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Official Records

President: Ms. Espinosa Garcés. (Ecuador)

*In the absence of the President, Mr. Ke (Cambodia),
Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Commemorative meeting on the occasion of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace

Agenda item 15 (continued)

Culture of peace

The Acting President: The General Assembly will continue with the high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

Before proceeding further, I would like to appeal to all speakers to make their interventions brief and concise in order to make maximum use of the limited time we have for this high-level meeting. To enable all on the list of speakers to be heard, delegations should limit their statements in plenary meetings to three minutes when speaking in a national capacity, as announced in the letter of the President dated 26 March 2019. As members will recall, in its resolution 71/323, of 8 September 2017, the General Assembly called for strict adherence by all speakers to the time limits in the Assembly, especially during high-level meetings. Participants with longer statements are encouraged to read a shorter version of their text and to submit their full statements to the Secretariat for posting on the PaperSmart portal. Also in accordance with resolution 71/323, the “all protocol observed” principle is

recommended, whereby participants are encouraged to refrain from the listing of standard protocol expressions during their statements.

With the time limit in mind, I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace so that interpretation into the six official United Nations languages may be provided properly. I appeal for the cooperation of all speakers in observing the time limits so that all inscribed on the list of speakers can be heard in a timely manner.

Mr. Polyanskiy (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing today’s event and the delegation of Venezuela for its leadership in negotiating resolution 73/127, establishing 24 April as the International Day for Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. It is symbolic that the situation that Venezuela is facing right now is an illustration of the challenges facing the mechanisms of multilateral diplomacy.

We would like to remind the Assembly that when we created this Organization, in the aftermath of the Second World War, we outlined in the Charter of the United Nations the key elements of a polycentric world order as well as the founding principles and norms of international relations — the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in their domestic affairs and the prohibition of the use of force in international relations without the Security Council’s permission, except in self-defence. Adherence to those principles is a decisive factor for international stability and security. Along with other like-minded countries, the Russian

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Federation advocates for strengthening the multilateral foundations of international relations and the global economy based on the universal norms of international law and the Charter. We are guided by the fact that this worldwide Organization remains the only universal global forum for consistent, open and honest dialogue dedicated to building a more stable and just architecture of international relations.

Today the global political landscape is changing rapidly. The political influence of the developing world is growing, and it is demanding that its hopes and aspirations be heard. However, the process of becoming a polycentric world order requires greater responsibility from the international community. We have to make the polycentric system a driving force for mutual cooperation and productive partnerships, leaving behind the philosophy of the balance of power and the struggle for influence as things of the past. For that, we have to reject phobias, stereotypes and all the various geopolitical games, respect one another and work on behalf of the future of all humankind.

However, States' efforts to strengthen our polycentric foundations have come up against various actors' attempts to entrench their domination by rewriting the principles of civilized conduct. Their playbook includes taking unilateral action to circumvent international law and legitimate decision-making formats, ripping up existing agreements and introducing illegitimate coercive measures. Examples that come to mind include the bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, the occupation of Iraq in 2003, the flagrant manipulation of the Security Council's mandate in Libya in 2011 and attempts to overthrow legitimate authorities first in Syria and now in Venezuela. The basic principles of a Middle East settlement, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on the Iranian nuclear programme, World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations and agreements on climate change and disarmament are being undermined.

A theoretical foundation has emerged behind these measures. The attempts by individual States to replace the system of international law with some kind of so-called rules-based world order represent a serious challenge to the system of multilateral relations. These so-called rules are frequently an arbitrary interpretation of international legal norms to the benefit of a particular group of countries. The upshot is a practice in which decisions are taken by a coalition of narrow situational alliances branded as so-called multilateralism, after

which the rest of the States are invited to join these prearranged decisions and those that do not want to are put down as enemies of multilateralism.

These attempts — which are being made in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, UNESCO and a number of other bodies — to subordinate international organizations to the narrow interests of individual States and groups of States in a kind of privatization of their secretariats are deeply disturbing. What we are seeing behind them is a desire to prevent the establishment of a polycentric world and maintain their own domination of world affairs. But in reality such attempts lead only to a greater potential for conflict in international relations. Those who support these concepts would do well to remember that nowhere is there any mention in the Charter of any so-called rules-based world order, nor will there ever be. Indeed, there is a reference to the principles of international law in Article 1.

It is of course premature to suggest that the United Nations is being drastically weakened. Our global Organization still has a very solid margin for safety. However, we have to strengthen its authority. Together with the General Assembly, the Security Council has an especially important role to play as a key tool for supporting international peace. Besides our worldwide Organization, we greatly value flexible mechanisms for developing consensus-based collective approaches to world affairs such as the Group of 20, the Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) grouping and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Over the past few years, BRICS has evolved into a fully fledged mechanism for strategic partnership on three main fronts — politics and security, economics and finance, and culture.

We also want to point to the positive role played by regional integration organizations built on the principles of equality and mutual benefit, such as the Eurasian Economic Union, which functions on a basis of WTO norms and rules, which we are working to tie in with the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative. The principles of voluntary participation and strict adherence to the provisions of the Charter also form the foundations for the work of the Collective Security Treaty Organization, which is currently being transformed into a structure capable of making a constructive contribution to resolving complex issues related to strengthening regional and international security.

In conclusion, I want to once again stress some indisputable facts. In order to support peace and security at the global level, it is crucial to uphold international law, including the Charter of the United Nations, and to respect State sovereignty. It is also vital to strive to cooperate and not to confront one another. We must all acknowledge that all peoples have the right to determine their own future independently and without outside interference in their internal affairs. We can achieve positive results by uniting our efforts. That is the only way we can ensure a just, democratic and harmonious world order.

Mr. Arbeiter (Canada): Before I begin, I would like to express our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka. We stand in solidarity with them and with the families of the victims at this difficult time.

Each of us here today comes from somewhere. We each have our own stories to tell about our homes and homelands, our communities and how we got to where we are today. On this International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, I would like to share a little of my story with the Assembly. When he was visiting New York City earlier this year, I brought my father to this Hall. It was rather quiet. There were no official meetings in session, just a tour group in the gallery up there. And my father came up here, and I snapped a picture of him while he was on the rostrum. It was a real moment of pride, I in him and he in me.

My dad recently celebrated his seventy-sixth birthday. And his story, like that of so many others, happens to coincide with the history of modern multilateralism, the history of the United Nations. He was born in Eastern Europe during the Second World War. His parents were stateless. His younger sister, my aunt, was born in a displaced persons camp. The rest of their extended families perished, and they sought refuge, as so many others did then and so many still do today. My father and his family were fortunate enough to build a life in Canada as multilateralism matured. Over successive generations, they saw institutions take shape, treaties come into force and global standards set. Those rules were not uniquely about international peace and security but also sought to improve quality of life across the planet. They were about how to make international aviation and international maritime shipping safe, increase opportunity and reduce poverty, advance gender equality and leave no one behind.

The gains directly attributed to multilateralism over the past 70-plus years are undeniably impressive. But of course the system is not perfect. The benefits of multilateralism are not evenly distributed and the rules not equally applied. Too many, especially women and girls, are excluded from the decisions that affect their lives. Impunity remains widespread, including for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Climate change is a real and present danger affecting lives and livelihoods. It is clear that multilateralism must evolve as new challenges emerge and old problems persist. But this has always been the case. However slow, multilateralism is never static. It changes as we will it to. Its gains are collective, as are its setbacks. That is the thing about multilateralism. We are all in it together.

As we have been since 1945, Canadians are proud to do their part. Canadians value community. We are open to the world. We see strength in diversity. Many Canadians came from elsewhere, too. The notion that we are stronger because of our differences, not in spite of them, is the very foundation on which Canada was built. It is also central to how we approach our work at the United Nations. That means truly listening, learning and sharing.

(spoke in French)

I look forward to continuing to listen to and learn from everyone here. I look forward to hearing their stories, told in their languages.

(spoke in Spanish)

I look forward to continuing to listen to and learn from everyone here and to hearing their stories, told in their languages.

(spoke in French)

The vitality and effectiveness of multilateralism depend on its capacity to enable genuine dialogue among States. In that context, multilingualism is a cornerstone of effective multilateralism. It is essential to the dignity and equality of all. Multilingualism is a condition of confidence in the multilateral system.

Lastly, I should like to use my remaining time to express my gratitude, on behalf of Canada and all Canadians, including my family, first, to United Nations personnel, past and present, in the Secretariat and in the field; to the peacekeepers, military, police and civilian, women and men, deployed in United Nations operations; to those who distribute assistance, provide

shelter and collect witness testimonies; to those who respond to outbreaks of disease, risking their health and even their lives, and to the United Nations first-responders. I thank them all. We are all in their debt.

Secondly, I would like express my gratitude to all States Members of the United Nations. I thank my colleagues posted here, and those in Geneva, Nairobi, Vienna and everywhere else the United Nations is present, for their collegiality, commitment and camaraderie; for representing the interests of their countries and peoples; for their engagement in support of multilateralism and for coming here prepared to find solutions, day in and day out.

And thirdly, to the young people of Canada and the whole world; to the journalists who cover the United Nations and the state of our planet more broadly, who work to tell our stories not just when we succeed but also when we need to do better; to the civil-society representatives, activists and academics who push all of us to be better diplomats — to all of them, I express my gratitude and urge them, sincerely and seriously, to continue tirelessly advocating that we work better together.

Mr. Prasad (Fiji): I would like to express my deep gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

Over the past few weeks, we have had an opportunity to reflect on the order and scale of the challenges facing the world. In response to those global challenges, we have our global goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). But we know that to achieve the SDGs for all our communities and all our peoples, we need trillions of dollars more in funding than what is available now. We know that we need shared global political will of an intensity not seen before. We know that on its current pathway, the world is facing climate-induced ecological and environmental disintegration. We know that there are no front lines to climate change. The whole world is now on the front line.

The world needs multilateralism to work as never before in history. The world needs diplomacy to secure a refreshed consensus on multilateralism that can help get our planet back on a sustainable track. The window for making diplomacy work is fast closing.

Fiji supports multilateralism based on the values of fairness and justice, which are part of our DNA and enshrined in our Constitution. Those values also lie at the heart of the Charter of the United Nations.

In the past month alone, we have all been hurt by the great tragedies in Christchurch and, over Easter, sadly, in Sri Lanka. I want to share Fiji's condolences with the peoples of Sri Lanka and New Zealand.

Both those tragedies bring to the fore an important truth, which is that globalization has brought great benefits and rewards, but it has also fuelled discontent and anger. Social and economic exclusion fuelled by globalization are felt most intensely at very local levels. A just, fair and inclusive international order is a very basic demand of a refreshed multilateral order. Multilateralism has to work better and faster in reducing economic and social exclusion wherever they exist. In short, we have to deliver on the SDGs.

Fiji has always played its small part as a global citizen. We have chosen to serve the international community through United Nations peacekeeping, in missions from Lebanon to Rwanda. We have done that without missing a beat for 40 years, and we will continue to do so. We do so because we are certain that the United Nations is the most legitimate and credible institution to help regions and countries transition away from conflict.

Fiji has worked with fellow Pacific island States on securing a law of the sea. The Pacific island States are working with all other Member States to secure a treaty for the high seas. We are doing so not because it will benefit us a nation, but because all countries benefit from rules that can make our shared oceans more secure and far more sustainable. We need multilateralism to work to make our shared oceans sustainable and restore the health of our oceans and the livelihoods of many coastal communities across the world.

Why does a small State in the middle of the Pacific so firmly support the President of the General Assembly's efforts to make multilateralism work better? As a small developing State from the Pacific region, we often find that our voice goes unheard. We are not unique in facing this problem. But we want our voices to be heard precisely on those challenges where we need the world to work with us in finding solutions to the problems that we cannot solve alone. That is where our national and multilateral interests intersect. And it is no different for any other Member State, I am sure.

But most of all, we have to make multilateralism work because individuals and communities depend upon its success. Multilateralism is meaningful to young girls in Fiji who want to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. They look to the United Nations to help them navigate barriers in pursuing such careers, both within their own country and internationally.

Multilateralism is important because our coastal community looks to us, its diplomats, to tell international fishing fleets to extract fewer marine resources from their waters. When those communities ask such things of us, we look to the international rules, not to the strength or might of our navies.

Multilateralism is important to thousands of our women and men employed in the tourism industry, who fear that their livelihoods will be destroyed by the next climate-induced disaster.

These may appear to be minor details of national affairs, but multilateralism is very much the pooling of thousands such individual and community aspirations and desires. All of them, in one way or another, depend to some degree on multilateralism working well. Multilateralism quintessentially matters to all individuals and their families in all our countries. It is this line of sight between individuals and communities and the global system that we must restore.

This is the greatest ask facing multilateralism and the United Nations. Nothing could better restore faith in multilateralism than a powerful, forceful boost to how the United Nations system delivers. That is why we support the efforts of the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to refresh and revitalize multilateralism.

Our plan through the SDGs is solid. Progress is happening in the right direction. What we need now is a sea-change in how the multilateral framework pulls together to deliver better and faster for men, women, boys and girls in Fiji, across the Pacific and around the world.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure to once again thank the President of the General Assembly for her continued attention to multilateralism. We are also grateful for the concept paper for this debate, which has enriched our knowledge of this extremely important subject.

The continued and increasing common challenges that the international community is facing constitute a growing concern for everyone. Crises and violations of international law threaten peace and stability throughout the world. Considering that, international cooperation based on multilateralism and diplomacy is the only way to achieve peace and development and uphold human dignity, the main pillars of the United Nations.

International multilateral action is the most appropriate and effective way to address challenges across the world. Since the establishment of the United Nations, that approach has produced significant achievements, the most recent of which include the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (resolution 73/195).

The principle of multilateralism, upon which the United Nations was built, today faces serious challenges that could wipe out the gains we have achieved and undermine international efforts to bolster peace, development and human rights. If multilateralism is weakened or non-existent, it could result in bullying in international relations and the rule of the jungle, with risks and serious consequences for which all of us pay the price.

In that regard, we are concerned about the challenges facing our region as a result of the ongoing conflicts and crises aimed at achieving goals that are prohibited by the Charter of the United Nations and international law. They also constitute serious regional and international threats to peace and security and thereby affect the entire world.

The unjust blockade that has been imposed on Qatar for almost two years now, under false pretexts that are well-known to the international community, is a flagrant violation of international law, human rights and the Charter. It undermines international cooperation and the international multilateral system, which we are gathered today to strengthen.

Multilateralism and diplomacy are clearly demonstrated in the role of the United Nations as the main forum for international relations and burden-sharing to address challenges in accordance with the provisions of the Charter. It is incumbent on us as Member States to use our capabilities to strengthen the role of the Organization in addressing global challenges and enable it to achieve its objectives.

Consequently, the State of Qatar agrees with the vision of the President of the General Assembly for bringing the United Nations closer to the public. She has said that the United Nations is a house of diversity. The role and effectiveness of international institutions, especially our Organization, are intrinsically linked to their ability to put the vision of the Charter into practice, end violations of international law and human rights, address people's fears and concerns and realize the common aspirations of the international community to peace, security, development and human rights.

The State of Qatar has always been an effective and exemplary country when it comes to promoting peace, human rights and development. We will always use our stature and pluralistic diplomatic legacy at the regional and international levels to support the role of the international community in the areas of humanitarian assistance, the peaceful settlement of crises and disputes and the promotion of the rule of law and human rights. We are proud that Doha has become a capital of diplomacy and multilateralism. It is a haven for dialogue, tolerance and cooperation in the sciences, intellectual pursuits, sport, development, politics, freedom and law.

In demonstrating our commitment and our policy on the role of the United Nations and the responsibility of Member States to help the Organization in carrying out its mandate, the relevant entities of the State of Qatar have continued to build partnerships with United Nations organs and provide them with financial support. The State of Qatar recently provided United Nations agencies with financial support in the amount of \$500 million to assist with the reform plan for the Organization and implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We have been applying that approach with a view to supporting multilateralism at the international level.

In conclusion, we take the opportunity of this International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace to reiterate our support to and cooperation with the presidency and all United Nations organs in order to strengthen multilateralism for peace, development and human rights.

Mr. Al-Mouallimi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am pleased to be able to express my thanks and appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for organizing this meeting to commemorate the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy

for Peace. My country sponsored resolution 73/127, which proclaimed this International Day.

At the outset I would also like to express my deep condolences to the Government and the friendly people of Sri Lanka for the loss of life following the recent terrorist attacks. I stress once again that my country condemns all forms of terrorism, regardless of where or by whom they are committed.

To quote from the Holy Qur'an,

“O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other.”
(*The Holy Qur'an, XLIX:13*)

This Qur'anic verse attests to the tolerant Islamic faith that entrenches the value of diversity among peoples and promotes a culture of peace and dialogue among various civilizations and societies, as well as acceptance of one another and the belief that diversity is intrinsic to human beings and societies. There is no difference between peoples of different faith, religion, colour, language, ethnicity or race. As a motto of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, this Qur'anic verse is the compass that guides us in our complex international relations.

Today we are marking the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. Peace is the *raison d'être* of this Organization and the central pillar for achieving the noble objectives enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, foremost among them being to maintain peace and security and save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which has brought untold sorrow to humankind.

Today more than ever, the world needs peace. We are witnessing many conflicts, risks and security challenges, including ongoing occupations, denials of people's rights, and marginalization and persecution, which contribute to the spread of extremist ideologies, hate speech and terrorist threats in all their forms and manifestations. That requires all of us to ensure our close cooperation and effective coordination, while strengthening multilateralism and diplomacy to maintain our unity and solidarity, achieve justice and promote the values of peace and tolerance.

On this occasion, I want to stress the importance of not confusing multilateralism with interference in the internal affairs of other States. That is why my delegation rejects the statements by the Permanent

Representative of Germany about the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (see A/73/PV.78). I consider his comments an instance of flagrant and unacceptable interference in my country's internal affairs.

Guided by its Islamic faith, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been working on consolidating multilateralism and diplomacy while entrenching the principles of mutual respect in our international relations and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other States pursuant to our Charter commitments, while also advancing the three pillars of the United Nations — sustainable development, peace and security and human rights.

My country is keen to settle disputes through peaceful ways and means. We pursue initiatives aimed at using peaceful means to settle disputes, both regionally and internationally, based on our commitment to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law.

The Charter calls on regional organizations and international arrangements to play a leading role in the peaceful settlement of disputes that may arise among Member States. In the light of the various crises and issues that the international community is witnessing in many parts of the world, it has become apparent that the regional arena needs regional organizations and international arrangements to play central roles in enhancing multilateral diplomacy, settling disputes and defusing wars based on the principles of the global collective-security system and Chapter VIII of the Charter. According to Article 52, paragraph 2,

“The Members of the United Nations entering into such arrangements or constituting such agencies shall make every effort to achieve pacific settlement of local disputes through such regional arrangements”.

In conclusion, the United Nations is the international Organization that best represents the peoples and the countries of the world. It is entrusted with regulating international relations among its Members based on establishing international law, maintaining security and achieving peace.

The various changes and challenges on the security, economic and intellectual fronts that we are facing must compel us to strengthen the role of the United Nations and revitalize its institutions, in cooperation with all regional and international organizations

and arrangements. We must focus our attention on multilateralism and diplomacy to keep pace with current changes and developments and achieve our shared objective of achieving permanent peace. Let us all promote tolerance and live together in peace and good neighbourliness.

Mr. Rana (India): I would like to begin today by strongly condemning the serial explosions in our neighbour Sri Lanka, and to take this opportunity to once again extend our deepest condolences to the families of the victims and to the people and the Government of Sri Lanka.

I would also like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for organizing this meeting for the first commemoration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. The initiative of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, of which India is a founding member, to mark this International Day on 24 April, the closing day of the historic 1955 Bandung Afro-Asian Conference, is a significant step in focusing global discourse on multilateralism during what are troubled times.

As the Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly have said a number of times, multilateralism is in crisis today, perhaps when we need it most. Over the past couple of years, the issue and themes of multilateralism have been intensively debated, invoked and reiterated, and today's meeting adds to that essential conversation, perhaps the most relevant of the decade for this Organization and all of its Member States. The side event organized yesterday by the President of the General Assembly demonstrated that relevance once again.

The United Nations was created in 1945. Within 25 years of its creation, we had already achieved an expansion in the non-permanent membership of the Security Council. By the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, we had set ourselves on an ambitious path to achieve a global development agenda driven by the spirit of an increasingly interconnected world. As we approach the seventy-fifth anniversary, our challenges perhaps overshadow what we have achieved. Our work over the next two years will reflect the level of ambition we set for ourselves, and I hope we aim high under our present leadership.

Yesterday's discussions during the side event were insightful. Refreshingly, we heard from young

people and civil society about their expectations of the multilateral order. There was particularly relevant discussion about the unfair trading system, the urgent need for climate action, increasing inequality, rules that permit and perhaps increase inequality, and the crisis of the multilateral security architecture.

In addition, the developments of the past 20 years have multiplied our challenges. The promise and perils of new technologies, the ability of malicious acts in cyberspace to polarize communities and sow distrust among States, and the threats posed by terrorism have only grown. Taken together, those threats have the capacity to endanger the future we want for our young people. We are fast approaching the 2030 deadline. The time for effective climate action is also running out. Collectively, we are still lagging behind.

Here in this very Hall, during the latest general debate, we heard our leaders speak about the significance and challenges of climate action, migration and financing for development as some of the key areas where enhanced efforts and cooperation are needed. If we are to fulfil our commitments and produce genuine results, international cooperation and coordination will be fundamental. To reiterate the sentiments of the Secretary-General in that regard, ambition and urgency are needed to deal with those challenges. It is clear that the challenges we face today cannot be addressed by any one Member State or region alone. Frankly, there is no fall-back alternative to multilateralism for dealing with the challenges we face.

The conversation on multilateralism has not been easy, and it will perhaps continue to be challenging in future as well. But we will have to commit at every step of the process. While for some it may be a commitment to a rules-based order and to others a reaffirmation of the status quo multilateral framework, most members of the General Assembly believe that reform is the only path forward. The Secretary-General himself has called for the promotion of a reformed, reinvigorated and strengthened multilateral system — a vision that reflects the overwhelming sentiment of the General Assembly.

Speaking of reform, the reform of the peace and security pillar of the United Nations, the Security Council, has been perhaps the most important yet stagnant process undertaken by the General Assembly. We must take action to effect swift reform. We must take action so that Africa is given a central and leading

role in a truly international new order, especially in a reformed and expanded Security Council, and so that the Council reflects the world of today, not that of 1945.

Like every crisis, this crisis of multilateralism is an opportunity for all of us to enhance our efforts. We should redouble our efforts, not only to preserve what we have achieved but also to reinvent things as we move forward. That is essential to enable us to deal effectively with the range of new challenges and threats we face today and to do justice by future generations, who will inherit the fruits of our action or inaction.

We welcome the President's focus on young people. They will produce the leaders of tomorrow and their voices must therefore find a place in our discourse. The forthcoming seventy-fifth anniversary presents an opportunity for all of us to recommit to working towards our common goals.

In conclusion, I would like to say that in my country, discourse, argument and debate are part of our national character. We will therefore support any endeavours aimed at strengthening, reforming and rejuvenating our multilateral system.

Mr. Perera (Sri Lanka): Sri Lanka extends its heartfelt gratitude to Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the General Assembly, for her extraordinary efforts and support to Sri Lanka, in particular in dedicating this meeting to the memory of the victims of the dastardly attack that took place on Easter Sunday. Our gratitude also goes to all delegations that have expressed their condolences and support to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka at this most difficult time as we face an unprecedented challenge. We lean today on the international community and are overwhelmed by the support extended to us by all Member and observer States and their peoples.

Sri Lanka is pleased to be speaking at this historic moment commemorating multilateralism at the United Nations. We are proud to collectively serve in an intergovernmental body that despite its many challenges has for the past 74 years demonstrated that multilateralism is the only path to a peaceful world and that protectionism and isolationism are anachronistic concepts that have no place in a mature and forward-looking international order.

We commend the President for convening this high-level meeting and for her efforts in promoting the three pillars of the United Nations, sustainable

development, peace and security and human rights. And we acknowledge the extraordinary work of the Secretary-General in that regard, especially at a time when multilateralism is being undermined and threatened in many parts of the world.

We are pleased to align ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78) to commemorate the inaugural International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, a day that was set aside at the United Nations following the adoption of resolution 73/127, which was promoted by the Non-Aligned Movement, another intergovernmental body that manifests the collective good that flows from multilateralism.

We must continue to seek ways to promote and strengthen multilateralism and diplomacy in order to reaffirm the faith of all our people in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, advance the three pillars of the United Nations, which are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, reaffirm the importance and relevance of multilateralism and international law, and advance the common goal of a lasting and sustained peace through diplomacy. It is vital that Member States forge new and innovative partnerships in order to promote our collective values and ideals, and that they do so under the umbrella of multilateralism. It must be the common responsibility of all Member States to strengthen the international order based on the rule of law.

It is also appropriate to recall that the first multilateral treaties negotiated in the period of the founding of the Organization, such as the 1961 and 1969 Vienna Conventions on Diplomatic Relations and on the Law of Treaties, laid strong foundations for effective multilateralism in the years ahead. In that regard, multilateral treaties relating to the global commons — the preservation of the environment, oceans and outer space — and instruments on cooperation in the area of international criminal law, including on the suppression of international terrorism, reflect the spirit of cooperation among States that underpins those treaties.

The diversity of systems represented by Member States serves as an opportunity to find innovative solutions in maintaining and advancing the rule of law as a tool for sustainable development, peace and security and the realization of human rights. In

that context, the commitment of Member States to multilateral treaties and conventions can only help to solidify international norms and advance collective responses to global problems.

Threats to multilateralism often emanate from politically motivated fearmongering. The fear of globalization — an inevitable phenomenon that has existed for thousands of years and has only served to enrich societies and nations — and the surge in migration, among other factors, have stirred suspicion of multilateralism and fuelled protectionism, populism and unilateralism. We must therefore work together to allay such fears and frustrations and address them in meaningful ways that enable the dividends of multilateralism to reach all our peoples at all levels.

To that end, we must support the United Nations — our United Nations — and its many agencies and one another, as we strive to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, address gender inequalities, alleviate poverty and speedily address humanitarian concerns. It is our responsibility to demonstrate the relevance of this body, always remembering why it was established and firmly eschewing the brutalities of the past born of isolationism and authoritarianism, while embracing the inclusivity of the future that guarantees peace and prosperity for all.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina would like to take the opportunity afforded by the commemoration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace to reaffirm its firm support for the United Nations as the cornerstone of the multilateral system, and its strong commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

As stated in the President's concept note, multilateralism is at a crossroads. The principles on which the international order was based after the Second World War are being challenged on several fronts. Little by little, a narrative of scepticism and frustration regarding the multilateral system is gaining ground in some sectors of our societies, and a number of Governments seem to be resorting to an approach that offers only isolationism, protectionism and xenophobia in response to the challenges of the multilateral system. In that context, we must not forget the crucial contributions of multilateralism to consolidating international peace and security, strengthening the rule

of law at the international level, driving sustainable economic development, promoting disarmament and upholding respect for human rights, to mention just a few of its greatest achievements.

Many challenges clearly remain, and the work of the international community is not yet finished in several areas. However, we must not be misled by false or hasty conclusions. Although multilateralism has not always lived up to its promises and our expectations, the world would undoubtedly be a much worse place if it were not for the work of the United Nations and other multilateral organizations.

The constraints faced by the international community should not drive us to abandon a path of collective development based on the sovereign equality of States, the peaceful settlement of disputes and international cooperation. We must work together to build consensus in the multilateral arena and undertake the necessary reforms of international organizations so that they can face current challenges in a flexible, effective and transparent manner.

Argentina reiterates its wish to contribute constructively to strengthening the rules-based multilateral order and adapting it to the new global challenges. For that reason, we reaffirm our strict attachment to international law, which must guide the action of the international community on the basis of the belief that multilateralism is essential to international peace and security. At a time when multilateralism is being repeatedly challenged, we reaffirm the importance of ensuring that the General Assembly takes due account of the political dimension of its mandate in order to fulfil the lofty responsibility entrusted to it by the Charter of the United Nations.

Supporting multilateralism also involves combating impunity for the most serious violations of international law. In that context, and given that there can be no peace without justice for victims, we stress the central role of the International Criminal Court and the importance of ensuring that States cooperate with it in fulfilling their obligations under the Rome Statute and the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Hermida Castillo (Nicaragua) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to express our greetings and thanks for the convening of this event on multilateralism and diplomacy for peace.

Nicaragua associates itself with the statement made by our colleague Jorge Arreaza, Minister of People's Power for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78). Peace and multilateralism are closely intertwined and are fundamental principles of our Non-Aligned Movement.

Nicaragua is a peace-loving country that defends the sovereignty and self-determination of peoples in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as reflected in all our international relations and our commitment to multilateralism. We must rid our hearts and minds of the emotions and culture of war, violence, interference and intervention and replace them with an attitude and culture that promote peace and well-being for all and a genuine commitment to international peace and security. Nicaragua defends the peaceful settlement of disputes, sovereign equality, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the maintenance of the multilateral order without resort to the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of States.

Sustainable peace is essential to sustainable development and is achieved by respecting and observing the norms of international law without impositions of any kind. For that reason, Nicaragua rejects the use of coercive unilateral economic measures, which are a real obstacle to the eradication of poverty and the sustainable development of peoples.

Multilateralism is all of us in this Hall at this plenary. We come together to live in peace, promote the development of our peoples by implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, eradicate poverty, join forces to address global warming, and work for the common good of all humankind in good faith and respecting the sovereign equality of States.

Multilateralism leads us towards justice and peace. In order to address the great challenges facing the peoples of the world, the only option is for all nations to strengthen and fully respect multilateralism in order to build a better world with a better future for future generations.

Mr. Nayeck (Mauritius): I would like to thank the President for her leadership in organizing today's important first meeting to commemorate the

International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and Rwanda, on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.78).

At a time when multilateralism is increasingly under attack and questioned, today's commemoration provides us with an excellent opportunity to reaffirm our firm commitment to the ideals of the United Nations and its primary role in the maintenance of international law and the promotion of lasting peace. We reaffirm the principles of sovereign equality and respect for the territorial integrity of States, which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and are the foundations of multilateralism. We also reaffirm the supreme role of the International Court of Justice as the principal judicial body of the United Nations and the international community.

No country alone, regardless of its size and power, can address the global challenges of climate change, poverty and rising inequality, migration, the deteriorating conditions of our oceans, the proliferation of weapons and instability in cyberspace and, especially, terrorism. The recent senseless killings in places of worship should unite us in a common resolve to eradicate terrorism.

In our globalized world, virtually all problems faced by Governments require collective action. Whether it is plastic in the oceans or microplastics in the mountains, we need close collaboration and collective responsibility to respond to such global environmental challenges. Universality and ensuring that no one is left behind are the core principles of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Multilateralism must be reinvigorated through the promises and pledges of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. In order to rebuild trust, we must implement the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Our rules-based international system — with the United Nations at its heart — has played a key role in fostering peace and prosperity in many parts of our world for more than seven decades. That rules-based international order is a safeguard for all, enabling both large and small countries to benefit from a fairer, safer and more sustainable world.

Soon we will be witnessing the seventy-fifth year of the United Nations. We should make a solemn commitment to implementing what has been agreed in the past. We need a more transparent, reformed and effective United Nations. It is our collective responsibility to continue to promote, preserve and strengthen multilateralism and the multilateral decision-making process by working through the United Nations and adhering to international law.

Mr. Doualeh (Djibouti) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, Djibouti expresses its profound gratitude for the organization of this inaugural high-level meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate and promote the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. The event is an opportunity to celebrate the many achievements of the United Nations and to affirm the centrality of the international rules-based order that has enabled us to prevent wars and large-scale atrocities.

The States gathered here today have patiently and successfully built an architecture of international cooperation around the main international conventions, whether universal or very nearly. Among the most important of them is, of course, the Charter of the United Nations, signed in San Francisco on 26 June 1945. That fundamental document not only created an institution that will soon celebrate its seventy-fifth anniversary but also codified the rules for international peace and security.

The system of international governance based on clear and defined norms has been a shield against disorder and uncertainty. However, it must be stressed that multilateralism as we know it is in crisis and under attack, which makes it urgent to hold an in-depth debate on the causes of that challenge. The resulting tensions have led to a stalemate in negotiations, such as in the Conference on Disarmament. In other cases, when agreement has been reached, withdrawals have occurred for many reasons, including defects and inadequate implementation. While we welcome the establishment of norms through multilateral cooperation, a lack of follow-up and inadequate implementation is one of the recurring themes in criticisms of the United Nations.

Today's debate enables us to pursue the reflection initiated at the high-level dialogue held on 31 October 2018 led by the Presidents of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, where the scope of the issues was identified and an

outline of possible solutions proposed. That meeting, led by the main organs of the United Nations, resulted in a frank and determined assessment of the challenges we face. We will therefore not retreat. We nevertheless emphasize the urgent need for the United Nations to demonstrate its effectiveness and relevance in a world that is going through major upheavals.

Some questions cannot be avoided. What did the United Nations do to prevent the terrorist attacks on two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand? What did the United Nations do to prevent the coordinated terrorist attacks on churches and hotels in Sri Lanka three days ago? Beyond offering messages of sympathy and solidarity and while recognizing the primary responsibility of States to combat terrorism, we can legitimately question the effectiveness of the international cooperation framework for combating the radicalization efforts of terrorist groups that recruit through modern technological platforms distributed by social networks to reach a wider audience. What strategy for action does the United Nations intend to use to confront the changing nature of conflict in Africa?

Actors steeped in jihadist ideology are forming alliances with organized groups involved in transnational organized crime, giving rise to an emerging problem that will have devastating consequences for international peace and security. As the criminologist Jean-François Gayraud emphasizes, outlaws and jihadist militants who only yesterday lived separately in distinct spaces and homes have precipitated themselves — in the chemical sense — onto the same violent and predatory stage. That has ramifications for the diplomatic tools at our disposal for bringing about peace. We must refine and adapt them.

The United Nations, which is both a barometer and a mirror of international relations, as some have noted, must more effectively communicate the successes that its work has brought about to date and must also achieve visible and tangible results in the priority areas of peace and security, development and human rights. It must work urgently to resolve not only protracted conflicts but also more recent and potentially destabilizing conflicts at the regional level that pose a major threat to international peace and security. Peacekeeping operations must provide a definitive way out of conflicts, while supporting a political process that establishes an environment conducive to the restoration of a stable political order and economic reconstruction.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is an ambitious and potentially transformative programme, must be able to enjoy the required level of funding through the efforts of all stakeholders, including innovative financing mechanisms. According to estimates by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the minimum amount of funds needed to fill the gap to meet the infrastructure needs of developing countries is \$2.5 trillion a year. Current statistics show that based on current trends, there is a high risk that we will not meet our funding targets by the target date of 2030.

The latest report of the World Bank on the global economic outlook confirms fears of a gloomy picture owing to declines in industrial production and investments and the real threat of an escalation in trade disputes. Extreme weather conditions are further complicating what is already a difficult situation and could have a disastrous impact on global food prices. The Paris Agreement on Climate Change, which underscores the international community's unprecedented ambition to refocus on climate-related issues, must meaningfully enable the strengthening of capacities for adapting and generating resilience to climate change and the realization of adequate funding for achieving its goals.

Every effort must be made to ensure that discussions of multilateralism are not tainted by rivalries and controversies. We must be more interested in the practical dimensions of the task we have undertaken today than in polemics. To that end, we must question with the same urgency both the vote and the veto. Our discussions in this main deliberative organ should focus on seeking dialogue and consensus among States so that while avoiding paralysis, we can restore trust among States. Let us say no to dialogue that reinforces misunderstanding and yes to open dialogue, fully oriented towards finding creative solutions and forming reliable and credible coalitions.

We are fervent supporters of a robust multilateralism that considers the interests of all, developed or less developed. That is why we believe it is so important to hold debates on the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and the Security Council. Let me stress that multilingualism is an integral part of multilateralism. A meaningful dialogue among States requires that that need be taken into account.

Multilateralism faces many challenges and complex issues that we must overcome with patience, perseverance and a rational approach. Let us say no to giving up and yes to a new beginning, which, in addition to demonstrating a show of faith, will lead to a renewal of the commitment of all to multilateralism created to serve humankind.

Mrs. Raz (Afghanistan): I am pleased to address this high-level meeting on strengthening multilateralism and diplomacy for peace, which is the foundation of the United Nations, was an extremely important discussion in the aftermath of the Second World War and is even more vital for our world today. A renewed focus on strengthening international cooperation and multilateralism is a strategic investment in ensuring a more harmonious global environment that is grounded in the rule of law, human rights and respect for human civilization.

Our global village faces a number of challenges today that affect all of us together. International terrorism, extremism and discrimination have increased in various parts of the world. Beyond that, we also face the challenges of climate change, long-term conflict, migration and other regional and international tensions. For international peace and security to prevail, those challenges must be overcome and the effective mechanism that can make that happen is multilateralism.

Afghanistan's commitment to multilateralism and diplomacy for peace emanates from its abiding commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and international law. The maintenance of constructive, friendly and neutral relations with all countries, based on mutual respect for their territorial integrity and sovereignty and the promotion of peace, stability and prosperity in our region and the global community at large, is the cornerstone of our foreign policy architecture.

We know from our own experience that no challenge is too difficult to address through international cooperation. Afghanistan's transition to a democratic and pluralistic society is a testament to that reality. The convergence of many countries from different regions and political groupings in 2001 played an essential role in helping us start a new chapter in our modern history. Today international engagement and cooperation remain vital in helping Afghanistan to become a peaceful and prosperous country. More broadly, that

engagement has a profound impact on the promotion of global peace and security.

At this important juncture, we want to re-emphasize to all partners the need to view Afghanistan as a platform of cordiality and cooperation, based on amity and complementarity, and not as a ground for negative rivalries. We expect all countries to fully respect, support and reinforce that standing with common goodwill, cohesion and unity. At the moment, Afghanistan is heavily engaged in peace efforts to end the decades-long imposed conflict in our country. We have worked with international partners to forge a new consensus on the need for peace in Afghanistan, which we expect to reinforce our Afghan-led peace efforts to meet the goal at hand, which we will continue in a spirit of national unity and consensus reflecting the views of the full spectrum of Afghan society, especially women, who suffered the most during the dark era of Taliban rule. For our part, we will make sure that any eventual outcome of peace talks will safeguard and protect human rights and democratic principles, based on our Constitution.

The United Nations has a crucial role to play in promoting international cooperation in a rules-based international order. The Secretary-General's reform agenda for ensuring a more efficient United Nations is an important factor in strengthening the work of this institution to serve effectively as a platform of multilateralism and cooperation. We welcome the adjustments made across the peace and security, development and management pillars of the United Nations. That having been said, the ultimate success of multilateralism and peace rests with States themselves. All States must adhere to basic norms governing international relations. That includes fulfilling their good-faith commitments under the Charter and the various treaties and conventions related to global peace and security, social and economic development and human rights.

Afghanistan remains a firm supporter of the peaceful settlement of conflicts and disputes. We believe that diplomacy, dialogue and consultations, with a view to achieving common understanding and consensus, offer the best solution for resolving conflicts and ensuring sustainable peace and development. We support greater collaboration between the United Nations and regional organizations and platforms in order to prevent and resolve conflicts and promote development. The Heart of Asia and Regional Economic Cooperation

Conference on Afghanistan are two such initiatives, led by the Government of Afghanistan, through which many regional and international partners are working together for stability and prosperity in Afghanistan, the region and beyond.

In conclusion, Afghanistan reaffirms its strong commitment to promoting a rules-based international order, based on international solidarity and cooperation. We remain engaged in the region as a platform for greater cooperation and effective diplomacy.

Mr. Al Harthy (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to express my delegation's appreciation to the President for organizing this celebration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. The event that we are commemorating today is the result of Member States' awareness of the importance of multilateralism in the light of worsening global problems and the growing challenges facing humankind at the political, economic, social and even basic survival levels.

These problems and challenges have had a global impact, which ensures that solutions cannot be reached by any one State alone. Solutions require joint international efforts, which is the optimal way to address them sustainably. That highlights the need and the value of multilateralism and collective diplomacy, of which the United Nations is a cornerstone. Multilateralism and diplomacy can promote the three United Nations pillars of sustainable development, peace and security, and the protection of human dignity and rights. Our international Organization is the most representative of the aspirations and hopes of humankind and the best way to express them throughout the world.

In accordance with its foreign policy, my country, the Sultanate of Oman, believes in the importance of cooperation and understanding among States as the best way to find solutions to the problems and conflicts from which humankind is suffering in various regions of our world. We have always sought to serve the cause of international peace and security through our initiatives and ideas. The Sultanate enjoys an outstanding record of taking and supporting peaceful initiatives in the region. We will continue to play that role and adapt it to changing situations.

My country also tries to foster a culture of peace, coexistence and shared values among nations. In that context, my delegation is organizing an exhibition in this building, next to the Vienna Café, on the values

of tolerance in the Sultanate. I invite everyone here to come and see it. Visitors to the exhibit can have their names transcribed in Arabic.

In conclusion, the Sultanate of Oman supports the role of the United Nations as the main representative of multilateralism. The United Nations strives to find solutions to the various issues threatening international peace and security. We believe in the importance of all Member States supporting the efforts of the international Organization in order to settle conflicts peacefully and save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and other tragedies.

Mr. Rai (Nepal): I would like to begin by expressing my condolences to the people and the Government of Sri Lanka for the loss of lives and serious injuries in the recent bombing attacks. Our hearts and minds are with those who lost their nearest and dearest. Nepal stands by the people of Sri Lanka in this hour of grief.

I align my statement with that delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78).

The world today is more interconnected and interdependent than ever. There are enormous problems that do not respect national boundaries. Terrorism and transnational crimes must be curbed, pandemics controlled and the adverse effects of climate change checked. New technological achievements such as artificial intelligence and cyberworlds require new regulations. Ever-rising inequality and inequitable access to the development of resources have betrayed humans' hope for a just and prosperous world.

Those global challenges require a global response and global solutions, which are possible only through multilateralism. Our resolve to promote and strengthen multilateralism is therefore needed far more today than ever before. Multilateralism is a sine qua non for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and establishing a peaceful world. It ensures the effective implementation of international law. It provides a voice and a vital place for small and developing countries on the global stage, empowering them to set equitable rules for our global order.

Nepal firmly believes that the United Nations is the epitome of multilateralism. The principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the norms of world peace are the guideposts for multilateralism. Diplomacy must be given every chance to prevent conflicts and

promote international peace and security. The maturity of human civilization will be reflected only if we embrace diplomacy, not war, to settle our differences. Nepal hopes that this Day will remind us every year of our interwoven destiny in this interconnected world, and re-energize us to work together for development and peace.

I would like to conclude with a call to further strengthen our equitable, transparent and rules-based multilateralism with a stronger and more effective United Nations at its front and centre.

Ms. Skåre (Norway): I would like to express our deep condolences to the people of Sri Lanka and all those affected by the horrific terrorist attacks on 21 April. Our thoughts and heartfelt sympathies go to the deceased and injured and their families and friends. We strongly condemn those senseless attacks on worshippers and visitors in that beautiful country. The attacks are a powerful reminder of the importance of international efforts to eliminate all forms of violent extremism.

In 1945, when we established the United Nations, we pledged to save our future generations from the scourge of war. We pledged to work together to promote economic and social advancement and to uphold respect for human rights and fundamental rights for all. Our job is not done. There are a number of challenges to multilateral cooperation today. No State can single-handedly tackle those arising from climate change, conflict and instability, poverty and humanitarian crises, the sound management of the oceans and free trade, to mention only a few. Furthermore, the benefits of globalization are unevenly distributed. There are significant inequalities within and between countries. That is not just or in accordance with our common values, and inequalities fuel discontent and unrest.

To address those challenges, we must work together at all levels, from local to global, within nations and among States. We will not succeed in reaching our common objectives if we pursue the paths of unilateralism and polarization. We must learn from the past, as well as from our successes. We have achieved a lot working together within the United Nations. We have prevented wars and built societies. Indeed, one country that has benefited greatly from multilateral cooperation through the United Nations is Norway. We are a small nation, and we need a global international

order in which the rules are clear and followed by the world's nations. We were among the founding members of the United Nations, and the United Nations has always been a cornerstone of our foreign policies. We love the United Nations, and the leadership of the United Nations has a tremendous impact on public opinion and debate in Norway.

The Norwegian Government is currently assessing how we can best contribute to strengthening multilateralism. In a new white paper, we are analysing the defence of international law, peace and security, global free trade, respect for human rights, sustainable development and transnational challenges such as climate change, migration and pandemics. Norway's membership in the United Nations, and its policies towards and contributions to it, have broad political and popular support in Norway. Through its taxation system, Norway is able to be among the world's top per capita contributors to the United Nations and its funds, programmes, organizations and agencies. We engage politically in important areas such as ocean policies, through which we advocate clean and healthy oceans that are sustainably harvested, which is a prerequisite both for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and for food security. We engage in global health, education and humanitarian assistance, as well as other policy areas, and we invest heavily.

We defend and promote our common values and human rights. We promote equality within and between countries. For many years, Norway has also engaged in conflict resolution. All of those efforts, in partnership with others, contribute to a rules-based and predictable multilateral order. It is in our common interest to secure that order. The world needs efficient, transparent and legitimate organizations that have the people's trust. We need a strong United Nations that is fit for purpose, and for that reason, Norway strongly supports United Nations reform.

Finally, we must forge partnerships that are genuine and long-term. To name only one example, Norway is launching a cross-regional initiative to defend multilateral cooperation. We are reaching out to Nordic and African Member States to join forces based on shared interests in the field of multilateralism, because we believe in the value of working together.

Norway is a predictable and consistent partner in our joint efforts for a better future for all, and we

hereby renew our commitment to the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Rybakov (Belarus) (*spoke in Russian*): Belarus welcomes the establishment of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, which we are celebrating for the first time today, thanks in part to the efforts of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. The inclusion of this date in the international calendar is deeply significant, serving as it does as a clear example of how States Members of the United Nations are willing and able to work together constructively to achieve the common and unifying goal of promoting the principles of multilateralism for the sake of peace and prosperity.

Unfortunately, today's celebration also reminds us of the negative challenges that the entire international community is grappling with today. The crisis of trust among the world's most powerful countries is accompanied by increased confrontational rhetoric, open disregard for the norms and principles of international law, interference in domestic affairs and attempts to undermine the situation in various regions and countries of the world to benefit individual geopolitical interests. We cannot help being concerned about the unprecedented attempts to drag the United Nations into initiatives aimed at discrediting the legitimate authority of States, both in the General Assembly and other international forums. In circumstances where the fundamental mechanisms for maintaining international security are being eroded, we must look critically at the current situation and reconsider our approaches to building a global dialogue for peace.

Belarus is not just committed to the principles of peace-loving and non-confrontational policies, but is also actively developing new ideas about how to put those principles into practice. We believe that multilateralism could be strengthened through the initiative of Belarus and its President to reconstitute a comprehensive process, based on a broad new discussion, for restoring relations between East and West, similar to the Helsinki Process. It is quite clear that there is an urgent need for a new, large-scale international dialogue aimed at overcoming the existing differences in the relations between States and groups of States in the shared Euro-Atlantic and Eurasian space. Rather than hiding behind slogans, we are setting an example of a serious attitude to the maintenance of international peace and security. Belarus is actively contributing to the negotiation process on the settlement of the

conflict in south-eastern Ukraine by organizing the meetings of the Minsk Trilateral Contact Group and its working groups. We are also contributing significantly to the development of international expert dialogue on security policy issues. In November of last year Minsk became a platform for a world-renowned expert discussion, the Munich Security Conference Core Group Meeting, which brought together in Minsk European leaders, prominent authorities and political figures, representatives of international organizations, the academic community and other experts.

We intend to continue promoting and strengthening the principles of multilateralism in international relations through cooperation and dialogue. We call on all responsible States not to remain on the sidelines, because only our joint efforts can change the world for the better and give us all hope for a safe and secure future.

Mr. Duarte Lopes (Portugal): I would like to thank the President for convening this high-level meeting. As this is my first intervention since the barbaric terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka, I would also like to convey our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka and all the countries affected.

Portugal aligns itself with the statement delivered previously by the observer of the European Union (see A/73/PV.78).

We consider it crucial to preserve and strengthen the multilateral system, the irreplaceable role of the United Nations and its capacity to advance a comprehensive and cross-cutting concept of peace. No country can address every threat on its own. Only by building bridges and broadening dialogue can we seriously reach and engage in meaningful solutions. Disinvesting in the role of international organizations runs the risk of repeating the mistakes of the twentieth century. I would like to briefly highlight three examples of Portugal's clear commitment to multilateralism.

First, we are currently engaged in six United Nations operations — Mali, Darfur, Colombia, South Sudan, Haiti and the Central African Republic. In the latter, we have a quick-reaction force, which embodies our strong commitment to the work of stabilizing the country and the region. Secondly, during the most recent negotiations on the scale of assessments for United Nations peacekeeping operations, Portugal decided to voluntarily relinquish the discount to which it was entitled. Thirdly, we are committed to the horizontal

implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. One specific example is Goal 14, where we are actively involved, along with Kenya, the Special Envoy for the Ocean and the Secretariat, in the preparations for the second United Nations Oceans Conference in 2020.

I also want to emphasize the role of the inclusive participation of civil society. Diplomacy for peace concerns all stakeholders, and the participation of civil society is essential to enabling Member States to design and implement appropriate policies. They must be fully included in those processes.

I would like to conclude by recalling a statement that President Rebelo de Sousa of Portugal made during his address to the General Assembly during this year's general debate.

“Portugal believes that multilateral action, political dialogue and diplomatic wisdom are the only possible path to harmonious coexistence among nations and peoples” (*A/73/PV.9, p.26*).

Mr. Matjila (South Africa): At the outset, I would like to join other delegations in thanking the President for convening this meeting to mark the first-ever special International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, following the adoption of resolution 73/127.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see *A/73/PV.78*).

Resolution 73/127 designates 24 April as the annual International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, which is a reaffirmation of the Charter of the United Nations and its principles in resolving disputes among countries through peaceful means. The observance of this Day complements the Assembly's adoption of the political declaration (resolution 73/1) at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit, on 24 September 2018 in this Hall, where we, as States Members of the United Nations, committed to redoubling our efforts to build a just, peaceful, prosperous, inclusive and fair world, and to revive the values for which Nelson Mandela stood. We also committed to furthering understanding and reconciliation among the nations and peoples of our world. We recognized that the world has changed significantly since the founding of the United Nations and acknowledged that global peace eludes us to this day. We therefore have a responsibility

to find sustainable solutions to bring lasting peace and address threats to global peace and security, including challenges to the primacy of multilateralism. At the apex of multilateralism is the United Nations system, the global centre of power and inter-State relations.

Since 1994, South Africa's foreign policy has been inspired by its history and guided by its ethos and principles, foremost of which is the desire for a just, humane and equitable world. In the conduct of our foreign policies and international relations, we attach the utmost importance to the promotion of human rights, democracy, justice and the rule of international law. Those principles of necessity place multilateral institutions, specifically the United Nations, at the centre of our foreign-policy activities, and that is why part of our duty is to protect and defend multilateralism. The multilateral system can also assist all of us in managing complex and new issues, as well as new international threats such as terrorism, climate change, pandemic disease, food insecurity, disarmament, including nuclear disarmament, migration, protectionism, inequality, poverty, unemployment and other challenges. Common problems can no longer be solved without the collective efforts of all members of the international system, acting together through multilateral institutions.

The centrality of the United Nations to South Africa's international relations strategy is therefore based on a strong belief in a rules-based international system of global governance. As we did 74 years ago, when we became a founding member of the United Nations, today, as we stand on the verge of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, we still believe that the multilateral system should be an indivisible construct based on common and shared values. It should set norms and standards that find universal application, without exception. The normative framework flowing from the multilateral system should be at the service of humankind and not the parochial interests of the few. My delegation therefore believes that the initiative of the Non-Aligned Movement to recognize this Day on an annual basis acknowledges the use of multilateral decision-making and diplomacy as the right tools for achieving the peaceful resolution of conflicts among nations.

That is also in line with Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, which promotes the pacific settlement of disputes. That non-aggressive and pacifist approach reinforces the three pillars of the United Nations — sustainable development, peace and

security, and human rights. Those pillars are indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. They support each other and should be treated equally.

My delegation believes that if conflicts are not settled through multilateral diplomacy, such situations will lead to wars or threats of war and will ultimately result in the suffering and disenfranchisement of millions of people. Women and children are among the people most affected during those conflicts. The United Nations, through the Charter, can bring nations together to avoid such catastrophes, which are often man-made. The global geopolitical challenges that humankind faces are complex and multifaceted. No single country, no matter how powerful and wealthy, can seek to assume for itself the global unilateral monopoly on seeking solutions to all of the world's problems. Most regional conflicts require a multilateral approach and high-level diplomacy.

South Africa, as a founding Member of the United Nations, always stands for respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which includes recognizing the rule of law and the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all States Members of the United Nations.

In conclusion, we reaffirm our support for multilateralism and diplomacy as the best way for States to resolve conflicts and respect international institutions and agreements as guiding principles in relations among States. Multilateralism is particularly important today because of increased global and regional economic interdependence, the emergence of new major systemic changes affecting the global distribution of power and the enhanced role of civil society. The best safeguard for the security and prosperity of us all is to consolidate rather than erode the rule of law and embed the principles of cooperation over conflict and collaboration over confrontation. The challenge therefore is to expedite efforts to transform global politics from a power-based hierarchical construct to a rules-based system of international society.

As we reform the United Nations system to make it fit for purpose in our times, we should also speed up the reform of the Security Council to make it more representative and to include Africa in its special permanent category.

Mr. Edrees (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to welcome today's high-level meeting to commemorate, for the first time in the

history of the United Nations, the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, in line with resolution 73/127, which was adopted by consensus in September 2018.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered today by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78).

We thank the President of the General Assembly for her efforts and contributions since the beginning of her mandate to link the United Nations directly to all people. That approach requires strong, effective and multilateral diplomacy to address the challenges that the international community currently faces. We also welcome the efforts of the Secretary-General, who leads the work of the United Nations by supporting multilateral diplomacy, collective international action and joint international efforts to achieve peace, prosperity and respect for the rule of law for all humankind.

We all know that multilateral diplomacy is criticized because it is said to be unable to achieve a tangible impact on the ground in many areas and issues. In addition, some United Nations resolutions, including binding Security Council resolutions, continue to be disrespected because the United Nations has not succeeded in resolving crises that have been ongoing for decades and has been unable to take effective action in several sensitive situations, in addition to applying double standards in some cases. In that regard, we would like to underscore some important points that we believe are necessary for the promotion of our work and of multilateral diplomacy.

First, it is important to reform and increase the membership of the Security Council and address the problems caused by the repeated use of the veto.

Second, it is important to carry out periodic reviews of the sanctions regimes imposed by the United Nations to prevent any unintentional consequences and to ensure that sanctions achieve the goal for which they were adopted.

Third, it is important to promote the Secretariat and its counter-terrorism structures, including by providing the necessary financial resources from the United Nations regular budget so that the Secretariat is able to achieve tangible progress on the ground, especially by helping States to build their capacities to prevent and fight terrorism, and taking the necessary

measures against regimes that support terrorism with money, weapons and incitement and provide safe havens to terrorists, in violation of binding Security Council resolutions.

Fourth, it is important to implement Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations, which allows the Secretary-General to bring to the Security Council's attention any matter that in his opinion may threaten the maintenance of international peace and security.

Fifth, it is important to enhance the role of the International Court of Justice, especially in its capacity to give advisory opinions, in line with Article 96 of the Charter.

Sixth, it is important to implement Article 34 of the Charter, which enables the Security Council to investigate any dispute or situation that might lead to international friction or give rise to a dispute.

Seventh, it is important to improve the peacekeeping and peacebuilding system at the United Nations.

Eighth, it is important to give developing countries preferential treatment in order to help them to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We emphasize the need for sustainable and predictable funding for their efforts to eradicate poverty, while stressing the principle of national ownership and seeking to reduce conditionality when providing voluntary contributions.

This year Egypt has the honour of presiding over the African Union. We are continuing our work to promote the concept of multilateral diplomacy at the African level. We stress the importance of committing to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and the rules of international law, and of making every effort and taking specific initiatives to achieve peace, security, sustainable development and respect for human rights in our African continent.

At the national level, Egypt has worked consistently for constructive communication and engagement with many peoples and States at the bilateral, regional and international levels. We have sought for decades to be at the forefront of States participating in United Nations peacekeeping operations. Egypt is currently one of the 10 largest troop- and police- contributing countries in United Nations peacekeeping operations. As a member of various organizations, we seek to introduce initiatives with a view to achieving clear results that meet the interests of all Member States, such as our

initiative, as a member of the Security Council in 2016 and 2017, to counter terrorist narratives, which led to the unanimous adoption of resolution 2354 (2017).

In conclusion, Egypt is always working to promote diplomacy in general to support the culture of multilateralism and coexistence. We organize various events to bring peoples and countries together in order to mainstream ideas of peace, reject violence and promote the role of women and young people in society. In that context, from this rostrum Egypt calls on all countries of the world to let their young people participate in a very important event that takes place periodically in Egypt, the Global Youth Forum, held every year in Sharm El-Sheikh. The Forum has become an international platform for effective and constructive dialogue among young people from every country in the world.

Finally, Egypt stresses its commitment to multilateral diplomacy and the importance of enhancing the concept of partnership at all levels, while strengthening preventive diplomacy in order to promote sustained peace and achieve stability, development and prosperity.

Mr. Biang (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): My delegation thanks the President of the General Assembly for taking the initiative to convene today's debate and in particular for her focus on the promotion of multilateralism and diplomacy for peace on the first International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

Gabon aligns itself with the statement made previously by the representative of Rwanda on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.78).

Today's discussions present a twofold challenge. First of all, they are taking place in an international context of high uncertainty, centred in particular around the persistence of crises and conflicts throughout the world and an unprecedented migrant and humanitarian crisis. Moreover, the rise of extremism of all kinds inevitably challenges the ideals that unite us and strongly contributes to weakening multilateralism and diplomacy for peace, which we advocate in this forum. The erosion of multilateralism is also reflected in the emergence of a system dominated by unilateral actions that foster withdrawal from engagement and lead to the rise of nationalism.

Such recurring attacks on our common values give us every reason to challenge and explore new

avenues for revitalizing our Organization. The United Nations, by virtue of its universal scope, remains the only organization capable of responding holistically and effectively to the challenges of today's world. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Global Compact on Migration, to list only the most recent achievements, attest to our capacity to meet the world's aspirations.

Gabon remains deeply convinced of the importance of pursuing our commitments and uniting our efforts to meet the challenges of the future as well as today. We have done it before, we know how to do it and we can do it again. Together, we can overcome the threats posed by terrorism and violent extremism. Together, we can find lasting solutions to our many crises and conflicts, including humanitarian and migrant crises. Together, we will succeed in meeting the challenges of climate change and other cross-cutting threats. Above and beyond invective, and without prejudice to the relevant criticisms raised, it goes without saying that the continued pursuit of peace and security, as well as progress in sustainable development and human rights, is possible only through collective efforts.

Multilateralism and diplomacy for peace remain essential tools in that regard. In that context, reforming our institution becomes imperative. We must promote a new multilateral diplomacy that is focused essentially on our peoples' well-being and is closer to them. It must not just take into account the realities on the ground but also promote positive change. Now more than ever, the peoples of the world need a strong, effective, committed and forward-looking United Nations. In that regard, my country welcomes the reforms initiated in the United Nations and particularly those aimed at adapting it to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Those reforms should also compel us to mobilize increased funding for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Strengthening the partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations, on the one hand, and among regional organizations, on the other, as well as promoting triangular partnerships, will also promote multilateralism and diplomacy for peace.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my country's commitment to multilateralism, which we believe to be the most appropriate response to the global challenges of today and tomorrow.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening today's high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

Resolution 73/127, of which Azerbaijan was a sponsor, declares today, 24 April, as the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace in order to promote the values of the United Nations and reaffirm the faith of our peoples in the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

It is symbolic that the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace coincides with the date of the conclusion of the Bandung Afro-Asian Conference in 1955, which paved the way for the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. We are proud to be hosting the next Summit of the Movement later this year in Baku, the capital city of Azerbaijan, under the theme "Upholding the Bandung Principles to ensure concerted and adequate responses to the challenges of the contemporary world". As the next Chair of the Non-Aligned Movement, Azerbaijan will spare no effort to further promote multilateralism, the rules-based international order and the culture of peace and dialogue among civilizations, religions and cultures.

The United Nations is a critical pillar of multilateralism, and the purposes and principles of its Charter constitute the foundational normative framework in international relations. There is no alternative to commonly agreed rules and their universal application. It is our collective duty to promote and support a reformed, reinvigorated and strengthened multilateral system. Azerbaijan commends the Secretary-General's strong commitment to reform and fully supports his determination to genuinely contribute to preventing wars, sustaining peace and making the United Nations more integrated, effective and efficient.

First and foremost, all States must strictly comply with their international obligations, in particular those relating to respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and the inviolability of their internationally recognized borders. The objective of ensuring a peaceful, just and prosperous world is hardly achievable if the universally accepted fundamental values, norms and principles are overtly disregarded so as to whitewash acts of aggression and other illegal actions. Needless to say, the implementation of resolutions adopted by the principal organs of the

United Nations and accountability take on significant importance in that connection. The apparent disregard of Security Council resolutions containing binding demands, along with attempts to evade their execution by secondary measures, under whatever pretext, cannot constitute an accepted practice in the Council's discharging of its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The United Nations, which was established to prevent war and human suffering by binding all its Members through a common rules-based order, plays a central role in ensuring that all involved in addressing peace and security concerns uphold the uniform application of the purposes and principles of the Organization. Support for that role of the United Nations and for safeguarding its collective security and political and humanitarian mechanisms is crucial to maintaining peace, stability and sustainable development.

Coherent global responses and common efforts, with an effective United Nations at the centre, are the most effective ways to address conflicts, fight climate change and global terrorism, manage forced displacements and migratory flows and achieve the goals of peace, inclusive sustainable development and human rights for all.

Ms. Mudallali (Lebanon): I would like to thank the President for convening this high-level meeting to mark the very first International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, a theme that Lebanon greatly values.

Before I begin, I want to express our sincere condolences to Sri Lanka and its people for the horrendous terrorist attack. Those who perpetrated that crime are outside the bounds of humanity.

It seems somewhat obvious for all of us to be taking part in this commemoration today, as we know only too well that preserving the beleaguered multilateral rules-based system remains key to promoting peace. Lebanon can testify first-hand to the importance of working together in a strengthened multilateral framework. Throughout its history, Lebanon has strived to address its challenges through constructive dialogue and inclusivity.

The contribution of the Arab countries and international partners was instrumental in ending the civil war that tore apart the fabric of our country for 15 years. Collective cooperation to end a conflict

is a testament to what can be achieved through multilateralism and diplomacy.

Again, after a devastating invasion, the collective will of the world came together to help Lebanon ensure peace and security. The contribution of the United Nations and the international community to stabilizing the situation in southern Lebanon with the establishment, more than 40 years ago, of a peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), is also proof of their relevance. UNIFIL is today made up of personnel from more than 40 countries, who work every day alongside the Lebanese authorities to promote peace and stability.

The Charter of the United Nations, carefully drafted, provides us with a framework to help address our many existing challenges with preventive measures and strengthened cooperation. The Charter enshrined in law shared values, such as sovereignty, territorial integrity and the peaceful settlement of disputes, that all countries should hold dear. It remains one of our most valuable assets. Adhering to its purposes and principles and complying with United Nations resolutions is of paramount importance. As a small State, we know all too well that international law does not come down to some obscure theoretical concept but rather shields us.

We need a re-energized multilateral approach and preventive diplomacy. That cannot happen without building trust with those for whom the United Nations should be most relevant. That can happen only through more inclusivity, with greater involvement of stakeholders, including young people, women, the private sector and civil society, and by delivering on our purposes.

A few weeks ago, in the Security Council Chamber, the decision was made to open the curtains to enable light from outside to come in and spread across that organ of the United Nations. Let us be inspired by that initiative to let more light and more transparency into this building and into our work. Let us be inspired to showcase it to the world. The world needs to know and trust us. Let us truly work harder together.

People are more connected than ever around the world. But inward-looking, isolationist sentiment has never been greater. The more people know, the more scared they seem. Bonds appear to be broken or fraying everywhere. It does not have to be this way. We can do better. We can be the glue that puts us back together.

The United Nations can lead that charge. Let diplomacy be our first response, and not the last resort.

Mrs. Harqoos (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for organizing this important meeting, in which we are celebrating the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace for the first time. I would also like to commend the Secretary-General and the President for their efforts to enhance multilateralism and diplomacy within the Organization in the interests of international peace and security.

The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace is a way to promote the values of the United Nations while reaffirming our peoples' belief in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and in the importance of multilateralism for achieving sustained peace through diplomatic efforts. The United Nations is an embodiment of multilateralism. It is the main tool used by Member States to address common international challenges that are complex and multifaceted. We are still in dire need of finding solutions to those challenges by enhancing the important role of the United Nations and other international and regional multilateral organizations.

Multilateralism plays an important role in promoting dialogue and understanding among countries regardless of their cultural or religious differences, as well as in building peaceful and tolerant societies. Based on that, the United Arab Emirates has launched a number of important initiatives that aim to enhance interaction and dialogue between societies at the national, regional and international levels. At the forefront of those initiatives was our proclamation of the year 2019 as the Year of Tolerance. We stress the commitment of the United Arab Emirates to promoting the values of tolerance, coexistence and acceptance of one another regardless of differences. This year also marked the first papal visit to the Arabian peninsula. The Pope's visit to the United Arab Emirates culminated in the Document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together, signed by His Holiness Pope Francis and the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, Sheikh Ahmad Al-Tayeb, which stresses that human fraternity is a common responsibility for us all.

The United Arab Emirates emphasizes the importance of building trust within the multilateral United Nations system so that the Organization can play the role entrusted to it in an effective, transparent and responsible way. My country underscores the

importance of intensifying diplomatic efforts as the best tool for achieving our desired goals. We therefore continue to contribute effectively to the efforts to reform and enhance the role of the United Nations system by revitalizing the work of the General Assembly. This year we are also helping to facilitate the intergovernmental negotiations on the reform of the Security Council.

In conclusion, as we approach the seventy-fifth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations, to be celebrated next year, the United Arab Emirates stresses the importance of fulfilling the promises we have made as Member States of the Organization, foremost of which is the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Our commitment to achieving those Goals will enhance the trust in multilateralism and diplomacy for peace.

Mr. Ruidíaz Pérez (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is grateful for today's meeting, which so opportunely brings us together to talk about what has driven and continues to mobilize us — the desire to live together in peace through cooperation and cooperation.

We believe that the joint work of the United Nations, regional organizations and other multilateral organizations constitutes the most effective tool for maintaining order, peace and international security. In that context, Chile supported and welcomed the cross-cutting preventive approach taken by the Secretary-General in all the work of the United Nations. We continue to embrace his call for making diplomacy for peace one of our main priorities.

Chile believes it essential to invest in multilateralism as a means of prevention from a broad perspective. For example, we have identified climate change as an area of particular sensitivity on which my country — as the next venue for the twenty-fifth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in December — can serve as a platform for the convergence of ideas, initiatives and commitments from all the Members of the Organization to face this enormous threat. We invite all Member States to participate in that meeting and to confront together a phenomenon that affects every nation, without distinction, and that jeopardizes current and future generations.

Diplomacy for peace is deeply embedded in Chile's multilateral policy vision. As such, improving coordination within the system itself, with Member States and with other actors, such as civil society,

the private sector and academia, is fundamental to achieving true effectiveness in terms of human rights, sustainable development and peace. In that regard, the reform processes within our Organization must continue and be strengthened, to give the necessary support not only to the proper implementation of United Nations mandates but also to achieve collective goals such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes among its objectives peace, justice and strong institutions as an integral part of the prevention agenda.

Chile hopes to be able to contribute from its experience in that regard. Next July we will deliver a voluntary presentation at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development. In doing so, we hope to direct our efforts to promoting the building of more resilient and cohesive societies, without forgetting the important role of women in decision-making, with the understanding that their role can be a key element for early warning and peacebuilding, the promotion of cooperation and capacity-building, and in the establishment of support networks at the local, regional and international levels.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation's resolute commitment to the promotion of diplomacy for peace, of which multilateralism should be the bedrock and diplomacy the instrument that gives it form and expression.

Mr. Castañeda Solares (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to start by stating that the Government of Guatemala condemns in the strongest terms the attacks in the capital of Sri Lanka on Easter Sunday, which to date have wounded or claimed the lives of more than 200 people. Guatemala reaffirms its commitment to fighting terrorism and religious intolerance. We extend our sincerest condolences to the families of the victims, as well as to the people and the Government of Sri Lanka. We join the international call for preventing innocent people from falling victim to this type of violence, the product of intolerance and hatred.

Guatemala is grateful for the convening of this meeting, which gives us an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of multilateralism and diplomacy in international relations and foreign policy. We firmly believe that multilateralism is a vital tool for development, and that global challenges such as security, comprehensive and sustainable development, migration, human rights and climate change, among

others, must be addressed through dialogue and collective consultations within the international system. In a complex world in which old conflicts persist and new ones have emerged, multilateralism has been key to their resolution. It has enabled the international community to strengthen its efforts for the benefit of humankind and work for its welfare, while seeking a world of peace, prosperity, development, justice and respect for human rights.

Today, on the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, Guatemala reaffirms its commitment to promoting the values of the United Nations and our peoples' trust in the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. We reiterate the importance and relevance of multilateralism and international law in promoting a common goal, the achievement of international peace, sustained through diplomacy, as a first line of defence and a preventive measure. Guatemala recognizes the importance of multilateral forums as mechanisms for consolidating dialogue and political coordination processes, and therefore considers it vital to strengthen them, with the aim of establishing common positions that favour democracy, the rule of law, development and States' economic growth. The future of multilateralism will depend on the actions we undertake today as Member States, while maintaining our focus and resolve for the coming years.

We recognize the devastating consequences that come with armed conflicts, destruction and tragedies, which threaten the most valuable thing of all — life. After almost four decades of internal armed conflict, Guatemalans made peace, a solid and lasting peace. We assigned ourselves the task of building and sustaining that peace. The road has not been easy, but we are working to promote and support the consolidation of peace in every way.

From that perspective, we have joined Member States in various initiatives aimed at creating and sustaining peaceful societies, for we firmly believe that the concept of sustainable peace has the potential to reorient the way the Organization works to prevent the emergence, escalation, recurrence or continuation of conflict.

We believe that the impetus for development also leads to peace and prosperity. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is our benchmark for reducing the gaps and challenges that so deeply affect

our peoples. Working for its implementation will undoubtedly spur dialogue, address the root causes of poverty, reduce unfair terms in trade and promote the sustainable use of natural resources for the general welfare of humankind.

I would like to conclude by recognizing the United Nations as the highest body and universal forum for addressing the global challenges that affect us, influence the values and interests of nations and require collective attention and action. The quest for peace is our bulwark, and maintaining it is a task shared by all the countries of the world in order to prevent conflicts and promote development. We therefore celebrate this Day and join all the efforts and goodwill of those gathered here to continue to work in a committed manner on the various issues with a view to preserving peace for the benefit of future generations.

Mr. Moriko (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): My delegation would like to reiterate its sincere congratulations to Her Excellency Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on her leadership in presiding over the General Assembly at its seventy-third session, which, through resolution 73/127, declared 24 April as the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Rwanda on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.78), and would like to add the following remarks.

For several decades, humankind has undergone remarkable sociopolitical, economic and scientific transformations, sources of hope for our societies and bearers of our common aspirations for a world of peace and shared prosperity. Those changes go hand in hand with emerging challenges, including the maintenance of international peace and security and climate change. In that context, it is now more than ever our responsibility to embrace a strategy together that embodies the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, in order to find long-term responses to today's challenges, foremost among them poverty, youth unemployment, violent extremism and terrorism. In that connection, we believe that the international community's conscious choice of multilateralism and its promotion are essential, particularly through the affirmation of the central role of the United Nations.

The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, which the international

community is celebrating today, prompts us to refocus the United Nations on the noble values and objectives that underpinned its establishment, whose main aim is to maintain international peace and security and strengthen international cooperation. The Charter of the United Nations, which enshrines multilateralism as the best approach in our common search for solutions to the challenges of our time, makes the United Nations a centre where the efforts of nations are harmonized. Our faith in the virtues of multilateralism and ongoing dialogue as a peaceful means of crisis resolution underpins our belief that the hopes for peace of millions of people in countries affected by conflict are warranted.

The multiple and multidimensional challenges facing the world require States to develop appropriate strategies and measures to deal with them. Those global threats require sustained cooperation. In the face of the gradual erosion of multilateralism, which is marked by the questioning of the international cooperation frameworks where consensus strategies are being developed to meet today's challenges, Côte d'Ivoire calls on all Member States to act in accordance with the framework defined by the Charter of the United Nations. For whenever they have acted in a concerted and coordinated manner under the auspices of our common Organization, Member States have always been able to overcome the most intractable challenges with the aim of achieving world peace and stability.

Mr. Llorenty Solíz (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Bolivia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela (see A/73/PV.78) on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Bolivia welcomes the adoption of resolution 73/127, which establishes the date for the commemoration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. Unfortunately, however, we see it as a worrisome sign of the state of the international community. The multilateral system is under pressure and under threat, and it must address serious challenges.

Bolivia comes from a region that has been declared a zone of peace, where the strengthening of multilateralism is understood to be a fundamental element of relations among its States and respect for international law, and is accepted by each State within the framework of the exercise of its sovereignty.

It is important to define what we mean when we talk about a multilateral system. We mean a rules-based system grounded in the principles of equality among States and respect for State sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence; one based on non-interference in the internal affairs of States and the rejection of the use of force or the threat of its use; a system that prohibits unilateral coercive sanctions and promotes joining forces for the peaceful resolution of disputes through the means set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

We have clearly witnessed in recent times how — through political propaganda campaigns and on the pretext of justice, democracy, human rights or for humanitarian reasons — media and military attacks are launched by applying policies of regime change whose sole purpose is to access, control and use natural resources, control trade routes or punish those who do not obey the true Powers, and thereby of course violating international law.

We deplore the illegal invasion of Iraq that resulted in more than 1 million deaths, on the pretext that Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction; the overthrow of the Libyan Government, with tens of thousands of deaths, on the pretext of humanitarian reasons; the civil war in Syria, which in the past eight years has led to more than half a million deaths; and, in our own region, the case of the Contras in Nicaragua, which even drew a ruling by the International Court of Justice condemning those unilateral actions.

Bolivia therefore calls for the defence of multilateralism. However, words are not enough because, in our view, the defence of multilateralism has real-world applications, such as in the situation in Palestine, where it means defending a two-State solution with the ultimate aim of establishing a free Palestinian State within the pre-1967 international borders and East Jerusalem as its capital. For us, defending multilateralism means recognizing the sovereignty of Syria over the Golan Heights. It means rejecting all unilateral coercive measures against the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and the economic and financial blockade that the United States has imposed on Cuba.

Today, due to threats to human life and planet Earth as a whole — such as climate change, growing nuclear-weapon arsenals and the disruption of new technology, as well as other global challenges that include the migration crisis, terrorism and transnational

organized crime — the defence of multilateralism is not just one option, it is the only option. Those threats can be resolved only through cooperation based on a multilateral system. That is common sense, but as a popular saying goes, sometimes common sense is the least common of the senses.

We therefore believe unequivocally that the international community must renew its commitment to multilateralism, as well as to the effective application of diplomacy, mediation, prevention, conciliation and good offices for the peaceful settlement of disputes, and implement the provisions laid down in Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

Finally, I would like to reiterate what President Evo Morales said in September during the Security Council meeting on the maintenance of international peace and security:

“The responsibility of our generation is to bequeath a fairer and safer world to future generations. That will be achieved only if we work together to build a multipolar world, with common rules for respecting and defending the United Nations from all threats.”
(*S/PV.8362, p. 9*)

Mr. Sparber (Liechtenstein): Let me first express my Government and people’s deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka and the many other countries affected by the recent heinous terrorist attacks.

One year before its seventy-fifth anniversary, the greatest peace project in the history of humankind may well be facing its most challenging times. Today, as the living memories of the world wars fade, the rule of power seems to chip away at the rule of law, and power itself again seems to become a feature of the few, not the many. The long-term vision of the Charter of the United Nations seems increasingly at odds with the short-lived politics of election cycles. The International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace is a welcome reminder that the Charter’s vision of international cooperation and collective action on the basis of sovereign equality is its strength, not its weakness. But the Day is also a reminder that we have to do better to realize that vision.

As Members of the United Nations we all have our grievances with the Organization. For some it moves too fast, for others it procrastinates. For some it spends too much money, for others it invests too little. For

some it acts where necessary, for others it remains silent too often. Those differences, while important, tend to obfuscate the vast common ground that unites us. We all sought membership in the United Nations to partake in the high ambitions enshrined in the Charter, convinced that States affirm their sovereignty in cooperation, not isolation. We have to be ready to defend that conviction in order to preserve the potential for the United Nations to deliver.

The United Nations should do better in listening to the peoples it represents. Young people around the globe are sounding the alarm because of our meagre track record on climate change. We are putting their future at risk, although we have long known that more action is needed. Rather than providing solutions, disengagement from our joint commitments makes it harder for everybody to make a positive difference.

Women around the globe have had enough of discrimination and violence. Their powerful movement of solidarity has torn down barriers and abusive power structures. The United Nations should embrace their struggle as we approach anniversaries of such milestones as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Plus 10 Conference. The continued leadership of the United Nations is crucial, and the Secretary-General has signalled his strong commitment in that regard.

Grass-roots organizations have shaped the disarmament landscape and brought about significant change, the latest example of which is the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. Such achievements show the need for continued multilateral engagement, in particular when the actions of a few can have consequences for the security of all others.

The victims of never-ending cycles of conflict-related violence are rightly demanding true and lasting peace. For that, there must be justice, dignity and hope for a better future for all. The Security Council, which ought to act on behalf of all of us, too often considers those elements as dispensable, thereby seriously obstructing its own ability to implement its Charter mandate. We have to increase accountability for the Council's performance, or lack of it, particularly in the light of the increasing use of the veto. If that is difficult to justify to the United Nations membership, we can imagine what damage it does to outside perceptions of the Organization. The General Assembly is not a venue to lament the failure of others, it is the central

policymaking body of the United Nations. It is mandated by the Charter to address any question it deems important. Whenever there is a failure to implement the Charter's vision, the Assembly should take issue.

When the General Assembly acts with determination and pragmatism, it can achieve great things, such as the Sustainable Development Goals. And it brings with it the legitimacy needed for implementation, which is the true strength of multilateralism. From its European perspective, Liechtenstein considers multilateralism a necessity, and we see great potential in the General Assembly as its most important embodiment. We may not always achieve the optimum results in this forum, but we do make them possible by discussing our shared interests together in a spirit of cooperation.

Mr. Ahmad Tajuddin (Malaysia): My delegation associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78).

The world is facing increasing anxiety about unilateralism. We are witnessing a world where the big and the strong impose their will on the small and fragile, pushing the world order further into deeper seas of protectionism and isolationism. Multilateralism is indeed at a crossroads. With the resurgence of such sentiments around the world, multilateralism must be defended, and the United Nations has to be strengthened in order to respond to complex global challenges.

Malaysia therefore firmly believes that all Member States must remain united in our collective resolve to uphold and respect the purposes and principles of the Organization, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Those purposes and principles have always called for safeguarding multilateralism and advancing the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, development and human rights. As prescribed in the Charter, the United Nations remains at the forefront of various international and multilateral efforts to combat challenges and maintain international peace and security. The purposes and principles of the Charter remain as important today as ever. The challenges we face are mounting, and they require the commitment and readiness of all parties to engage in multilateral diplomacy through the framework of the United Nations and other multilateral processes.

In order to preserve stability, tranquillity and relative peace, our world demands the collaborative engagement of us all. It is therefore in our collective

interests to work together to uphold a system based on our shared universal values, through dialogue and cooperation.

Malaysia reiterates its continued commitment to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism, while upholding the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. Our commitment to world peace is based on shared universal values, particularly those that uphold the rule of law, human rights, justice, fairness, responsibility and accountability. Malaysia will continue to work closely with all stakeholders through active participation in various multilateral forums. It is our earnest hope that all our efforts will help to address the most pressing global challenges with the goal of championing multilateralism.

Mrs. Gregoire Van Haaren (Netherlands): I would like to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on organizing today's meeting. Multilateralism is under pressure at a time when we need it more than ever. The Kingdom of the Netherlands therefore agrees with her that we should renew our commitment to multilateralism, discuss the challenges to it and seek ways to strengthen the multilateral system. Our citizens expect solutions to cross-border problems such as climate change, irregular migration and terrorism. They are also calling for free and fair trade, sustainable development and respect for human rights. The United Nations has a key role to play in all of these areas.

In a number of areas, the United Nations has been instrumental, for example by reaching the agreements set forth in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and by deploying tens of thousands of peacekeepers to stabilize fragile countries. In other areas, it has been less successful, the most striking example being the conflict in Syria. This is not the fault of the United Nations as an organization, but of Member States in not being able to find agreement.

We also see a trend where countries are pulling back from multilateral organizations and agreements. Their argument is that they want to preserve their sovereignty. In our view, sovereignty is about a country being able to resolve problems and tackle challenges in order to improve the lives of its citizens. It is an illusion to think that by turning inwards problems will go away. We need one another and have to be honest with our

citizens about these facts. And in certain cases citizens need the help of the international community to ensure their protection and rights if their Governments fail to do so.

We see international organizations, such as the United Nations, the European Union, the World Trade Organization, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, as a way to improve our ability to solve the problems that we face on a global scale. If those organizations somehow did not exist, we would have to invent them. That does not mean that all multilateral organizations are perfect, because they are not. Some are criticized for a lack of effectiveness or efficiency. However, it is too easy to discard organizations when they do not instantly produce the results that we want. Instead of walking away, we should engage in improving them and finding solutions.

It also means that we should sometimes be critical and push for reforms. For example, the Netherlands has been investing in modernizing United Nations peace operations and making them more effective by enhancing intelligence capabilities. A second example is the Funding Compact agreed with the United Nations, whereby the United Nations commits to greater transparency and accountability and Member States to increased long-term and core financing. A third example is the importance of tackling sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment. In this context, we encourage the United Nations and other international organizations to step up their policies and implementation.

Better functioning multilateral institutions also depend on respect for the international rules-based order, international justice and accountability. International law, rules and commitments should be respected. As my Prime Minister pointed out in the General Assembly in September, we believe in the power of principles, not the principles of power, to guide us towards a better future for more people (see A/73/PV.9). He also said that we are in favour of a constructive multilateralism that is focused on solutions rather than a combative multilateralism focused on confrontation.

The United Nations has been able to do a lot of good work in the past 74 years. Next year we will celebrate its seventy-fifth birthday. Let us make sure that we — the Member States — enable the Organization and other multilateral organizations to deliver the results that our citizens demand.

Ms. Vieira (Cabo Verde): I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting to celebrate the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, as recommended in the resolution 73/127. The Government of Cabo Verde has the honour to associate itself with the occasion and to deliver its views on multilateralism and diplomacy.

The Constitution of Cabo Verde proclaims respect for the Charter of the United Nations, and specifically for its purpose of developing friendly relations among nations based on the principles of the equal rights of peoples and the sovereign equality of its Member States. Cabo Verde advocates a multilateralism mechanism that favours the inclusive participation of all Member States as well as a democratic dialogue in international relations that brings positions together, builds bridges, establishes consensus and advances the global and common causes of humankind.

Since its independence, Cabo Verde, a small State, has made the natural choice of embracing the opportunities of diplomacy and multilateralism at global and regional levels, and of putting them at the core of its foreign policy by promoting international cooperation and building sound partnerships. While embracing multilateralism and diplomacy, Cabo Verde considers the need for a more democratic and equitable international order important, because we believe that the values of democracy, the rule of law and respecting and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all represent a lasting path to building more inclusive and peaceful societies.

Global challenges and problems need tangible global solutions, making multilateralism the appropriate approach for finding common understanding and responses to challenges and difficulties that are beyond national capacities. The truth is that promoting peace, conflict prevention and international security, countering terrorism, eradicating poverty, combating climate change and environmental degradation, and effectively and globally implementing sustainable development goals can be accomplished only through diplomacy and in multilateral venues.

By its universality and centrality, and with reference to the three main pillars of the Organization, the United Nations is the natural centre for the global multilateralism from which landmark world agendas are shaped. Almost 75 years after the creation of the

United Nations, the world faces increasingly complex challenges that call for a reinvigorated multilateralism, with the idea that, according to the Secretary-General António Guterres in his 2018 report (A/73/1) on the work of the Organization,

“[a]s today’s problems grow ever more global, multilateralism is more important than ever”.

In conclusion, I would like to quote another Secretary-General, Dag Hammarskjöld, who stated that “[t]he United Nations was not created to take mankind to heaven, but to save humanity from hell”. In other words, the system we have may not be perfect, and there is always room to strengthen its efficiency, but we can do so by undertaking the necessary reforms to that end. It is in our hands to make the United Nations the best it can be, so it can do and achieve the best it can.

Mr. Sinka (Burkina Faso) (*spoke in French*): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Alpha Barry, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Burkina Faso, who would have liked to have witnessed the commemoration of this first International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Rwanda on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.78).

Following the adoption of resolution 73/127, establishing 24 April as the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, Burkina Faso welcomes the effective celebration of this first Day, which testifies, if that were still necessary, to its importance for all other States Members of the United Nations, multilateralism’s most representative and emblematic organization. Several legal instruments have been developed under its banner and many initiatives taken in accordance with the spirit of the Charter and its principles, which continue to guide our actions. Many of the achievements of the United Nations reflect the humanist vision of its founders.

Burkina Faso believes firmly that multilateralism is the necessary foundation both for achieving sustainable development for all and for sustaining peace in the world. Such values as national independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality among peoples, the peaceful settlement of disputes and solidarity among peoples are the cornerstones of multilateralism and diplomacy in the service of peace for all peoples of the

world. To them we must add multilingualism, which is the foundation of effective multilateralism, in the sense that it is necessary to maintain a balance, dignity and equality for all. Each country must have the same opportunities to take part in debates and thereby have access to information in the official languages of the United Nations.

This day is commemorated at a time when ideas challenging multilateralism are emerging as our world faces major problems, such as worsening terrorist acts, the rise of violent extremism, the perpetuation of some conflicts, climate change, increasing inequality, poverty and cybercrime. We can meet all these challenges only in a multilateral framework, and we must therefore pursue our common and concerted action with perseverance, constantly seeking to strengthen cohesion, because more than anything else, peace, the independence of peoples and the democratization of international relations for the global progress of humankind deserve our unwavering commitment.

Since 2015, my country, Burkina Faso, has been the victim of terrorist attacks that have caused many deaths and are still doing so as I speak. In the belief that the fight against terrorism can be won within a regional and multilateral framework, Burkina Faso and four other countries have created the Group of Five for the Sahel and are seeking the support of the United Nations for the operationalization of its Joint Force.

The responsibility and role of the international community remain crucial to achieving stability, peace and security throughout the world. In this regard, Burkina Faso welcomes the reform of the United Nations undertaken by its Secretary-General. We believe that it will be complete only with the long-awaited reform of the Security Council and a reconfiguration of the international financial architecture, which will make it possible to take into account the interests of all countries, particularly those of developing countries and those in special and vulnerable situations, such as Burkina Faso.

In terms of development, it is also, and only, in a multilateral framework that we can achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. In this perspective, the involvement of international financial institutions is necessary, and South-South cooperation should be strengthened for the cohesive development of our States.

In conclusion, Burkina Faso hopes that the commemoration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace will provide an opportunity for deep reflection and enable the United Nations to promote its own values and principles in order to restore and consolidate the confidence of the peoples of the world in it through the fulfilment of the purposes and principles set out in its Charter of the United Nations.

The meeting was suspended at 6.05 p.m.

Mr. Tiare (Burkina Faso), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was resumed at 10.05 a.m. on 25 April 2019.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): Before proceeding further, I would like to appeal to all speakers to make their statements brief and concise in order to make maximum use of the limited time we have remaining for this high-level meeting. To enable all on the list of speakers to be heard, statements in plenary meetings should be limited to three minutes when speaking in a national capacity, as announced in the letter of the President of the General Assembly dated 26 March 2019.

As members will recall, in its resolution 71/323 of 8 September 2017, the General Assembly called for strict adherence by each speaker to the time limits in the Assembly, particularly during high-level meetings. Participants with longer statements are encouraged to read a shorter version of their text and to submit their full statements to the Secretariat for posting on the PaperSmart portal.

Also in accordance with resolution 71/323, the “all protocol observed” principle is recommended, whereby participants are encouraged to refrain from the listing of standard protocol expressions during their statements. Bearing in mind the time limit, I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace to enable their proper interpretation into the six official United Nations languages.

Mr. Srivihok (Thailand): Thailand joins others in reaffirming the importance of the multilateral approach and diplomacy for resolving global challenges and international disputes through peaceful means. They are critical tools in global affairs, especially for small nations such as my own.

Complex global challenges, such as climate change, poverty and threats to international peace and security, can only be truly and sustainably overcome through collective efforts within a rules-based international order. Some say that faith in multilateralism is waning in many parts of the world. For Thailand, effective multilateralism and the United Nations are needed more than ever. Our common successes — such as the adoption of the bold and ambitious 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — are proof that multilateralism works. We must continue to support and reinforce the work of the United Nations and the multilateral approach.

First, we must ensure that multilateral processes are linked to the interests of people in their daily lives. We must continue to aspire to become a system that is more trusted and people-centred. The only effective way to do so is to involve civil society, especially young people, and local communities. They can be and are a major driving force for peace, social cohesion and sustainable development in their countries.

Secondly, we must change our narrative. Challenges to multilateralism may have actually provided an opportunity for positive change. Thailand supports the ongoing efforts to envisage and implement United Nations reforms. Coming together in common efforts to increase the transparency, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness of the Organization is a powerful exercise. But more importantly, it is a necessary one to ensure that we adapt in order to remain relevant.

Thirdly and lastly, regional and cross-regional cooperation play a crucial role as building blocks of the multilateral order. We must nurture dialogue and cooperation among regional organizations, as well as between the United Nations and those organizations. The theme for Thailand's chairmanship this year of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), "Advancing partnership for sustainability", is meant to do exactly that — to link the common objectives of the United Nations and ASEAN in a pointed and concerted manner.

Let me conclude by thanking the President once again and joining others in reaffirming our common commitments and aspirations as we commemorate the first-ever International Day for Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

Mr. Alrowaie (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure to thank the President of the General Assembly for holding this historic high-level meeting to

commemorate the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

Resolution 73/127 stresses the important and pivotal roles of the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations in promoting multilateralism and diplomacy so as to strengthen the three pillars of the United Nations — sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights.

The Kingdom of Bahrain, under the leadership of His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, believes that the maintenance of international peace and security, the protection of human rights and the achievement of sustainable development require the promotion of multilateral diplomacy and cooperation among countries to achieve those noble objectives. To that end, we must strengthen the capacities of the United Nations to address the challenges before us and continue reforming its structures, especially those related to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by various means, including addressing climate change and empowering women and young people.

We underscore that economic and social issues are closely intertwined with peace and security. There can be no security without development and no development without security. The international community, which is represented by the United Nations entities and its specialized agencies, should work to bridge the large economic gap among countries. However, that can happen only through multilateralism and by upholding the vital commitment of the international community to ensuring balance and equality.

The Kingdom of Bahrain believes in the importance of coalitions at the regional and international levels to address all challenges that threaten international peace and security. Consequently, we play an important role in maintaining the security and stability of the Middle East. We participate in the Global Coalition to Defeat the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham, in the Islamic Military Counter-Terrorism Coalition and in the Arab coalition to support legitimacy in Yemen.

The Kingdom of Bahrain plays a vital role in ensuring freedom of navigation in the Arab Gulf within the framework of the task force led by the United States Fifth Fleet to protect the Gulf of Aden from piracy. We also underscore the need for the Middle East Strategic Alliance to ensure security and stability in the region.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain stresses the need to address global challenges through cooperation among Member States under the United Nations umbrella, as well as through regional and subregional organizations, to find the best solutions. We must also promote partnerships and best practices to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure the security and stability of our people.

Mr. Al-Otoom (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express to the President of the General Assembly my thanks and appreciation for convening this high-level meeting as part of our global efforts to promote diplomacy and multilateralism, as well as to promote the shared values of humankind and the culture of peace.

As we commemorate the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, we must remain aware of the difficult challenges facing humankind, at the forefront of which are terrorism, violent extremism, climate change, long-term conflicts, poverty and inequality. Those challenges are affecting all of us and we can address them and save ourselves and humankind only if we are united.

Although we are seeing unilateral actions and calls for isolation, Jordan still firmly believes that diplomacy and working together are the only ways to address conflicts and their root causes, in particular the question of Palestine and the occupied Arab territories, which require joint diplomatic efforts to end the years-long stalemate. We cannot talk about establishing peace as long as the world fails to seek a comprehensive and just solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which is the basis for the growing terrorism and extremism that continue to threaten stability throughout the world. A solution to this conflict must be found that establishes a Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Since Jordan joined the United Nations in 1955, we have sought to achieve the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. We have always been one of the biggest contributors to peacekeeping operations all over the world. Our forces have been commended wherever they operate. As a member of the Security Council in 2014 and 2015, Jordan greatly enriched the work of the Council. We introduced the youth, peace and security agenda and facilitated the sixth review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. We have also been a candidate for the chairmanship of the conference on the establishment of a Middle East

zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction to be held in November.

Multilateral diplomacy is not just an intellectual luxury or a slogan; it is the foundation for ensuring the peaceful settlement of conflicts through genuine commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and international law, democracy, respect for human rights and the inclusion of all social sectors in the development process. Young people are the first among these components. There can be no alternative to including young people, enabling them to express their interests, empowering them politically and socially, and providing them with the culture necessary for them to build their future. That will help to limit the actions of terrorist and extremist groups, which have been targeting young people, especially those who are marginalized and do not embrace the meaning of genuine citizenship.

In conclusion, I should not fail to mention the role of the United Nations as a cornerstone of global diplomacy. In that regard, the General Assembly, our Organization's most representative multilateral organ, is an indispensable forum for addressing the challenges we are facing. As a co-Chair of the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the General Assembly, Jordan is eager to work with all our partners in order to reach an practicable, consensus-based final document that makes the General Assembly and the United Nations more relevant to those who look to the Organization to ensure a better and more promising future for us and for our children.

Ms. Ferreira (Angola): Angola aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Rwanda, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78).

We also wish to thank the President for convening this meeting, as it is a very pertinent theme for our current reality. The United Nations, as a global Organization, was founded to serve as a privileged platform for diplomacy and multilateralism, and it must remain at the forefront of efforts to promote dialogue and to seek the peaceful settlement of various issues that affect humankind and the world in which we live.

The celebration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace should serve as an opportunity for us all to assess how we are promoting the values and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. It is also a great occasion

for many of us to raise awareness of the importance of multilateralism as an effective tool in international relations, advance our common goal of lasting, sustained peace and build consensus on the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Dialogue and a multilateral approach are part of the core principles and values of the Angolan Government when it comes to preventing crises and finding peaceful and lasting solutions to conflicts at the domestic, regional and international levels. Unfortunately, we are still witnessing a number of conflicts around the world where those principles are not being applied, with dramatic consequences for the humanitarian and economic situation of the affected populations. The changing nature of conflicts — specifically the rise in terrorism, trafficking in persons and drug trafficking and the multiple armed non-State actors involved in conflicts around the world — reinforces our belief that we must enhance cooperation in order to effectively eradicate these scourges.

Angola supports the Secretary-General's proposed reforms aimed at transforming the Organization and making it more balanced and fair, that is, the proposal to reform the Security Council and other United Nations organs to better reflect current geopolitical realities. Those reforms must take place if we are to deal more effectively with the regions that suffer most from conflicts, enhance preventive diplomacy initiatives and improve the three pillars of the United Nations — peace and security, sustainable development and human rights.

While we respect the principles of sovereignty and independence, we also believe in the importance of multilateralism for preserving peace and security and increasing development in the world as a positive legacy for future generations. As such, we appeal to all Member States to continue to support the United Nations and its specialized agencies, which are doing important work to further that agenda.

Ms. Yáñez Loza (Ecuador) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes today's first celebration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. Ecuador, a founding Member of the United Nations, is convinced of the value of multilateralism as a central element in the life of the international community.

Our constitutional norms are those proclaimed by the Charter of the United Nations and constitute the

foundation of our foreign policy. My country believes firmly in the value of action guided by principles and respect for the rule of law and human rights. Despite all difficulties and doubts, and because we would all like to see a better and fairer world, we believe that multilateralism has the power to connect and remind us that dialogue remains a better instrument than weapons. In that regard, my delegation echoes the Secretary-General's words that the Organization should be an instrument of diplomacy for peace. That conviction is the reason for our presence in this organ and in regional multilateral forums, which are based on the same principles and where cooperation underlies all initiatives.

We believe that the three pillars of the Charter reinforce and complement one another. That is illustrated by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, preventive diplomacy, the spirit of optimizing United Nations reform and the global pacts that we are committed to. None of that would be possible in a different venue. Here, every Member has a voice and a vote.

The value of multilateralism is evident not only in this Day of celebration, but in the ongoing joint efforts that we make every day to promote international law and sustained peace through diplomacy. Peace is the bedrock of human rights, which have a bearing on development.

Mr. Duque Estrada Meyer (Brazil): I thank the President for convening this timely event. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our deep condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka for the terrible attacks that took place last Sunday.

Next year, we will celebrate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. On 24 October 1945, at the end of the Second World War, the Charter of the United Nations, signed by the 51 founding Members, among them Brazil, entered into force, representing a historical landmark in the quest for peace through multilateral conciliation. Over the past seven and a half decades, the United Nations has been consolidated as the most legitimate expression of multilateralism. It has become an irreplaceable tool in the search for international peace, justice and development. The milestone of its 75 years will be an excellent opportunity to examine some of the challenges facing the Organization today and, in the light of those challenges, to think about the future of multilateralism.

Many of these challenges are in the field of international security, and we should not fail to mention the international community's problems with finding political solutions to the conflicts around the globe. To a large extent, it is only by updating its governance mechanisms that the United Nations will be able to overcome those challenges. We have failed to update our main institutions to properly reflect the current geopolitical landscape and the increasingly multipolar system, with a greater presence of developing countries. Entire regions with excellent records in contributing to international peace and security still do not have adequate representation in the administration of international order.

During the 75 years of its fruitful relationship with the United Nations, Brazil has tirelessly defended the importance of multilateralism and the role of the United Nations as a way of seeking common solutions to international challenges. It is in the interests of the international community to ensure that the Organization is strong and more in tune with the realities of the twenty-first century, so different from those of 1945. Only then will it be able to fully exercise its key role as a universal institution dedicated to the promotion of peace, development and cooperation among countries and the pursuit of human dignity. The international community must work to strengthen multilateralism, for which the United Nations is the best synonym.

Mr. Barro (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Senegal, I would like to convey our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka in the wake of the terrorist attacks that resulted in hundreds of casualties. My delegation condemns those heinous acts, which cannot be justified.

Senegal aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Rwanda on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.78).

Barely six months ago, at a public meeting, the Security Council invited us to consider the role of the United Nations in strengthening multilateralism (see S/PV.8395). Now, through this debate on the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, we have a renewed opportunity to revisit the virtues of multilateralism as the cornerstone of our Organization.

Multilateralism, as symbolized by the United Nations, has made giant strides in terms of peace and security, particularly through its peacekeeping

operations, the achievement of concrete economic and social progress, including through the Sustainable Development Goals, the promotion of human rights and the fight against climate change, through the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

We are convinced that the consolidation of multilateralism inevitably requires the establishment of a more inclusive and effective United Nations system that represents the interests of the entire international community, because our current challenges transcend borders and have demonstrated the limited ability of States to address them individually. Senegal therefore urges Member States and all actors to pursue Security Council reform and the revitalization of the General Assembly, among other things, and supports the Secretary-General's proposed reforms.

The strengthening of multilateralism also requires support for cooperation and partnership initiatives between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. In that regard, my delegation commends the progress made by the United Nations and the African Union, particularly with regard to the promotion of peace and security in Africa.

Senegal, which has made multilateralism a major focus of its foreign policy since its accession to international sovereignty, has always taken an active part in efforts to promote peace, development and human rights throughout the world. In addition to its regional and international conflict-prevention and resolution activities, Senegal has regularly contributed to United Nations peacekeeping missions. It is undoubtedly in recognition of its ongoing commitment that the international community has consistently shown the confidence it has in Senegal, as is currently the case with my country's 2019 presidency of the Human Rights Council at its fortieth session.

We should acknowledge that there is a clear lack of trust in national and international institutions, mainly because of disappointed expectations with regard to conflict prevention and resolution, socioeconomic development, the reduction of inequalities and the promotion of human rights. Beyond international and regional forums, the promotion of multilateralism remains dependent on the success of national policies, in particular those of States in conflict. That requires an inclusive approach involving all stakeholders, particularly women and young people, in all forums of the public and private sectors and civil society.

At the Security Council open debate that I mentioned earlier, the Secretary-General reminded us of a simple definition of multilateralism, which

“is nothing more than countries coming together, respecting one another and establishing the forms of cooperation that guarantee peace and prosperity for all in a healthy planet” (*S/PV.8395, p.3*).

If we can work together on the far-reaching reforms of our Organization that the Secretary-General laid out in 2018, we can preserve the hope of overcoming the interconnected challenges facing all humankind with a view to achieving a more united, peaceful, stable, prosperous and resilient international society in the spirit of multilateralism.

Mr. Kpayedo (Togo) (*spoke in French*): Togo aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Rwanda, on behalf of the Group of African States, and Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78), under agenda item 15.

We commend the President of the Assembly for organizing this high-level plenary meeting to celebrate and promote the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, in accordance with resolution 73/127 of 12 December 2018.

On 20 September 1960, soon after its accession to international sovereignty on 27 April 1960, Togo acceded to the United Nations, thereby reaffirming its full commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, which is the world’s most representative and emblematic instrument of multilateralism to date. We would like to take this opportunity to highlight the contribution of Togo and other members of the various organs of the Organization to the settlement of certain disputes by peaceful means, particularly through our troop contribution to the various United Nations peacekeeping operations and, above all, through my country’s membership in the Security Council on two occasions, for the 1981-1982 and 2012-2013 periods.

My country, which is currently a member of the Human Rights Council and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations, will therefore continue to promote an approach based on multilateralism and diplomacy, within those entities and in the General Assembly, that will enable progress on the three main pillars of the United Nations — sustainable development, peace and security and human rights.

In that connection, we note and commend the various reform initiatives launched by the Secretary-General to enable our common Organization to address the many multifaceted and complex problems facing our world today, whose resolution requires determined and concerted collective action.

Finally, we underscore that to date, Togo has ratified, acceded to or accepted more than 100 multilateral instruments deposited with the Secretary-General. In addition, my country is a member of several international, regional and subregional organizations and believes that all those bodies play a crucial role in promoting and preserving multilateralism and in facilitating diplomacy in the service of peace. I would therefore like to affirm here the importance and relevance of multilateralism and international law and express the confidence of the Government and the people of Togo in the purposes and principles eloquently enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Ms. Grignon (Kenya): I thank the President for convening this important meeting on preserving the values of multilateralism and for providing us with the concept note attached to her letter dated 26 March 2019, which has guided our discussions. I thank Under-Secretary-General Ribeiro Viotti for her informative briefing on the current challenges to multilateralism and for outlining its potential to mobilize us to face our common global challenges (see A/73/PV.78).

Kenya aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Rwanda and Venezuela on behalf of the Group of African States and the Non-Aligned Movement, respectively (see A/73/PV.78).

We join with other Member States in expressing our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka. The recent tragedy that took place there shows that terrorism continues to be a global threat to the spirit and core values of multilateralism.

Kenya approaches its foreign policy on the key premise that its future is inextricably linked to the stability and security of its immediate subregion, the larger African region and indeed the globe. This is the mainstay of Kenya’s nationhood and of the prosperity and livelihoods of its citizens. We fully subscribe to the principles and provisions of the United Nations Charter as the embodiment of our collective efforts aimed at supporting multilateralism as the basis for achieving peace and security, sustainable development and human rights. This is why Kenya’s foreign policy objective is

clearly stated as “promotion of international cooperation and multilateralism” and is guided by the principles of, first, peaceful coexistence with neighbours and other nations; secondly, the resolution of conflicts by peaceful means; thirdly, the promotion of regional integration; fourthly, respect for the equality, sovereignty and territorial integrity of States; and, fifthly, respect for international norms, customs and laws.

My delegation is concerned about the growing tendencies towards unilateralism on many issues and situations confronting the world today, including increasing attacks on globalization and political intolerance. The post-Second World War economic order has been based largely on the rule of law and a commitment to free trade. The resultant economic globalization has lifted millions from poverty, which was made possible thanks to multilateralism and the willingness of Member States to embrace international cooperation. Admittedly, its benefits have not been uniformly distributed and have fostered inequality all over the world. Multilateral dialogue on what ails the current global model is the best way forward.

My delegation believes that reforming our institutions of economic and political governance at all levels to make them more responsive to the needs of citizens in the current interconnected digital information age will be crucial. Good institutions, both national and international, must be based on the rule of law and the efficient provision of public goods. Reforming such institutions of global governance as the Security Council so that they become more inclusive and representative is crucial for multilateralism. Global governance institutions, including the United Nations, the African Union and others, must remain at the forefront in exploring and guiding our collective efforts to identify, understand and address worldwide challenges and processes that go beyond the problem-solving capabilities of our individual Member States.

My delegation believes that the key to unlocking the full potential of multilateralism is to strive to be as adaptable and inclusive as possible in developing solutions to our common challenges. Strong political will in support of multilateralism will therefore be constantly needed.

In conclusion, we believe that a stronger office of President of the General Assembly in a revitalized General Assembly ought to be the embodiment of Member States’ affirmation of multilateralism.

Mr. Rakhmetov (Kazakhstan): We would like to add our voice to those of previous speakers and reaffirm our unfailing commitment to multilateralism and diplomacy for peace. We are pleased to join the General Assembly today in celebrating the first observance of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

At the moment, such challenges as protracted wars, unresolved conflicts, terrorism, extremism, poverty, disease, illicit migration and climate change are beyond the scope of any nation. They are further aggravated by unpredictable regional and global insecurity, external interference, proxy wars, the threat of use of weapons of mass destruction, and the erosion of international legally binding norms. These perils call for egalitarian multilateral action, reinforced through shared responsibility. This high-level meeting is a significant step towards that goal.

Kazakhstan has always worked steadfastly to foster the best possible levels of multilateralism, transparency, impartiality, honest brokering, confidence-building measures and partnerships, which are the hallmarks of our foreign policy. We support the Secretary-General’s call for a rules-based global order and a safer world that adheres to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Multilateralism must also be invigorated by implementing the decisions taken in Addis Ababa, Sendai, Paris, Marrakech, Istanbul and Katowice in the framework of other global processes and with the engagement of women and young people. Multilateralism can be effective only with close partnerships at the regional and subregional levels, which is why, in 1999, Kazakhstan, together with 15 other countries, established the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia, an intergovernmental forum for enhancing cooperation for promoting peace, security and stability on the continent. Today, the Conference includes 27 countries, from the Republic of Korea to Israel.

My country promoted the establishment of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia as a unique platform for promoting such diplomacy. In 11 years the Centre has accumulated a proud record of achievements aimed at alleviating conditions likely to lead to conflict and assisting countries of the region in maintaining stability.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can also succeed with strengthened regional endeavours. My country is therefore proposing to establish in Almaty a United Nations interregional Sustainable Development Goals modelling centre for Central Asia and Afghanistan. A new state-of-the-art, fully equipped and furnished building, specifically designed to United Nations requirements, has been provided to 14 United Nations agencies with regional, subregional and multi-country mandates. We hope that this consolidated United Nations field presence, now under one roof, will continue to successfully promote the Sustainable Development Goals in our region.

In the area of peace and security, Kazakhstan has shown itself to be a moral leader in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. With its neighbours, it created the Central Asian nuclear-weapon-free zone as a platform for multilateralism and is now bringing together such zones from other regions for greater interzonal collaboration.

International terrorism cannot be defeated without a coordinated response. Kazakhstan therefore launched the code of conduct aimed at achieving a world free of terrorism at the high-level event held at United Nations Headquarters on 28 September 2018. Some 80 like-minded Member States have signed the code of conduct and agreed to honour their commitments to implementing the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and other instruments.

A recent striking example of multilateralism was our deployment of 120 well-qualified peacekeepers to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon as part of the Indian battalion. We are proud that this innovative partnership with India in peacekeeping was established during Kazakhstan's non-permanent membership of the Security Council in 2017 and 2018.

In conclusion, Kazakhstan stands in solidarity with others for the defence of multilateralism and diplomacy for peace as the only way for transforming a world in crisis into a planet of hope and promise.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): I would like to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for convening this meeting.

We align ourselves with the statement delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78).

At the outset, my delegation joins all others in expressing our solidarity with the people and the Government of Sri Lanka in the wake of the recent terrorist attacks.

Bangladesh, which is an emerging economy, a country that owes a lot to the United Nations for its emergence as an independent State and one that believes in a values-and-rules-based global order, always looks to multilateralism as a bastion of inspiration and support, as expressed in the pronouncement that the father of our nation, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, made in 1974 from this very rostrum:

“In a world that is marked by strife and human misery, the United Nations remains the focus of man's hope for the future.” (*A/PV.2243, para. 21*)

Our Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina is also a flag-bearer of multilateralism who has attended the high-level week of the General Assembly for the past 10 years. She is undoubtedly one of the very few world leaders to have participated in the adoption of both the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals. And this is not just about our beliefs. We are also contributing to multilateralism in our own humble way.

Bangladesh participates in almost all United Nations consultations and norm-setting exercises on global issues, whether on development, human rights, peace or security. Our contribution to mainstreaming the notion of a culture of peace in United Nations discussions, our robust participation in United Nations peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and of late our support to the notion of sustaining peace espoused by the Secretary-General are meant to serve the maintenance of international peace and security. We are leveraging the issues of graduation from least-developed-country status and climate change with a view to supporting the global development agenda. Faced with the world's most rapid displacement crisis, requiring us to shelter 1.2 million Rohingya, we have again resorted to the custodianship of the United Nations in conjunction with our bilateral efforts. All of this reflects our abiding commitment to and trust in multilateralism.

The global multilateral discourse has exponentially broadened its reach to encompass matters for which almost no countries have the capacity to address the issues on their own. The challenges of our time, such as climate change, forced displacement, conflict, ultranationalism, terrorism, inequality, cyberattacks

and health issues all transcend borders. The series of terrorist attacks we have seen worldwide is a horrific reminder that no one is immune and that our destinies are intertwined. It would be folly if we thought that only the developing world needed multilateralism and that the fortunate others did not.

It is not only challenges that the fourth industrial revolution brings forth. There are enormous opportunities as well. We should embrace these opportunities for the benefit of humankind and keep the dark sides at bay. Despite the impressive body of international law that the United Nations has developed over the seven decades of its existence, there still remain serious gaps in global norm-setting, not only in unexplored and emerging frontiers but also in some existing domains pertaining to the common heritage of humankind. We need global governance and international legal dispensations in all these areas, which can be achieved only through multilateralism.

Against this backdrop, rather than eroding, this should be a time for multilateralism to thrive and prosper. The world needs multilateralism more than ever. Beyond political will, it is the restoration of people's trust in it that can save multilateralism, and that can happen only if United Nations and the multilateral system as a whole embrace all stakeholders — the business community, civil society and particularly youth people — with the aim of delivering on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and our unfulfilled commitments, addressing global challenges and taking advantage of new opportunities. Most importantly, all these must bring tangible, positive changes to common people's lives. Again, the onus is on us, the Member States, to enable multilateral systems to be action- and results-oriented.

Upholding multilateralism does not merely mean protecting a principle but rather supporting the only available conduit for saving the world from a multiplicity of challenges. It is our partnership and our unity of purpose, guided by multilateralism, that will be our best bet. Observance of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, the twentieth anniversary of the culture of peace later this year, and the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations next year will be occasions for conjuring our collective will in that direction.

Mr. Odida (Uganda): I would like to begin by extending my Government's condolences and

sympathies to the people and the Government of Sri Lanka in the wake of the terrorist attack that took place over the Easter weekend. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the families of the victims.

My delegation would like to join those who have spoken before me in congratulating the President of the General Assembly on organizing this first-ever International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, during which we engage in a solemn reflection on the commitments that were made at the inception of the United Nations.

In doing so, I would like to align myself with the statements made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in his capacity as Chair of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and by the Permanent Representative of Rwanda in her capacity as Chair of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.78). We would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

As a landlocked developing country counted among the least developed countries, Uganda believes that the multilateral system remains the only viable framework and tool for meeting the multifaceted goals of eliminating poverty, boosting economic growth, promoting sustainable development, combating the global challenges of climate change, preventing conflict, maintaining peace and security, eradicating the scourge of war, and meeting the challenges of terrorism and intolerance, among many other issues.

The commitments made at the inception of the United Nations 74 years ago and the inspiring actions that have followed since then have had a profound impact on the life of many peoples, countries and nations, including Uganda. We owe our existence to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and its family of institutions. Today, however, we all agree that the Organization is at a point where the multilateral system — the bedrock on which we have built the current international architecture — remains under threat.

My delegation recognizes the growing threats to multilateralism, which seriously undermine the ability of the United Nations and other international organizations to effectively execute their mandates. And if not seriously addressed, they will threaten the core principles on which the Organization was founded. We therefore agree that there is a growing need to promote, defend and strengthen multilateralism and

its related decision-making processes. We also agree that there is a need to reaffirm our commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter.

My delegation would like to briefly highlight a few of the areas that we continue to be concerned about in that regard. While acknowledging that the multilateral system is imperfect, we would rather have an imperfect multilateral system than none at all.

First, the intergovernmental nature of the General Assembly should be preserved to ensure that it remains a forum for genuine intergovernmental dialogue.

Secondly, the Security Council should be reformed to make it more representative of the countries that make up the United Nations, and especially of those regions that are underrepresented or not represented at all in some category.

Thirdly, the States Members of the United Nations must collectively enhance their cooperation to mitigate our growing challenges in addressing such problems as disarmament and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Fourthly, Member States must similarly collectively enhance their cooperation in preventing and combating of terrorism and should scrupulously implement all the relevant international instruments governing these areas.

Fifthly, on the role of sanctions as implemented by the Security Council Sanctions Committees, we believe that the power of the Security Council to impose sanctions should itself be exercised cautiously and in accordance with the Charter and international law.

Sixthly, with regard to the capacity for peace enforcement and peacekeeping, we support the framework of the Secretary-General's Action for Peacekeeping initiative but believe that the present rules relating to peacekeeping budgets and operations should be amended to reflect existing situations on the ground, where countries, and regions such as Africa, are increasingly shouldering significant burdens.

In conclusion, it is critical that all Member States rededicate themselves to upholding the Charter of the United Nations and respect for international law. The growing flagrant disregard of international law is increasingly threatening the maintenance of international peace and security, a dangerous situation that we should all strive to prevent from deteriorating. I

want to reiterate my delegation's thanks to the President of the General Assembly for organizing this high-level debate. Supported by the outcomes of the informal policy dialogue on building trust and the importance of multilateralism, held on Tuesday this week, our engagement today will, I hope, serve to guide the actions of the General Assembly in that regard. Uganda remains committed to playing its role, in concert with the community of nations, in upholding the integrity of the multilateral system.

Mr. Bessedik (Algeria): My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM) and by the Permanent Representative of Rwanda on behalf of the Group of African States (see A/73/PV.78).

At the outset, I would like to thank the President for her initiative in holding the first high-level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. The time is always ripe to take up an issue that is worthy of our fullest attention. We also thank Venezuela, which acted on behalf of NAM, as the main force behind this commemoration. Indeed, the essential question should be how can we uphold multilateralism, when it seems to be challenged. Do we believe in multilateralism, and, more specifically, do we have a common understanding of what multilateralism is?

First of all, the answers are not easy to define, but there is common ground that cannot be contested. We, the Member States, and others, have to take a closer look at the frameworks we have at hand, of which the United Nations is a strong pillar, a beacon and a cradle for multilateral action. As is indicated in the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, it cost humankind two world wars to bring about an instrument aimed at preventing another cataclysm that would annihilate the human race. There is no better success and faith in multilateralism than the very name of the Organization, the United Nations, whose meaning is clearly apparent — nations united in acting together for the sake of the whole world.

We have a precious instrument, the Charter of the United Nations, but do we really implement its full power? Do we respect the full meaning of the purposes and principles it contains? It is clear that after more than 70 years of existence, the United Nations must

adjust its structures to be more relevant, efficient and respected.

There are steps that ought to be taken. In that regard, the reforms of the United Nations would be an integral part of the strengthening of multilateralism. There are many important issues that have been lingering for far too long, such as the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and Security Council reform, including an increase in its membership and a review of its working methods. All of that will work together for greater efficiency, relevance and credibility, and in the end for multilateralism. One of the major areas to be reinforced is close work with regional organizations. In that regard, we salute the cooperation and coordination that exists between the United Nations and the African Union, and we strongly urge that it be strengthened.

When we address the issues still at stake we have to perceive the United Nations through the prism of its efficacy in resolving regional conflicts. Despite the tremendous successes we saw in Namibia and Timor-Leste, how many failures have unjustifiably been put on the shoulders of the United Nations? Clearly, some issues, such as the question of Palestine, have haunted the agenda of the United Nations since the birth of the Organization, and this failure can only be seen as a failure of multilateralism.

Regional conflicts, old and new, are a constant litmus test of the value of the United Nations and multilateralism. But are we all equal in the responsibility for those non-successes? Merely based on the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, some Member States, especially in the Security Council, have specific duties that cannot be ignored.

Multilateralism also serves to protect the lives of every human being on Earth, since it is our duty to promote their well-being. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and what it embraces as common responsibility and solidarity, the very ideas of leaving no one behind and of eradicating poverty, are also a test of and for multilateralism.

The well-being of none is assured if the well-being of all is overlooked. No one is safe if all are not safe. The issues of climate change, migration and terrorism are global and require coordinated global action. They are a clarion call for multilateral action and solutions, when Powers large and small, powerful and not so powerful, must think and act together with mutual respect and a sense of shared responsibility.

I wish we could draw some optimism from those who were inspired to draft the Charter of the United Nations before the Second World War had even ended. The values, principles, goals and mechanisms together generated inspirational momentum, which has unfortunately since been impeded by narrow visions.

In our view, multilateralism and patriotism are not mutually exclusive and should not be seen as opposed to one another. Our world, this global village, cannot sustain disenfranchisement or exclusion; forced to accept such afflictions, we would end up in beleaguered citadels, where the besieged and the besieging would live not in tranquillity but in dubious confrontation.

Hurricanes know no borders and neither does sunlight. There is but one way to alleviate hurricane damage, rebuild what is being destroyed and let the sunlight shine for all, and it is through multilateralism.

(spoke in Arabic)

In conclusion, I would like to stress one particular point: as long as there is strong political will to overcome the challenges facing the United Nations system, as I said earlier, then we can truly say that multilateralism, something we steadfastly support, exists in the activities of the United Nations.

Mr. Kai-Kai (Sierra Leone): On behalf of Sierra Leone, let me join other Member States in unequivocally condemning the recent terrorist attacks on innocent people in churches and hotels in Sri Lanka.

I commend and thank the President of the General Assembly for hosting this first high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representative of Rwanda, on behalf of the Group of African States, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78).

This high-level meeting is taking place in an era of global uncertainties and challenges, including the emergence of new threats that tend to undermine our efforts to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples across our global village. The seemingly unending cycles of conflict and violence, the destructive and devastating effects of climate change, the spread of terrorism and the largest refugee, migration and humanitarian crises in recent

history continue to call into question the effectiveness of our present international machinery as well as our ability to promote peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet within the framework of the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

We are challenged to generate innovative ideas and credible mechanisms that will bring all conflicts to a peaceful end, promote social progress, peace and security, human rights and fundamental freedoms, and secure better living standards for humankind. We have no alternative to multilateralism for addressing those challenges.

Without a doubt, there is no alternative to this Organization, the United Nations. In that regard, the General Assembly should reflect on reform measures that will reinforce our collective obligation to uphold the purposes and principles on which our Organization was founded. We cannot champion the cause of justice and legitimacy when significant regions of our world, including Africa, remain excluded and underrepresented in one of the highest decision-making organs of the United Nations, the Security Council.

Looking ahead, we must not lose sight of our shared obligation to ensure a peaceful and secure world by resolving our differences, including national and international disputes, through constructive dialogue. We must respect and prioritize strengthening the existing mediation mechanisms provided for in the Charter. The role of regional organizations, in partnership with the United Nations, must further be strengthened to enhance responses at the regional level in implementing preventive measures such as early-warning mechanisms.

As a small State, and on the basis of our recent history, Sierra Leone recognizes the benefits of multilateralism and its significance in promoting peace, security and development at the national, regional and global levels. It is our firm belief that the United Nations must continue to build on the gains made in preventive diplomacy efforts, including promoting collaboration among Member States and among our regional and subregional organizations and actors, while making use of experiences that have helped us achieve relative international peace and security. Sierra Leone's membership of the Mano River Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the African Union, as well as our contributions

to international peacekeeping, are testaments to our abiding faith in multilateralism.

As States Members of the United Nations, we have a binding commitment to build a global society that is more just, inclusive and equal than the one we live in today. It is time that we rose to the occasion and assumed our moral responsibility by putting our collective voice and actions to work in support of people affected by conflict, poverty, climate change and other scourges.

In conclusion, our collective resolve to recommit to multilateralism must be an immediate priority. Our inaction will have a debilitating effect on the dignity of humankind. In that regard, Sierra Leone reiterates its commitment to multilateralism and to the principles, ideals and objectives of the Charter of the United Nations — a commitment that we made when we joined the Organization as its 100th State Member in 1961.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I should like to join previous speakers in expressing France's heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Sri Lanka following the horrific terrorist attacks carried out on Easter Sunday. We express our sympathy and compassion for the victims of those barbaric acts, as well as our solidarity in the face of such hateful violence.

I should also like to begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for organizing this inaugural meeting commemorating the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

In that regard, France fully endorses the statement delivered yesterday on behalf of the European Union (see A/73/PV.78). I will simply add a few remarks this morning in my national capacity.

This new International Day is particularly welcome given the challenges facing international cooperation and international law today. It is a situation of real concern. It is not only the functioning of international institutions and the United Nations that is subject to criticism; it is the very relevance of multilateral tools, of a collective and collaborative quest for solutions to the problems we share, and of the concept of a common rulebook that applies equally to all that are being called into question.

However, the threats and challenges we must face together have never been so numerous and interconnected. They include protracted complex conflicts, spiraling global inequality, the climate and environmental crisis,

the emergence of new asymmetrical threats and new technological developments. As nations and as human beings, we have never been so interdependent. The only response to such global threats is a global one, founded on a collaborative global approach that reflects our interdependence.

We must support and modernize international organizations, enabling them to function as a network and strengthening their connectivity with civil society and the private sector so they can work as closely as possible with men, women and children in responding to the concerns of our fellow citizens — which range from economic, political and social concerns to health and education issues and the fight against poverty — and upholding their rights. The reforms undertaken by Secretary-General António Guterres are a step in the right direction. France reiterates its unwavering support for him and his ongoing efforts to modernize the Organization, which remains the cornerstone of international cooperation and collective security.

There is no contradiction between supporting multilateralism and defending national sovereignty, quite the contrary. It is in that spirit that France, Germany, Japan and Canada have joined forces to launch the Alliance for Multilateralism, which seeks to organize States committed to cooperation, dialogue and the regulation of international relations based on respect for agreed principles, particularly respect for fundamental rights and the rule of law. We want to send a clear message that a vast majority of States continue to support multilateralism and remain committed to the United Nations. This majority has long remained silent because we believed that the importance of international cooperation went without saying. Since this no longer seems to be the case today, these States must stand up and speak out on behalf of the Charter of the United Nations.

France will play its full role in those efforts, maintaining its unwavering defence of rigorous and effective multilateralism in the service of peace and international security, human rights, sustainable development and the fight against climate change and inequality. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a perfect illustration of the relevance of this collective ambition, anchored in the Charter of the United Nations.

Cooperation is not always the easiest choice, but it is the choice of security, for there can be no security other

than collective security, and it is the best guarantee of lasting peace. That is the commitment that France renews to our partners in a spirit of goodwill.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of the Holy See.

Archbishop Auza (Holy See): The Holy See would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level plenary meeting on the important and timely topic of multilateralism and diplomacy for peace.

As we discuss how to strengthen the multilateral system, my delegation would like to recall that an indispensable condition for the success of multilateral diplomacy is the goodwill and good faith of the parties, their readiness to cooperate and treat one another with respect, honesty and fairness, and their openness to finding common solutions to overcome disputes. Whenever even one of those elements is missing, the result is a search for unilateral solutions and normally, in the end, the domination of the powerful over the weak.

In his address to the diplomatic corps at the beginning of this year, Pope Francis spoke of the purpose of multilateral diplomacy, its characteristics and its responsibilities in the contemporary context. He highlighted four points.

The first was the primacy of justice and law. It is troubling to see the re-emergence of tendencies to impose and pursue individual national interests without recourse to the instruments provided by international law for resolving controversies and ensuring that justice is respected, including through international courts. Such an attitude at times results from the reaction of Government leaders to growing unease among their citizens, who perceive the procedures and rules governing the international community as slow, abstract and ultimately far removed from their own concrete needs. Yet the need to respect law and justice remains essential, both within their national communities and within the international community. Reactive, emotional and hasty solutions may garner short-term consensus, but they will not resolve the deeper problems, but rather run the risk of aggravating them.

The Pope's second point was about the defence of those who are in the most vulnerable situations. In its efforts to leave no one behind, the international community's mission is to hear the cries of those in

distress, to give a voice to those who have none and to denounce actions that affect their lives. We think of the victims of ongoing conflicts and war, persecuted ethnic and religious communities, displaced persons who have been forced to flee their homes, and those forced to migrate on account of poverty, persecution, natural catastrophes or climatic disturbances. Peace is never a partial good but one that embraces the entire human race. Diplomacy for peace must have no fear of encountering strangers, the poor and the suffering, or of listening to what they have to say.

Thirdly, multilateralism functions as a bridge between peoples and peacebuilders. Peace, in effect, is the fruit of a great cultural and political project grounded in the mutual responsibility and interdependence of human beings. Peace demands constant renewal and effort because it is not achieved once and for all. It is a challenge ever ancient and ever new. It entails a conversion of heart and soul. It is both interior and communal. It is far-sighted and not limited to seeking short-term solutions, but asks for patience, dialogue and respect for others' positions, a shared search for mutual benefit.

Fourthly and lastly, multilateral diplomacy invites us to stay focused on our common destiny and on the appropriate means to achieve it. International relations cannot be held captive to military force, mutual intimidation and stockpiles of arms, which involve enormous expense and will never constitute a basis for peaceful coexistence among members of the human family. Our shared destiny must rather be inspired by an ethics of solidarity and involve a reconsideration of our relationship with our common home, planet Earth, rediscovering the grandeur of the gift of the world we have received and our individual and shared responsibility as stewards, citizens and builders of its future.

A renewed understanding of multilateralism must be founded on the idea of the international community as a family of nations committed to pursuing the good of all and not of the few. It requires the exercise of solidarity on the part of Governments, international organizations and all women and men. Its firm foundation is a collective and shared responsibility for the common good and for the development of those who are most in need, so that every person may be welcomed and participate as a member of the global family.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer of the Observer State of Palestine.

Mr. Mansour (Palestine): At the outset, I would like to present our deepest condolences to Sri Lanka and express our solidarity with its people.

We thank the President for convening this important plenary meeting to promote multilateralism and diplomacy for peace, in line with her unwavering commitment to those values.

The State of Palestine aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (see A/73/PV.78).

It took two world wars to convince humankind to reign in its worst instincts and be touched by the better angels of its nature. The international community built the United Nations and adopted its Charter and established the International Court of Justice. International criminal law took its first, imperfect steps. We adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Geneva Conventions. We forged treaties to regulate international relations and enshrine national commitments. Since then, there have been many examples of how multilateralism has fostered important advances for humankind despite our changing and challenging circumstances, including the adoption in recent years of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

History is not linear, however, and we must acknowledge shortcomings and setbacks. We must recognize that in too many cases, right up to the present day, the multilateral order has not been able to provide answers to some of the most pressing matters of our times, or to long-standing conflicts and crises around the world. That does not mean we should abandon the project, however. It just highlights the need to perfect it.

To be just and to be efficient, multilateralism must be based on international law. It requires consistency, as double standards erode the credibility of the international system. It requires clarity, as ambiguity and false compromise will not salvage the system but render it further vulnerable to attack. It requires determination in standing up for what we believe in, whatever the odds and whatever the circumstances,

as too much is at stake. Finally, it requires solidarity, as only by standing together can we defeat the evils surrounding us.

Multilateralism has always been under attack by those who believe that might should triumph over right, who are ready to sacrifice long-term interests to secure short-term political gains, who believe that one should choose between love of country and love of humankind, who have forgotten the painful lessons of history, who seek to erode the national and international rule of law and who challenge the values and principles that we thought we had consecrated for all eternity.

How did such ideas become popular in some countries? How could they make for good campaign slogans and electoral wins? Humankind has been down that path before and knows only too well where it leads. We should be unapologetic in our defence of multilateralism, the rule of international law, justice, friendly relations among nations, freedom and peace.

The purposes and principles that lie at the heart of the multilateral system are never outdated. They are our answer to the horrors that humankind has experienced in the past and the global challenges of the present and the future. As such, they are a reflection not of our naivety but of our lucidity.

Palestine is well positioned to know the importance as well as the limits of the multilateral order. It enjoys international solidarity and support, yet continues to suffer from the longest occupation in contemporary history. The international consensus regarding the question of Palestine, as enshrined in United Nations resolutions, remains the only basis for peace. Yet there is a lack of measures for enforcing the implementation of United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions, and holding accountable those who violate them.

The United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, with the support of States around the world, continues to play a leading role in providing a human and humanitarian response to the needs of Palestinian refugees, but there is no end in sight to their plight.

Despite the shortcomings of the multilateral system, which our people feel in their flesh, I stand here today to proclaim once again our faith in multilateralism and our commitment to international law as our people pursue their struggle for freedom and dignity and as

we strive to end the occupation and achieve peace for all. We pledge to continue being an active player in furthering and strengthening the multilateral and rules-based order for the benefit of all humankind.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Mr. Mardini (International Committee of the Red Cross): The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) is pleased to join in today's commemoration of the first official International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace. As the guardian of international humanitarian law, a neutral, impartial and independent humanitarian actor and a multiple recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize honoured for its humanitarian activities during war, the ICRC deems it important to provide its perspective on this critical topic. In particular, we want to highlight the interrelated nature of humankind and multilateralism.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, States recognized that if wars cannot be prevented, they must be waged within certain limits. Humankind brought States together to draft, negotiate and adopt the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, which today represent the core of international humanitarian law and a shared commitment to humankind. Universally ratified, those rules of war are the quintessential product of multilateral consensus. They demonstrate what is possible through effective multilateralism, which is that together States can create norms, uphold them and take action.

The Geneva Conventions were designed to protect the safety, dignity and well-being of people affected by conflict. The original drafters knew that when we invest in our shared humankind, we see positive results. Torture, ill treatment, rape and other forms of sexual violence are prevented. Hospitals can function and medical personnel are able to help the wounded and the sick. People who are detained are treated humanely. We are able to view our enemies as humans. When upheld and respected, the collective result of international humanitarian law is less human suffering.

Humankind and multilateralism are at the heart of the United Nations and bring us together today. In this multilateral forum we create the norms that uphold our humanity. This year we mark the seventieth anniversary of the Geneva Conventions. Let us remember the spirit of those Conventions and uphold human dignity even in the midst of war. It is our collective responsibility

to ensure that those laws are respected. Through multilateralism we can achieve that.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer for the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Ms. Torsney (Inter-Parliamentary Union): This first International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace compels us to take a hard look at the United Nations-led system of global governance and at the root causes of growing distrust in democratic institutions around the world.

That was the central theme of February's joint parliamentary hearing at the United Nations, which brought together more than 200 parliamentarians. The hearing showed strong support for multilateralism within the global parliamentary community but also underscored the need for far-reaching reforms designed to make the United Nations more effective.

Business as usual is not an option. Multilateralism, like democracy, is work in progress towards an ideal — work that must never stop, because it is the only hope for the future of our people and our planet. As our beloved Dag Hammarskjöld said, the United Nations was “not created in order to bring us to heaven, but in order to save us from hell.” Thankfully, parliamentarians are no longer bystanders in foreign relations but are active participants. Parliaments are the essential link between the people and the United Nations as their global Organization.

Properly informed of decision-making processes and institutional reforms, parliamentarians can help hold Governments to account for their international commitments and can act as additional sounding boards for important United Nations processes.

As we heard at the hearing, one major reason why multilateralism is in crisis is that people do not trust their own Governments and, by extension, do not trust the intergovernmental organizations to which they belong. Too many Governments are seen to be acting in the interests of the few, exacerbating inequalities and denying human rights to increasing numbers of people.

Paradoxically, the distance between global institutions and the people has grown instead of narrowing despite global challenges such as climate change, migration, nuclear disarmament and terrorism, for which multilateral solutions are most needed. There is no real contradiction between sovereign rights

and multilateral solutions. As the President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) noted, the national interest is best served by participating in global processes that bring all countries together.

But international agreements are worth nothing if they are not properly implemented. Failure to deliver on our commitments leads to more disenchantment with Governments and multilateralism. The February hearing reiterated the key role of parliaments in the implementation of agreements such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and many others.

The IPU will continue to help build bridges between parliaments and the United Nations, as it has done for the past 20 years. We will promote parliamentary debates as the United Nations seeks to retool all its major bodies, as well as more discussion in parliaments on the United Nations budget, which most parliamentarians do not understand well.

As one presenter noted at the hearing, people everywhere must see and feel that everything we do here is for their benefit. That is truly our challenge today. To restore faith in multilateralism, we must strengthen accountability and transparency from the bottom up and across the board.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the observer for the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

Mr. Mehdiyev (Organization of Islamic Cooperation): First of all, I want to express our deep condolences to the people and the Government of Sri Lanka and all those who suffered in the recent terrorist attacks in that country, which we strongly condemn.

I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this high-level meeting, and all Member States that supported the commemoration of multilateralism by voting in favour of declaring today the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace.

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) believes in strengthening multilateralism and diplomacy by focusing on the creation of inclusive societies and the attainment of sustainable peace, now more than ever.

The OIC continues to pursue its policy of outreach and engagement in its societies to form meaningful and functional partnerships in order to foster a culture of

coexistence and peace and uphold human dignity. To that end, the OIC utilizes its specialized department on dialogue and outreach, in addition to its peace and mediation unit, to help promote dialogue regionally, most recently working with the African Union to alleviate the situation in the Central African Republic.

The OIC is also closely following political developments in the Sudan and urges all parties to maintain a constructive dialogue, while supporting the Sudanese people's choices and decisions about their future. In South Asia, the OIC recognizes the need for a speedy resumption of the dialogue process between Pakistan and India, which is considered a prerequisite for development and peace in the region. Last but not least, the OIC has long participated in the facilitation of the peace process in the southern Philippines, and will continue to do so.

The OIC has always emphasized the importance of embracing diversity and promoting tolerance and peace, as reflected in various OIC resolutions and decisions at the level of Ministers and Heads of State. We believe that current challenges such as xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, racism and hate speech must be tackled through dialogue, tolerance and the promotion of multilateralism and coexistence.

Unfortunately, human-made perils such as humanitarian tragedies caused by armed conflicts, sectarian and faith-based violence and hate crimes indicate that much more must be done to realize and protect the ideals of peace. The growing trends of Islamophobia and anti-Muslim discrimination are a great source of concern for the OIC and the international community. Muslims continue to suffer in different parts of the world because of various forms of discrimination, stereotyping and acts of violence. In order to combat that trend, we must continue to assert that diversity remains the world's biggest asset.

I would therefore particularly like to draw the Assembly's attention to the continued violence and indiscriminate use of force against Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, which has led to a catastrophic situation that affects a huge number of civilians across the region. Thousands of people have been killed and more than a million have been forcibly displaced, while their property and places of worship have been demolished and burned.

As the international community stands ready to defend multilateralism today, we should also express our unequivocal rejection of all unilateral actions and decisions that seek to recognize Israel's occupation of East Jerusalem and the Syrian Golan. Given the thorny nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, it is crucially important to promote multilateralism in the search for a just and lasting solution through the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions, and to call for an end to the prolonged Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories, which began in 1967.

In conclusion, this event provides us an opportunity to strengthen our resolve to promote diversity and interfaith and intercultural dialogue. The OIC is determined to continue working with its partners in that regard, particularly the United Nations and other regional and subregional organizations, while mobilizing its member States to disseminate and strengthen a culture of peace, in tandem with its efforts to promote sustainable development, human rights and good governance.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): We have heard the last speaker at this commemorative meeting.

The General Assembly has thus concluded its commemorative meeting on the occasion of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace and this stage of its consideration of agenda item 15.

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.