest crises in the modern history of humankind. And what have we the United Nations done? Let us perform the same experiment once again: ask the first person you see what the United Nations has done during the pandemic. It is in this connection that I would like to thank the countries and organizations that have helped and continue to help us survive the crisis.

I thank the Government and the people of the United States, who helped us transform a public system with 31 intensive care units into one with more than 1,000 multifunctional units, while sending us about 600 respirators, at a time when they were in short supply in the world.

I also thank the State and the people of Japan, without whose help we would never have been able to establish the largest hospital of the region and one of the most advanced and largest hospitals to treat the coronavirus disease in the world. I will forever be grateful to and in deep admiration of the Government and the great people of Japan, who as a society exemplify giving service to the world.

On behalf of the people of El Salvador I also express my heartfelt thanks to all the countries, representatives of private enterprise and volunteers throughout the world who have helped and continue to help us. All the help has enabled us to continue saving thousands of lives, not only in terms of the pandemic, but also the future. Every life that we have saved and will save together represents generations saved — hundreds of thousands of future lives and stories that will have been preserved thanks to our recent action. I thank God for giving us the opportunity and everyone who has helped us to do that.

Such help, however, has mostly been bilateral work, not necessarily owing to the United Nations system. Despite the fact that it was established mainly to deal with events such as the current existential threat facing humankind, there has been a lack of leadership on the part of the Organization to unite the world to counter the virus together.

But crying over what could have been is counterproductive. We must see this as an opportunity and wake-up call so that we are prepared for a similar, or even more powerful, blow — the next global threat — and, more important, so that we take advantage of this unique historic opportunity to build and create our future.

When I was a child — and I like to believe that it was not long ago — we thought about the future and our minds were carried away by the possibilities — flying cars and humans devoting their lives to the arts and humanities while robots would do the work that they did not want to do. The world we imagined speaks in a multifaceted way to the future of humankind's collective consciousness in a



multicultural world, free of war, channelling its efforts to explore the stars and place them within humankind's reach.

What do young people imagine now, as they look towards the future? The answer is natural disasters, pandemics, wars, apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic scenarios and dystopian societies. If you do not believe me, try the experiment once again, and ask the first young person you see: How do you imagine planet Earth in the future?

But certain aspects of the future that many of us imagined as children are today realities. Technology has reached levels that even the most daring futurologists could not have imagined. Almost everyone listening to me has a supercomputer in their pocket. Moreover, your mother may be listening to me with such a supercomputer.

Any smartphone today has millions of times more computing power than the supercomputer that took us to the moon. The latest iPhone is far more powerful than the supercomputer of the 1970s, 1980s and even 1990s. There are also billions of these supercomputers scattered throughout the globe, connected to one another by the largest network in human history.

A year ago, in this Hall, I mentioned the potential of this network, and, since then, it has become much larger and more powerful. In a year, it will be even more so. How do we manage it? I believe that we have yet to understand its potential and the potential of all the tools we have available both individually and collectively to us through it.

Never in human history have we had so many opportunities to be able to do what we want to do, be honest with ourselves and create what we want to create. This network allows us to instantly connect with the best minds anywhere in the world. This network enables us to connect with people with the same interests, aspirations and vision of the world. I am speaking from the individual's perspective. Imagine what we humankind can do.

There is something wrong with this world when millions of people have supercomputers in their pockets and the problems remain the same — historical problems like hunger, homelessness, deaths from curable diseases, which are all relatively easy for humankind to resolve. If the whole world decided to resolve every one of them, they would be solved in a matter of months or even sooner.

We have only marginally tested that ability to change the world in recent months. Yet the results have been incredible at both the international and local levels. We are seeing that in the race for a vaccine and collaboration involving treatments of the virus at the global level. In that regard, I very warmly thank the members of the Italian medical community, in particular, whose research led to the initial treatment that saved thousands of lives in El Salvador, not to mention the entire world, at their own great personal risk, at a time when we knew little about the virus. I thank them on behalf of the people of El Salvador. The applause of the world would fall short of justly singing their praise.

At the local level, in El Salvador we have seen how in a matter of months we have put an extremely precarious human health-care system on track to becoming a first-world system. Although progress remains to be made, we have realized that, if we try, we can achieve much more faster than we ever imagined. Every day that we fail to work together in order to solve the world and humankind's problems represents lives that will be lost forever. We will lose those opportunities forever.



In El Salvador, we are trying at the same time that we are cleaning house with regard to problems that lie ahead, but, thanks to God, we are seeing tangible results. With the help of friendly countries, we have succeeded in drastically lowering all insecurity indicators, including homicides, extortion and robberies, among others. In our Administration, we have saved an average of nine lives a day from being murdered — and nine families from mourning the death of a loved one. I thank God that we have achieved that much faster than we thought possible.

I pray to God that this trend continues and that we will soon be able to transform El Salvador into one of the safest places in the continent — a country that, until only two years ago, many considered as the most insecure country in the world. Much remains to be done. There are several issues that we have to resolve, but if we use the tools that we humankind have created, we can accelerate the process that all developed countries have had to go through.

We are doing it. We are beginning to educate and build a new country. Our idea is to begin building a model society for the world, already embodied by several societies with their own particularities, as examples of what we can achieve as part of humankind. In advocating our vision of what can be accomplished as an interconnected society, I therefore call on all the thinkers and doers of the world who want to participate in the development and consolidation of a country to work with us to build the miracle sovereign State of El Salvador.

El Salvador is a country where the political will exists to take the leap that is so urgently needed by the General Assembly. In El Salvador, members will enjoy the availability of a Government with the desire, ideas and the mission of a forward-looking people striving to create their own future, while, at the same time, contributing to humankind — as well as excellent weather and waves every month of the year.

We are a country that is in the process of being built, which is extremely exciting, but we would like to speed up the process. That is why we are entreating the pioneers of the world to help us in both the public and private spheres in which we are almost completely connected throughout the world where with a few key strokes I can reach them in everywhere so that they can answer me, collaborate and build. That tool is there in order to move humankind at least a little bit in the right direction.

We are counting on the creative human imagination, which differentiates and will continue to differentiate us from other species. The human species will live thousands of years longer and always have something to invent. The possibilities of our —humankind's— future are almost limitless. But we have to take control of our destiny. Humankind must always seek its path, and the purpose of certain pioneers is to ensure the consciousness and the courage to do so. If we unite and succeed in achieving that goal, we may even live to see ourselves as the architects of one of the golden ages in humankind's history.

May God enlighten us all and allow us to rebuild the future together as brothers.

Thank you very much.

**Grenada** (see also A/75/PV.15, annex II)

**Statement by Mr. C. Peter David, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Labour of Grenada**

*Delivered on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I extend cordial greetings from the Government and people of Grenada, on whose behalf I am always honoured to address this noble institution and its distinguished members.

Mr. President,

I join those before me in congratulating you on your election as president of this 75th session of the General Assembly. I am confident in your stewardship and assure you of my delegation's cooperation and support. Your presidency and leadership during these turbulent times require agility in navigating such waters.

I also take this opportunity to commend your predecessor, Ambassador Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, for his able stewardship of the 74th General Assembly.

I further wish to thank both you and Secretary-General Guterres for your leadership and willingness to serve as guardians of the spirit of our UN Charter.

Mr. President,

Grenada recommits, unwaveringly, to the United Nations and its principles as outlined in the Charter. Our commitment, in national and international fora alike, to the norms of peace, equality, justice, and to human rights and multilateralism, is clear.

Let us never forget that the *raison d'être* of this august body is essentially to solve the world's problems through multilateral efforts.

The growing challenges we now face as a global community, such as poverty, poor education and climate change, have been compounded by this dreaded pandemic, and, in turn, risk stymieing the progress made in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. This risk is more acute than most to Small Island Developing States, such as Grenada, given our unique vulnerabilities, including climate change impacts and high indebtedness.

Mr. President,

These are problems that cannot be solved by individual member states. Our efforts must be collective, focused and strategic, if we are to achieve meaningful progress for the future we want.

It goes without saying that we are at a time of immense challenges, but consequently equally, immense opportunities. The world is at the juncture where the

old reality meets the genuine potential of a new world order — only if we can grab this moment through genuine multilateralism.

Across seas and continents, people have had to reconcile their pain, with the hope that is needed to survive and to thrive.

The United Nations we NEED is a United Nations that respects, promotes and encourages solidarity and joint action. The United Nations we NEED must promote equality and respect for all humanity. The United Nations we NEED must protect populations from the crippling effects of unilateral sanctions and other coercive measures. The United Nations we NEED must always keep at the forefront achieving sustainable development for all peoples.

Whilst the values and goals of the Charter continue to be relevant today as they were 75 years ago, its commemoration provides us a singular opportunity to not only reflect on our achievements, but also on our shortcomings. Above all else, we must remain resolute in ensuring inclusivity in overcoming and addressing the great challenges we face and do so together.

Mr. President,

Our Assembly is occurring in a global context, with continued and increasing anxiety occasioned by the COVID-19 pandemic and the economic, social and political upheavals it has caused around the world.

COVID-19 and its adverse impact on the economy of small states, particularly small island developing states, and the achievement of the sustainable development goals cannot be overstated.

In Grenada, for example, we are dealing with the devastating impact of the pandemic. From projections for an eighth consecutive year of growth, Grenada is now facing the stark reality of negative growth, triggered largely by the significant impact on tourism, construction and education. This has resulted in a drastic decline in Government revenue.

In July, for instance, the combined revenue collection by Customs and Internal Revenue Division dropped by 53 per cent compared to that of 2019; a decline likely to be replicated across our main revenue generating departments over the next few months. A staggering figure for a small island developing and micro-state as Grenada.

The Government of Grenada is, therefore, utilizing its reserves and seek international help to finance any deficits and bring relief to its citizens, while continuing the fight against the deadly virus. Already, we have attracted funding from the International and Regional Financial Organizations and friendly governments. We continue to look at other sources for grant and soft loan financing, as well as explore options for debt relief.

Notwithstanding these economic challenges, the Government established a COVID-19 Economic Support Secretariat, along with the relevant stakeholders, with the aim of providing relief measures to the sectors most affected.

Moreover, seven Cabinet-approved sub-committees were established with assigned responsibility for each of the productive sectors of the economy, namely, Tourism and Citizenship by Investment (CBI); Construction (Private and Public); Education Services; Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises; Agriculture and Fisheries; Wholesale & Retail Trade & Manufacturing; and E-Commerce/Digitalization.

Mr. President,

The inescapable fact, however, remains that despite the best efforts of individual governments, like Grenada, this unprecedented global scourge has deep and lasting economic and social impacts on already vulnerable states. While Grenada has thus far been able to successfully combat the health crisis doing our part to stop the spread and preserve life, with a total of 24 cases and currently COVID-19-free, such success was and is only possible through concerted action and stringent measures, which further exacerbate our socioeconomic crisis.

There is, therefore, an urgent need for greater cooperation in combating this dreaded pandemic and this reputable body is best suited to meet this challenge. COVID-19 impacts us all and we must work together as the failure of one link in our global chain to fight this pandemic affects us all.

Mr. President,

In the spirit of multilateralism and inclusion, Grenada has always supported and continues to support General Assembly Resolution 70/5, which calls for an end to the economic, commercial, and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

We call for an end to the Embargo against the Cuban people and we ask for continued solidarity and support for the Government and people of Cuba.

In spite of all its challenges, the role Cuba has played globally in helping to fight this global pandemic must be noted and lauded. The country's doctors have been at the forefront of this battle in all regions of the world.

Grenada wants to thank the Government and People of Cuba for the assistance in our own fight, as well as all the other nations which provided direct assistance in this regard.

Mr. President,

The United Nations membership must make Article 3 of the Charter a major priority in the next few years. Our founding fathers called for this body

“to achieve international co-operation in solving international problems of an economic, social, cultural or humanitarian character, and in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion”.

We must do all in our power to provide added economic opportunities for the developing world. I, therefore, call on the Economic and Social Council to actively pursue undertakings that could create an encouraging atmosphere for Member States to have the opportunity to raise the standard of living of its people particularly in this pandemic period.

In this current global environment, we must be ever conscious that inclusion in the process of the global economy is vital.

Finally, I must recall Article 1 of the United Nations Charter which calls for the Organization “to maintain international peace and security; and to that end: to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to peace.”.

We must be relentless in our pursuit of the purposes of this organization. Our challenge is to work towards the strengthening of multilateralism if we are to effectively address the global issues that threaten humanity.

Our quest must be for economic opportunities for all states. And our goal should be for the peaceful coexistence of all peoples of the international community.

Indeed, Mr. President, if we can achieve this, we will be well on our way to achieving the future we want.

I thank you.

**Barbados** (see also A/75/PV.15, annex III)

**Statement by Mr. Jerome Xavier Walcott, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Barbados**

*Delivered on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

Your Excellency, Mr. Volkan Bozkir, I congratulate you on Turkey's election to preside over this historic 75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I pledge Barbados' full support during your presidency. We are confident that the work of the General Assembly will be facilitated, Mr. President, by your steadfast dedication and competent leadership.

I also wish to express my appreciation to your predecessor, H.E. Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria, for his excellent stewardship of the 74th Session, and his wise guidance in adapting the Secretariat and Member States to the world of virtual diplomacy to advance the Organization's work in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At this critical juncture in its history, Mr. President, when the United Nations should be celebrating its 75th Anniversary, the world is consumed by many complex challenges. Challenges that arise from a world in crisis, and a world with no global leadership.

A world that appears to have lost its moral compass.

Globally, we are witnessing an increased focus on systemic racial injustices, economic and social inequities, transnational crime, terrorism, human trafficking, increased human displacement, rising autocracies, violence against women and the climate crisis, to name but a few.

Geopolitical tensions are increasing as some countries, displaying an alarming preference for unilateral action, are dominating and marginalising others. Multilateralism, one of the philosophical underpinnings on which this very organisation was founded in 1945, is under serious threat.

Power imbalances are causing the world to lose its equilibrium.

Notwithstanding, Barbados continues to hold in highest regard the fundamental precepts of international community and collective action.

The imbalance of which I spoke earlier Mr. President is also evident when you look at how some States are being treated with respect to their debt management.

The refusal of those who have it in their power to help revive our economies — whether it be by moratoria or refinancing, or even access to concessional loans and grants — is causing us greater economic hardship.

Small island developing states, many of which are in the Caribbean and Pacific, labour under onerous debt burdens. Our African brothers share a similar fate. Sadly, for many of us, this remains our post-Independence legacy.

When Barbados joined the United Nations, it was our intention to be craftsmen of our fate and plan trajectories for our post-colonial development. Instead, we now find ourselves ensnared in the false per capita-based construct of so-called "middle income countries". An assessment which bears little resemblance to our everyday

existence. An assessment which prohibits our access to concessional loans or financing in adequate amounts, thereby stymieing our development.

Is not now the time for debt forgiveness? Is it not now the time for the creation of innovative economic instruments to reverse the widening gap of inequality?

Another instance of one-sidedness is in the global financial system where organisations of limited membership engage in universal “blacklisting”, and correspondent banking relationships are unilaterally withdrawn. Our small countries are blacklisted for daring to exert their sovereign right to create their own taxation systems and are forced to compete under rules that we have had no voice in setting.

This arbitrariness in engagement with countries like Barbados must cease. It is done without our knowledge and involvement. It is contrary to the laws of natural justice. These combined factors are pushing our countries back into a state of post-colonial penury.

Mr, President, nothing more starkly exemplifies this imbalance of power like climate change. Severe weather events are occurring across the globe and are making our climate mitigation and adaptation efforts even more urgent. As small island developing states, we are struggling to stay afloat literally and figuratively. Just think about what is happening to The Maldives.

In Barbados we have lost over 60 per cent of our coral reefs along with the rich abundance and diversity of species that the reef ecosystems support. In response, my government has launched an ambitious programme called Roofs to Reefs to save the remaining reefs and hopefully use modern exciting new technologies and the creation of new marine protected areas to rehabilitate damaged reefs.

What is ironic is that some countries represented here today provide advice on how Small Island Developing States can increase their resilience, and then take decisions in other areas that can significantly undermine those efforts. It is no secret that the greatest contributors to the climate crisis do not bear the consequences proportionally, and consequently they are not incentivized to decrease their greenhouse gas emissions.

Barbados, for its part, is not postponing its climate ambition. We will not be deterred! Barbados will be fossil-fuel free by 2030.

The United Nations must take greater steps to strengthen and revitalize the climate agenda. The challenges of sustainable development and creating resilience to climate change will assume even greater importance for our deliberations and negotiations. The UN will, of necessity, have to thread the needle carefully on these issues, some of which are of an existential nature for our countries.

I take this opportunity to express Barbados’ appreciation to the host of COP-26, the United Kingdom, for doubling its contribution to the Green Climate Fund to £1.44 billion. We are of the view that the need for adequate climate finance in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic cannot be overstated.

Mr. President, yet another reality that confronts us now is that once again the world is on the brink of devastation, This time at the hands of a pervasive new enemy, the COVID-19 pandemic.

This novel coronavirus has stripped us bare!



It has manifested into a “perfect storm” that has undoubtedly derailed what limited progress we were positioning ourselves to make in implementing the 2030 Agenda, and has jeopardised our ability to meet the Sustainable Development Goals within the agreed timeframe. Above all, it has exacted a horrific toll on millions of families worldwide and has already taken close to a million lives.

That is why, Mr. President, Barbados unequivocally supports the Secretary-General’s call in his recently issued Policy Brief on Debt and COVID-19 that the international financial institutions, the multilateral development banks and the UN should provide debt relief. Equally, we support the calls by ECLAC for the use of a vulnerability index through which issues of debt can be addressed and access to capital determined.

We also eagerly look forward to the results of the upcoming High-Level Event on Financing for Sustainable Development in the COVID-19 Era and Beyond where Member States will be presented with to address areas ranging from Illicit Financial Flows to Sustainable Recovery and the crushing debt burden faced by Small Island Developing States.

We are resolute in our view that debt relief and support measures, or additional financing, cannot be bound to any conditionality.

Barbados is also supportive of the UN’s Economic Commission for Africa in its call for the creation of a special purpose lending vehicle, the Liquidity and Sustainability Facility, to support African, American and Caribbean countries in advancing sustainable development initiatives and, more immediately, facilitating access to liquidity, lending and investment. In terms of the current COVID-19 crisis, such a facility could significantly lower borrowing costs, support financial sustainability, and help countries access markets for needed bridge financing and liability management.

Mr. President, Barbados’ recovery from the economic and social impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic will be slow and painful. Resuscitating our economy has been a balancing act between reopening for tourism-related services and air travel, and ensuring that our population remains safe. Given the importance of the global tourism industry, we are of the firm view that workers in these sectors should be prioritised among those frontline workers earmarked to receive approved vaccinations. This would put hundreds of millions of people back to work and stimulate the largest global economic driver,

Barbados and the Caribbean community owe a great debt of gratitude to Director General Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus and the World Health Organization for their support and solidarity in ensuring our access to stocks of tests and equipment needed to combat COVID-19. Barbados is also grateful for the assistance received from many other countries, allies, partners and agencies around the world which enabled us to manage and control the spread of the virus.

The United Nations must continue to play a key role in the global response to the pandemic to help its Members in their recovery and to assist them to build back better and greener — better economies, better societies, better conditions for the upliftment of the poor and marginalized,

Permit me, Mr. President, to mention of a few other issues of key importance to Barbados.

It is widely recognised that chronic non-communicable diseases are a global problem and constitute the largest cause of morbidity and mortality in the world. We therefore call on the United through its Inter-Agency Task Force on the Prevention and Control of NCDs, and on the World Health Organisation, to develop a health strategy aimed at treating these NCDs as part of a comprehensive development plan. I take this opportunity to point out the nexus between NCDs as both predisposing and exacerbating factors for COVID-19. This linkage makes the management of the NCDs all the more critical.

Mr. President, Barbados calls once again for an end to the Economic and Trade Embargo imposed on Cuba, our sister Caribbean nation. Deep bonds of friendship and family link our two countries, and I wish to place on record Barbados' deep gratitude to the Government and people of Cuba for their invaluable assistance rendered through the provision of much-needed healthcare workers to help us respond to COVID-19.

With respect to Venezuela, Barbados continues to call for sustainable, legitimate and peaceful stability in this important regional partner. In this regard, we look forward to the holding of inclusive elections.

I am pleased to advise, Mr. President, that from April 25th to 30th 2021, Barbados will be the first Small Island Developing State to host the UNCTAD quadrennial meeting. We eagerly await the opportunity to welcome the world to our shores.

The UNCTAD 15 theme From Inequality and Vulnerability to Prosperity for All will facilitate the discussion of a wide range of issues, including the impact of COVID-19 not just on trade and development, but also on our ability to attain the SDGs and Agenda 2030. We will also focus on the future of the multilateral trading system, the measurement of vulnerability, the management of debt, and the structural transformation of developing countries.

Mr. President, let me emphasize that Barbados is clear in its conviction that after seventy-five years the United Nations remains the pre-eminent organisation to respond to the global challenges before us, and to support the international community in the task of rebuilding our societies and economies in an inclusive and sustainable manner.

However, the organization must become nimble and focus more on people, more on delivery and less on bureaucracy. Barbados fully supports Secretary-General Guterres in his repeated calls for a New Global Deal. This New Global Deal must make the United Nations relevant not only to its founding members, but also to countries like Barbados which joined the organisation well after.

Mr. President, now is the time for leaders to foster unity and solidarity. Now is the time for us to display global moral leadership to promote international cooperation and collective action.

I am obliged to you.

**Cameroon** (see also A/75/PV.15, annex IV)

**Statement by Mr. Lejeune Mbella Mbella, Minister of External Relations of the Republic of Cameroon**

*Delivered on Tuesday, 29 September 2020, at the 15th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: French]

Mr. President,

It is with great pleasure that I take the floor today to contribute to this year's general debate on the theme: "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism".

First of all, allow me to congratulate you and the other members of the Bureau on your election as president of the 75th session of the General Assembly.

I would like to salute your predecessor, Ambassador Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria, who efficiently led the work of the 74th session.

I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to our Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, who works tirelessly to build a world of peace and justice, in an environment marked by multiple bouts of upheaval.

For the first time in its history, the high-level week is taking place without world leaders being physically present and the general debate is taking place by video teleconference. This technical feat compels us to work together to provide a coordinated response that will help curb this health crisis.

Heads of State and Government,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The United Nations is celebrating its 75th anniversary — a respectable age. It was baptized in 1945 and has helped to unite the efforts of all Members to save future generations from the scourge of war, promote social progress and create better living conditions for all peoples.

The past 75 years have shown that the success of our Organization's mission depends on its ability to bring people together to meet the multiple challenges facing the world.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Whether we like it or not, multilateralism is on our minds.

Nationalism can at times be appealing, but it must be acknowledged that the majority of today's problems are transnational in nature. There is no shortage of examples. I could cite among many others, global warming, migration, terrorism, trafficking of all kinds and so on, which can be combated only through international cooperation.

For more than seven decades, multilateralism has spared the world the tragedy of another world war. It has contributed to economic development and technological advances in various parts of the world.

While the United Nations has played an important role in this process, it is clear that many conflicts and tensions remain. At the same time, as I mentioned earlier, new threats have emerged. Rising inequality is one of them.

In today's globalized world, Cameroon would like that special attention be paid to the manipulation of public opinion and, in particular to the spread of false information through social networks, which increasingly constitute genuine threats to peace.

Above and beyond declarations of good will, my country believes that attaining the Sustainable Development Goals also depends on how each member of the international community assumes its responsibilities. Despite its limited means, Cameroon strives to make progress in eradicating poverty, promoting the rule of law and improving the quality of education.

But it must be acknowledged that low-income countries still have a long way to go.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since its inception, our Organization has been committed to conflict management and peacekeeping. The increase in the number of peacekeeping operations is a poignant illustration. More than 70 United Nations peacekeeping missions are in operation to support peace processes through, among other things, disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and repatriation, ceasefire observation and the maintenance of law and order.

The growing collaboration between the United Nations and other multilateral bodies in these areas is a step towards advancing multilateralism. This is particularly the case of the African Union, with which joint missions have been deployed and whose example has inspired African missions.

As a troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations, Cameroon has shown an ongoing commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security. Indeed, my country has continued to contribute to this multilateral effort. For decades, Cameroon has contributed troops to peacekeeping operations, such as MINUSTAH, MONUC, MINUSCA and MONUSCO, and can, I believe, be satisfied with them.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The maintenance of peace and security also requires the United Nations to address the issue of climate change once and for all, as it has an impact on security. Yet some deny it, despite the fact that the increase in natural disasters is a stark reminder. It is clear that climate change poses a serious threat to human life. That is why urgent measures must be taken to ensure the future of humankind and to acknowledge the right of humankind to live in a healthy environment.

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Because peace is not merely the absence of war, but also access to food and basic services, Cameroon would like greater attention to be paid to the issue of development. At a time when many developing countries, in Africa and elsewhere, combat poverty, it is important for the markets of developed countries to be more open to them. This openness would be a useful complement to the official aid and technical assistance that these countries receive from external sources.

For its part, Cameroon aims to build a society in which everyone's basic needs are met. This entails ensuring food security, eradicating poverty, combating discrimination and expanding access to health care. It is in this spirit that my country adopted its national poverty reduction strategy.

However, these efforts by my country are being hindered by the actions of the extremist group Boko Haram in the northern part of Cameroon. A sociopolitical crisis has compounded those difficulties in the north-west and south-west regions of the country where armed groups are terrorizing the population. The Government's efforts to protect the population and restore normal living conditions in the areas concerned have begun to show signs of success. A gradual return to calm is expected.

My country's Government is determined to pursue its mission, based on the principles of the rule of law, human rights, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination, exploitation and injustice. In prioritizing the need for consensus, Cameroon has successfully led a major national dialogue to address, among other things, the root causes of the crisis in the north-west and south-west regions to respond appropriately. The discussions have led to the adoption of the law on decentralization, which includes, in particular, granting special status to the north-west and south-west regions and implementing a reconstruction and development plan for the regions.

While Cameroon is making every effort to address the challenges threatening its stability and development, we must acknowledge that it is difficult for a country to face terrorism on its own. That is precisely why the international community must be called upon to collectively combat terrorism wherever it may be.

Mr. President,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

After 75 years of evolving efforts to achieve multilateralism, racism persists, barriers preventing the free movement of people are once again being set up, and fear of the other, especially migrants, continues to persist — all of which call for genuine multilateralism.

It goes without saying that the revitalization of the General Assembly will have to be combined with the that of the Security Council, which has been under way for several years. With regard to that issue, Africa expects all its partners to show solidarity in allotting two permanent seats, with all attendant rights, and two non-permanent seats to redress a historical injustice — an arrangement on which everyone seems to agree today.

The successful conclusion of negotiations on those two reforms would be the best anniversary gift that we the Member States could offer to the UN and all humankind, for whom our Organization remains the most appropriate forum for promoting peace, security and social progress.

I thank you for your attention.