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Note by the President of the General Assembly

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

The statements contained in the present document were delivered on the afternoon of Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly (see A/75/PV.11). Document A/75/592 and its addenda 1 through 11 contain the statements delivered in the 4th through the 15th meetings of the General Assembly (A/75/PV.4-A/75/PV.15).

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

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Kiribati (see also A/75/PV.11, annex I)

Address by Mr. Taneti Maamau, President, Head of Government and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Immigration of the Republic of Kiribati

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr. President
UN Secretary-General
Excellencies
Distinguished Delegates

At the outset allow me to share warm greetings from the Government and the people of the Republic of Kiribati. In the name of the Almighty God, I begin by sharing his peace and blessings. Kam na bane n Mauri!

Acknowledgement

Mr. President,

I join previous speakers in congratulating you, on your election to the Presidency of the 75th Session of the United Nations. I wish you every success as you guide our deliberations by making the United Nations of family relevant to all members.

On this note, I wish to assure you of Kiribati's full support, as you discharge your duties for the Assembly, and avail my Government's commitment, both morally and in kind, in particular for initiatives that seek to make our planet earth, a resilient, healthier, and safer home. This is the core of Kiribati's Vision for 20 Years (KV20) in line with our efforts to implement our agreed 2030 Agenda.

Contextualizing the Theme

Mr. President,

The theme for this 75th session, reminds us that the effectiveness of our individual national agendas, can be greatly enhanced through stronger global cooperation. By reaffirming our collective efforts to enhance links between our governments, our multilateral institutions, we can work together to create a resilient, healthy and peaceful future for our respective peoples. This is critical, especially with the emergence of unprecedented challenges such as climate change, natural disasters and the recent COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

On this note, I would like to express my deepest condolences to our brothers and sisters around the world who are suffering from the impacts of the global pandemic. These are difficult and uncertain times, which calls for stronger cooperation and reminds us of the strength we have in unity. It also reminds us of the United Nations we need- one that can step up in difficult and challenging times. A United Nations that undertakes to deliver and coordinate assistance and support. In particular to

our most vulnerable communities and the least developed amongst us, through its agencies, programs and multilateral systems, in a coordinated and timely manner.

It also extends to all of us, as individual sovereign States; as global corporations; as nongovernment and civil society organizations; as cities, towns and villages; as families and individual human beings. From small islands in the Pacific, to megacities and metropolitans in Europe and America. We have a calling as Leaders to work together to address our most pressing global challenges.

Mr. President,

During this difficult time, our remoteness and isolated location has allowed my country to be among the few fortunate nations, currently free from the reaches of this virus. But that has been our only advantage. The temporary suspension of flights into Kiribati, and strict measures to contain our borders from the virus, has also resulted in unprecedented challenges. Many of our nationals are currently stranded in other countries such as Fiji, New Zealand and Australia, as well as other parts of the world, due to the containment measures imposed to limit the spread of this deadly virus. I am thankful to these Governments for the cooperation and support they have given to my people as they await repatriation to their home country. While many countries have already begun to repatriate their nationals, my Government remains in crisis due to the absence of adequate infrastructure and capacity to isolate our nationals upon their return. A few months ago, I declared a State of Public Health Emergency, calling for assistance from our partners to enhance and strengthen our public health sector and to assist with any other necessary actions required to mitigate the economic and social shocks of COVID-19.

Mr. President,

I am optimistic that we can overcome this challenge, if we work together, as members of the United Nations family. My government remains grateful for the support of our development partners namely Australia, New Zealand, China, Japan, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, contributing 12.5 million AUD towards our preparations and efforts to mitigate the economic and social impacts emerging at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We also acknowledge the support provided by the United Arab Emirates through its assistance package to the Pacific; and the Government of India through the United Nations India Partnership Fund; the Canadian Fund for Local Initiatives response to COVID-19; and USAID for the donation of ventilators; and the medical supplies and protective equipment delivered through the Pacific humanitarian air service- funded by Australia, UN agencies, the Red Cross and USAID.

Mr. President, I remain grateful and optimistic in the strength and partnership of our United Nations family. In challenging times, such partnerships are needed more than ever, and I implore our UN family who are able to do so, to increase their support to confront COVID — a future that focuses on poverty alleviation, social inclusion, and leaves no one behind

Mr. President

As leaders, we are charged with a noble responsibility to take action today, to shape the future of tomorrow. Poverty and inequality remains humanity's biggest dilemma and challenge. The social and economic security of any nation can only be strengthened, if the support system begins at home. It is therefore critical, that the

UN programs targets the family, at a household level, from where the fragmentation of values, draws a fault line in our societies.

Like other governments, our people are our most precious resource. During these difficult times, the protection and welfare of the most vulnerable individuals and groups take centre stage. We are providing COVID-19 Relief Packages for laid off workers, Stateowned Enterprises and the Private Sector, together with a food buffer. At the same time, we increase senior citizens' support, copra price and general unemployment benefits.

As part of our policy for the next four years, my Government will be providing social welfare to certain age groups which are deemed to be the most vulnerable and disadvantaged in our efforts to improve the social and economic wellbeing of our citizens.

As my government undertakes its task for our people, we implore the United Nations to also do its part. Alleviating poverty is a complex undertaking and a challenging feat, which is duly recognized in the 17 goals of our 2030 Agenda. However, in times like this, we need accelerated action, and coordinated efforts, to target assistance to our most disadvantaged groups, marginalized communities and the least developed amongst us; as they remain most vulnerable, especially during global pandemics.

This is the future we want. A future in which development is inclusive and measured by the percentage of the population lifted-up across the poverty line, to live secure and healthier lives. And congruent with the ever-powerful motto of our 2030 agenda- a future that leaves no one behind.

Accordingly, I believe that the real and true test of the success of multilateralism, and that of our United Nations family, lie not in the measure of the number of treaties concluded or resolutions adopted, nor number of countries that graduate from the list of least developed countries; but rather on how the most vulnerable, disadvantaged, and least developed peoples, can get targeted support to ensure they are less compromised during the onset of global pandemics such as COVID-19. We need a United Nations that embraces these challenges.

Mr. President,

Blessed with a large ocean, Kiribati depends on the sea for livelihood. A common trait we share with our Blue Pacific family. For us, the sea is our identity and how we define ourselves and how we trace our roots, cultures and traditions. It is also the cornerstone of our economies.

We have a large EEZ and hence depend on fishing as our primary source of income, accounting for more than 70 per cent of total annual revenue. Being a volatile resource, we need to affirm our strategic intent of reinvesting more to maximize revenue to buffer the uncertainty posed by COVID-19

COVID-19 has created an unprecedented situation worldwide resulting in the closure of borders, both airports and seaports. This has presented a complicated situation for maritime transport and commercial activity, particularly for seafarers. Closure of borders have rendered ships unable to change crews forcing seafarers to stay on-board for extended periods of time and thus subjecting them to various health issues.

With current border restrictions around the world, our seafarers are effectively stranded both on land and at sea, unable to embark on ships to work and unable to disembark at other ports. In our efforts to address this issue, on 26 August 2020, my Government declared seafarers as key workers in response to the calls made by the IMO and the UN Secretary-General.

To this effect, I wish to make a call for the support of UN family and partners for assistance in fulfilling our commitment for the safety of all seafarers around the world, and their families and economies who depend on them.

A future that is resilient to the impacts of Climate Change

Mr. President,

Of great importance to Kiribati and our Blue Pacific is without question, the alarming dilemma of our present time, climate change. To this end, my Government continues to implement critical projects to build resilience, including the Peacebuilding Fund' climate security project, which I launched in Kiribati earlier this month. In solidarity with our Pacific Islands Forum family, we also remain committed to securing our maritime boundaries, amid the impacts of climate change. This is a matter of sovereignty.

Equally, we underscore the importance of countries managing their own upper airspace, in line with the requirements of ICAO, relating to effective administration, capacity and safety. My government is committed to invest into our aviation capability and strengthen internet connectivity through fibre optic cable technology and welcome any support from our development partners and the UN family.

While COVID-19 is our immediate crisis, we must continue to work on the other challenges that confront us all, in particular climate change, which presents the single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and wellbeing of the Pacific and its peoples, as declared by Forum Leaders in the *Kainaki II Declaration in 2019 and the Boe Declaration in 2018*.

Conclusion

Mr. President

When I am asked to define the future that my people want, it remains for me to convey that Kiribati wants an uncompromised future. A future that is secure and certain. A future that seeks to make our planet earth, a resilient, healthier, and safer home. A future in which national plans such as the KiribatiVision for 20 Years (KV20), are enhanced by multilateral policies such as the 2030 Agenda. A future where our United Nations family continue to deliver and coordinate assistance and support, in particular to our most vulnerable communities and the least developed amongst us, in a coordinated and timely manner. A future in which development is inclusive and measured by the percentage of the population lifted up across the poverty line, to live secure and healthier lives; congruent with the ever-powerful motto of our 2030 agenda, to leave no one behind.

Mr. President,

The future may be a vision, but it is a vision I believe can come true. And by seeing all the support that Kiribati has received from our UN family in these challenging times, I remain optimistic of this vision.

Mr. President,

I believe that the transformation called for in our theme is a call for more action and less words. If every nation, acts accordingly along this path of alignment, with the right heart and soul, then there is a good chance of the whole world moving forward towards inclusive social development, for all by the end of 2030.

I conclude, by sharing with us all our traditional blessings: *Te Mauri, Te Raoi ao Te Tabomoa*, meaning Health, Peace, and Prosperity.

Thank you.

Portugal (see also A/75/PV.11, annex II)

Address by Mr. António Costa, Prime Minister of the Portuguese Republic

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

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

Mr. Chairman of the General Assembly,

Mr. Secretary-General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate Ambassador Volkan Bozkir on his election as President of the General Assembly as the United Nations (UN) celebrates its seventy-fifth anniversary.

More than ever, the UN is needed to address challenges that know no borders and cannot be resolved by self-interested approaches.

We know to what degree the multilateral system is under pressure.

First of all, in the context of a return to a competition for power at the global level, we are witnessing increasing limitations on the ability to respond to shared threats and challenges.

Secondly, new issues are emerging that demand multilateral solutions in accordance with normative and cooperative arrangements. What is now called the fourth industrial revolution presents both a challenge and an opportunity. From artificial intelligence and robotization to the implementation of smart grids and 5G infrastructure and data management, to restructuring entire sectors of the economy, the impact of new technologies — on the economy, the work world and relations among States — will demand new rules of conduct at the international level. The UN must play a central role in defining them by providing compromise solutions capable of safeguarding the public interest.

Thirdly, international organizations are showing difficulty in responding to challenges and threats. The Security Council is a case in point. It has demonstrated its limited capacity to respond to crises and conflicts, while its membership does not reflect the geopolitical realities of the twenty-first century. That is why Portugal advocates the expansion of the categories of permanent and non-permanent members, including for the African continent and, at least, Brazil and India.

Despite such challenges, the UN remains crucial to preserving world peace and security, sustainable development and the defence and the promotion of human rights. And the General Assembly, which I am addressing, continues to be the Parliament of humankind. There is no other.

Portugal will therefore continue to resolutely support the United Nations system both politically and financially. We will uphold the ambitious agenda of commitments to strengthen the capacity of the UN and its Member States in responding to the major areas of international interest, including the Sustainable Development Goals, climate

change, migration, hosting refugees, issues related to the sea and the sustainability of the oceans.

The leadership and reforms introduced by the Secretary-General are essential to making the Organization's work more effective and flexible. He can therefore count on our full support.

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,

The context of the global emergency that we are experiencing today reinforces the need for cooperation among States and international organizations to respond to the challenge of the health crisis and its socioeconomic consequences. The United Nations is a central pillar to such efforts, including through the United Nations System Response to COVID-19, a response plan endorsed by Secretary-General António Guterres. We support its implementation and the coordinating role of the World Health Organization.

The pandemic has highlighted many of our vulnerabilities in the areas of health, the economy and social cohesion. We need to swiftly recover growth and employment and increase the resilience of our economies, societies and the State. This will be a key priority for Portugal when, in the first half of 2021, the country holds the presidency of the Council of the European Union.

Similarly, there is a need to strengthen development cooperation and the capacity of the United Nations system for action in this area. Portugal has strengthened its contributions to several United Nations agencies, focusing in particular on the World Health Organization, the International Organization for Migration, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and UNICEF.

The fight against economic inequalities deserves special attention given its truly cross-cutting nature. International security is incompatible with an inequitable distribution of resources on a global scale, in particular when compounded by demographic imbalances and issues related to environmental deterioration that are so often inseparable. We need a new global commitment based on human dignity that balances concrete access to opportunities and hope.

The crisis caused by this pandemic must not therefore serve as an excuse to disrupt policies aimed at countering the current climate emergency, which poses an existential threat to everyone. On the contrary, there is a need to deepen the coordination between the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, thereby helping to build societies that are less vulnerable to the impacts of extreme weather events.

Similarly, it is essential to deepen the relationship between oceans and climate change, while paying special attention to small island States. Therefore, Portugal reaffirms its commitment to co-hosting in 2021, together with Kenya, the United Nations Ocean Conference and counts on the participation of all UN Member States, at the highest level.

Mr. President,

Secretary-General,

The full realization of human rights is an ongoing process of improvement. Portugal supports an open discussion, as part of a critical dialogue among peers, to strengthen the promotion and universal respect for human rights. Together with our partners in the European Union, we reaffirm the defence of free, plural and tolerant societies that reject racism, xenophobia, homophobia and populism and that work for inclusion, gender equality and freedom of expression.

The pandemic has placed new demands on the promotion and protection of human rights. Portugal has provided an immediate response to these demands, in particular by expanding access to the National Health Service to all migrants and refugees, regardless of their status or legal situation, under the same conditions as for national citizens.

Portugal has played an active role in welcoming migrants and refugees, thereby expressing its solidarity in an undeniable way. We reaffirm our full support for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration. Furthermore, within the framework of the International Organization for Migration, we are one of the pilot countries for its implementation.

Portugal is one of the first countries to abolish the death penalty, opposing its use in all circumstances. In this regard, I call for the adoption of the biennial resolution on the moratorium on the use of the death penalty, which will be introduced during this session of the General Assembly.

In a year marking quarter of a century since the fourth World Conference on Women, Portugal reiterates its commitment to the promotion of women's rights. It is important to double the attention paid to gender-based violence and sexual and reproductive rights and health in the face of the challenges exacerbated by the pandemic.

Mr. President,
Secretary-General,

Despite the pandemic, many wars and conflicts persist. That is why we support the recent call by the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire.

Portugal currently provides troops to seven peacekeeping operations and special political missions. Our national participation in MINUSCA, in the Central African Republic, is an example, in particular because it provides the Rapid Reaction Force, which is crucial to the fulfilment of the Mission's mandate.

The persistence of high levels of violence in the Sahel reinforces the need for international coordination — a goal supported by Portugal, in particular through our participation in MINUSMA in Mali.

We monitor the international community's efforts to find political solutions to the conflicts that plague many parts of the world. We believe that the two-State solution is the only way to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; that the nuclear agreement with Iran must be preserved and fully respected by all parties and that the mediation and compromise processes led by the UN are those that will make it possible to overcome the deep crises today in Syria, Yemen and Libya. We also call for a peaceful and inclusive political solution in Venezuela.

The current challenges demonstrate the importance of international partnerships, in particular tripartite cooperation among the United Nations, the African Union and

the European Union. It was under Portuguese leadership that relations between the European Union and Africa were institutionalized at the highest level, and during its presidency of the European Union in 2021, Portugal will strive to further deepen the partnership between Europe and Africa. The role of the European Union as a global player, open to the world, a defender of multilateralism and economic exchanges that are beneficial to all will be a priority of our EU presidency.

Several organizations, of diverse nature, make positive contributions to the international rules-based order and demonstrate the willingness to cooperate. Among them, I would like to highlight, of course, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, which brings together nations from four continents. Under the current presidency of Cabo Verde and the subsequent presidency of Angola, the CPLP attests to the ability to establish partnerships and build bridges between countries and peoples, united because they share a language whose World Day —on 5 May — was declared by UNESCO. In this regard, I welcome the resolution of the post-electoral stalemate in Guinea-Bissau and hope that it will usher in a new cycle of stability and prosperity for the country. Furthermore, I express my deep solidarity with Mozambique — a victim of terrorist attacks and attempts to destabilize its northern regions.

Mr. President,

Secretary-General,

Portugal is a country that is open to the world. It advocates dialogue and a fair system of rules, in a stable and predictable environment. We know where the path of autocracy, aggressive nationalism and survival of the fittest has led us in the past. Seventy-five years ago, the founders of the United Nations had the courage to lay the foundations for a new world order, based on international law, equality among sovereign States and the dignity of the human person. It was the victory of hope. Today we cannot succumb to cynicism. It is our duty to cherish and build on the gains we achieved together to ensure a better future. A strong United Nations is essential for the good of us all.

Thank you very much.

Bulgaria (see also A/75/PV.11, annex III)

Address by Mr. Boyko Borissov, Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

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

MR. PRESIDENT,

MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL,

DEAR COLLEAGUES,

It is my honour and privilege to address the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. President,

Please accept my congratulations on your election. I wish you every success during the seventy-fifth UN General Assembly session.

The coronavirus overwhelmed the agenda of all institutions throughout the world. Yet, the theme of this virtual meeting suggests to us something more. Seventy-five years since its inception, the United Nations is in debt to humanity.

We are witnessing a shrinking space of freedom and violations of human rights and international law. Multilateralism as a key UN approach to a collective and solidarity-based solution to global and regional problems was put to the test.

In these circumstances, the world needs the UN more than ever as the moral leader of the modern world. I believe that the UN mission, drawn up 75 years ago, is capable of surviving the crisis of the organization itself — just as the UN had to revive the ideas born of the League of Nations and save future generations from the scourge of war.

The UN is going through a structural crisis that requires reform and revitalization. The UN General Assembly in its 75th anniversary presents a good opportunity to intensify work on the Security Council reform. Bulgaria supports the start of negotiations at the intergovernmental level in this direction.

In early 2020, the UN Secretary-General outlined four threats to humanity:

- geopolitical tensions and devastating conflicts;
- the climate crisis;
- growing global mistrust, and
- the dark side of the digital world.

Shortly afterward, the new threat of COVID-19 multiplied the risk of a global catastrophe.

The COVID-19 pandemic has threatened the rule-based international order.

The false opposition of “health or economy” has emerged. Protectionism has caused disruptions in supply chains. Asymmetric socio-economic changes have exacerbated inequality and the danger of destabilization and conflict.

The “Infodemic” — the wave of true and false information, which overwhelmed people, has further heightened their concerns.

On 25 March this year, The UN Secretary-General, the UN Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, the UNICEF Executive Director, and the World Health Organization Director-General announced a COVID-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan. Practically the entire UN system was committed to the humanitarian plan.

The UN has been proving once again to be a leader in exploring the needs, fundraising, management, delivery, and distribution of humanitarian aid to the population in countries in conflict or crisis.

Bulgaria welcomes the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2532 (2020) and the Secretary-General’s Call for a Global Ceasefire to protect the most vulnerable population groups.

Along with the UN, we will continue to support all working mechanisms, including the World Health Organization and the World Trade Organization. These institutions should contribute to a global, multilateral, and coordinated response to address the immediate and long-term effects of COVID-19, as well as to address future global crises.

The European Union and other regional organizations have joined the UN initiative for a global response to the pandemic, building on the mechanism of multilateralism. The strategic response of the European Union is multilateralism, combined with competitive and sustainable economies and solidarity.

The statements of the Alliance for Multilateralism, which Bulgaria joined on 26 September 2019, are in line with the four directions for UN action announced by the Secretary-General — cybersecurity, climate, security, and the fight against lethal autonomous weapons systems.

Our country took an active part in the Alliance’s meeting on strengthening the multilateral health architecture. In this manner, we reaffirmed our commitment to supporting multilateral cooperation in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

This year, Bulgaria has marked the 65th anniversary of its accession to the World Organization. As a member of the United Nations and the European Union, we are ready to take on our responsibilities:

- Supporting the leading role of the UN in multilateral cooperation to tackle the global pandemic;
- Actively working to implement the European Union’s priorities and actions in response to the pandemic, participating at the same time in initiatives for a global response to this challenge;
- As an important participant and mediator in the integration processes in Southeast Europe;

- Contributing to peacekeeping operations and ensuring unhindered access to humanitarian assistance;
- As a constructive member of the Human Rights Council for 2019-2021;
- And an active member of the ECOSOC for the period 2021-2023;
- Implementing the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement.

Bulgaria has joined the Team Europe package as part of the European Union measures to support third countries in tackling the pandemic. We promptly restructured our national program for development and humanitarian aid. Just over one million euros have been earmarked for emergency humanitarian aid, health care, and support for socio-economic development.

The goal was to support the most vulnerable groups among our neighbours in the Western Balkans, the Eastern Partnership countries, Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan, and through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees.

Bulgaria has provided humanitarian assistance in kind and a financial contribution to UNICEF's activities in support of the children who suffered in the tragedy in Lebanon.

To recover from the negative effects of the pandemic in the Western Balkans, it is particularly important to use the established cooperation mechanisms effectively: the Berlin Process — which Bulgaria is co-chairing with the Republic of North Macedonia this year, the South-East European Cooperation Process, the Regional Cooperation Council, and the Central European Free Trade Agreement. Our efforts are aimed at improving connectivity and security in the region.

The development of good-neighbourly relations in the Western Balkans with the neighbouring European Union Member States is particularly important in this context.

We reaffirmed our support for the Secretary-General's Initiative on Action for Peacekeeping. UN peacekeeping operations are the epitome of multilateralism and international solidarity. Not coincidentally, the first such operation was the deployment of a limited contingent of Blue Helmets in the Middle East to monitor the ceasefire between Israel and its Arab neighbours.

Bulgaria supports the leading role of the UN in the efforts to resolve the conflicts in the region of the Middle East and North Africa.

We welcome the US-sponsored agreement to normalize relations between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, and between Israel and Bahrain. This is a major diplomatic breakthrough that could open a new page in the history of the Middle East and change the lives of its peoples.

Suspending the plans for unilateral annexation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories prevents a humanitarian catastrophe in the context of an ongoing pandemic. It is also a step towards avoiding serious violations of human rights and international law.

We welcome and support the efforts of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East Peace Process, Nikolay Mladenov.

The civil conflict in Syria remains a serious destabilizing factor. A political transition in line with UN Security Council Resolution 2254 (2015) and the 2012 Geneva Communiqué is the single way to overcome the crisis and alleviate the situation of the civilians in need. I would also like to voice my country's support for the African Union's efforts to maintain peace and security on the continent in a situation complicated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A cause for serious concern for my country is the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine, where the humanitarian situation continues to deteriorate. Bulgaria reaffirms its support for Ukraine's sovereignty, unity, and territorial integrity in accordance with UN General Assembly Resolution 68/262 of 2014. Bulgaria was among the co-sponsors of this resolution. We support the efforts within the Normandy format to achieve progress in implementing the Minsk agreements.

During the first donor campaign in May this year, Bulgaria, through the International Committee of the Red Cross and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, redirected to Ukraine €100,000 from development and cooperation funds, as well as a package of humanitarian aid in kind to combat COVID-19.

We are following the situation in Belarus with concern. Bulgaria stands behind the rights and demands of the Belarusian people for a democratic future and free and fair elections. The efforts of the international community should be aimed at supporting and assisting the holding of inclusive national dialogue on a peaceful resolution of the crisis.

Last but not least, Bulgaria, within NATO, is developing transatlantic cooperation and solidarity in the conditions of the pandemic. The strategic dialogue between Bulgaria and the United States, which began in January this year, also covers the practical dimensions of overcoming the consequences of the pandemic.

Within the framework of the global network "Responsibility to Protect" of the UN member states, Bulgaria supported the need for shared responsibility for the prevention of atrocities during the COVID-19 pandemic. We recall the appeal of the World Health Organization for the responsibility of each country to protect the health and safety of its citizens in times of a crisis.

Mr. President,

The global pandemic is also a threat to the timely implementation of the UN Agenda 2030. Bulgaria, together with the other European Union member states, is fully committed to the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals during the Decade of Action.

Getting through the current crisis does not mean returning to our old way of life. We need to step on a new paradigm by implementing long-term economic measures. The full implementation of the Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Action Plan are critical to preparing the world for future systemic shocks.

The UN has no alternative in terms of the development of international law and multilateral cooperation. As a member state of the European Union, Bulgaria will champion a strong United Nations Organization as its main partner as a solid foundation of the rules-based multilateral order.

In conclusion, I would like to refer to the appeals of two Nobel Peace Prize winners in 1994. In order to achieve the common goals, which have brought us together at this forum, we should use our imagination more than our memory. We need to leap beyond our own imagination to prevent the olive branch from falling out of our hands .

THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT

Ethiopia (see also A/75/PV.11, annex IV)

Address by Mr. Abiy Ahmed, Prime Minister of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr. President,

Let me join others in congratulating you on assuming this high office during the historic 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly. I want to assure you of our fullest support and cooperation in effectively discharging your responsibilities.

We also take this opportunity to express our profound appreciation to your predecessor, Professor Tijjani-Muhammad Bande, who demonstrated able leadership in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic which has disrupted the work of this Assembly.

Excellencies, Mr. President,

This session is indeed special not only because we are marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the UN, but also because we are doing so in the midst of an unprecedented crises. I believe it will allow us to chart the way forward in the post-COVID world. This, of course, can only be achieved if we work together and try to find a collective solution to the myriad of challenges and threats facing humanity and the planet.

We all agree that the immediate priority now is, of course, how to recover from the current crisis and rebuild a better tomorrow. We have no guarantee to prevent a similar crisis in the future without creating sustainable, resilient, and inclusive societies. In this connection, accelerating progress towards the SDGs is not a matter of option but an absolute imperative.

On our part, we are determined to get back on track and build the necessary momentum for its implementation. It is in this context that we are designing our next Ten Years Perspective Plan, which coincides with the launching of the UN Decade of Action for the SDGs.

Mr. President,

No doubt, the pandemic has overwhelmed health systems across the world and crippled the global economy. Many African countries, including Ethiopia, also find themselves facing the risk of becoming even more food insecure. The World Food Programme has already warned, for instance, that the number of acutely food insecure people in our region is likely to increase significantly due to the socio-economic impact of the pandemic.

This coupled with the multiple crises affecting our region, including the massive outbreak of desert locusts and climate change induced extreme weather events, threatens to wipe out the livelihoods of millions of our people. Therefore, we fully support the call by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for a large-scale, coordinated, and comprehensive multilateral response amounting to at least 10% of global GDP and a series of measures to give developing countries the financial firepower they need to weather this storm.

While we are grateful for the international response in support of the continent which provided some relief, we believe that much more still needs to be done to mitigate the medium and long-term impact of the pandemic on our continent.

Mr. President,

Our objective should not only be to recover and rebuild a better future, but to do so in a green and climate resilient way. There is no stark reminder of the need for urgent action than the devastating impact of climate change that we are witnessing in various parts of the world. Our region is indeed a case in point with climate induced disaster upending the lives of millions of our people.

We all must mobilize more than ever to cut global gas emissions over the next decade to meet our targets under the Paris Climate Agreement. On our part, we are fully committed to redoubling our efforts and fulfilling our obligation. Ethiopia is already responding to the call for climate action through the Green Legacy Initiative, which is part of our efforts to build a green and climate resilient economy.

I would also like to draw your attention to the fact that our largest infrastructural project today — the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam — built with our own local resources, contributes to the conservation of water resources, which would otherwise have been lost to evaporation in downstream countries. I want to make it abundantly clear that we have no intention to harm these countries.

What we are essentially doing is to meet our electricity demands from one of the cleanest sources of energy. We cannot afford to continue keeping more than 65 million of our people in the dark. We have indeed been guided by the internationally accepted principle of equitable and reasonable utilization and not causing significant harm in building this Dam.

Our unwavering commitment to this important principle is clearly encapsulated in the Declaration of Principles, signed by Ethiopia, Egypt, and the Sudan in March 2015. I want to assure that we are steadfast in our commitment to addressing the concerns of downstream countries and reaching a mutually beneficial outcome in the context of the ongoing AU-led process.

Mr. President,

Our peace, stability and development is closely interlinked with the peace and security of our subregion.

It is in this relation that we are encouraged by the formation of the Revitalized Transitional Government of National Unity in South Sudan. We hope the South Sudanese political stakeholders will continue to work together in a spirit of collegiality to address outstanding issues and improve the plight of the South Sudanese people who have suffered for far too long.

We in the region together with the rest of the international community will continue to lend our support to accompany South Sudan on a path of sustainable peace.

We also follow the developments in the Sudan.

The transitional government needs all the support it can get from the international community in easing the serious socio-economic difficulties facing the country and fulfilling the hopes and aspirations of the Sudanese people. On the

other hand, we remain deeply concerned by the continued attacks perpetrated by Al-Shabaab in Somalia. That is why we all need to continue supporting Somalia in their security endeavor.

On our part, Ethiopia remains committed to the path of the reforms we began two and half years ago. Albeit the resistance that comes with any attempts to shift the status quo in favor of social justice, we will pursue Ethiopia's inevitable track for democratization.

Finally, Mr. President, seventy-five years after the founding of the UN, we find ourselves at a crossroads. Therefore, we have a unique responsibility to mobilize our collective political will and commitment to overcome the unprecedented challenges we face.

In line with the Declaration on the Commemoration of the 75th anniversary of the UN, we hope the Secretary-General will provide us with far-reaching and appropriate recommendations in helping us achieve this objective and we look forward to receiving his report before the end of this session. I thank you.

Denmark (see also A/75/PV.11, annex V)

Statement by Ms. Mette Frederiksen, Prime Minister of Denmark

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr. President, dear delegates,

The world is facing many challenges. Seventy-five years after the establishment of the United Nations, we are more dependent on each other than ever.

We need more multilateralism and we need more cooperation.

We are facing a global pandemic. Threatening the lives of the most vulnerable people in our countries.

We are facing climate change that risks getting out of control.

We are facing an economic setback that may rob millions of people of a descent future.

We are facing terrorism, instability and increasing danger of cyber-attacks, disinformation and nuclear weapons.

All of these challenges have one thing in common. They can only be solved if we take action and if we work together.

Are we doing that today? In some areas we are.

But the truth is: we can do it much better.

Denmark is ready to play its part.

So far, we have allocated one billion Danish kroner to assist some of the world's poorest and most vulnerable people in the fight against COVID-19.

We are committed to a reformed World Health Organization to ensure a stronger and a more resilient global health systems and plan to double our core support to the World Health Organization.

We insist on using the pandemic as a wake-up call. To build a better, greener and more fair future. To deliver on the Paris Agreement and on the Sustainable Development Goals.

Mr. President,

We are ready to take the lead on fulfilling SDG 7 as well.

Because energy transition must be at the heart of our efforts.

Green investments not only help the climate. They also create millions of jobs, providing better lives, and stronger societies and a future that we can believe in.

Political leadership and high ambitions in the run up to COP26 is urgently needed to achieve neutrality by 2050.

In the years to come, Denmark plans on reducing emissions by 70 percent.

Mr. President,

We must solve the global inequality that the virus has so brutally exposed.

The inequality of today — leads to the conflicts of tomorrow.

We need to invest more in conflict prevention.

And we, therefore, strongly support the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire in the face of the COVID-19 crisis to redouble our efforts to prevent and resolve armed conflicts and to build more peaceful societies.

And we need to bridge our humanitarian, development and peace efforts.

Denmark continues to work within the framework of international law and conventions regarding migration and refugees. But the asylum system of the past, does not fit the challenges of the future. We need an asylum system that is more fair and actually also more humane.

We must reduce incentives to embark on dangerous journeys — and put an end to the cynical business of human smugglers.

Countries along the routes of migration need more assistance to manage irregular migration and countries of origin need more help to create real alternatives.

Mr. President,

The UN was built on the ideals of human rights. But the current pandemic jeopardizes the progress we have made already on gender equality.

Every woman and every girl have the right to decide over their life, their body and future.

And Denmark stands with the Secretary-General and the vision behind his Call to Action on Human Rights. Rights and dignity must be at the core of all UN efforts.

Mr. President,

The world of today faces more global challenges than ever. I am hopeful that together we can deliver on the promises made 75 years ago. "We the peoples" we must act together.

Current and future generations expect nothing less.

Thank you.

Luxembourg (see also A/75/PV.11, annex VI)

**Address by Mr. Xavier Bettel, Prime Minister, Minister of State,
Minister for Communications and Media and Minister for Religious
Affairs of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg**

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

[Original: French]

Mr. President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear friends,

We will remember this year — 2020. What a year! We cannot meet as we usually do in the Hall, which, once a year, is the centre of our world. New York, which is the most open city in existence, where all our meetings are held, cannot welcome us. For many long weeks, it has been an epicentre of the global health crisis, and I would like to pay special tribute to it here.

The COVID-19 crisis has had an impact on everyone and in all areas, including the most prosaic and banal aspects of daily life. How do we visit our loved ones, our family? How do we get to work? How do we cope with online learning? How do we shop? How do we play sports? And these are the concerns of those who have or had a full-time job, social security and access to health care.

As Head of Government, I have had to deal with all facets of this crisis and swift decisions had to be taken, with significant consequences on the lives of citizens, the functioning of public services, economic activity and the funding of anti-crisis measures. This remains the common plight of all Governments around the world. But beyond that, all of us, citizens of this planet, are in this crisis together and only together will we emerge from it.

We face a global emergency. The crisis has affected all regions of the world almost at the same time. It has been compounded by restrictions on civil liberties, a return of borders, a re-examination of the gains made in the areas of free trade and economic integration and unprecedented challenges to public and private health-care systems, not to mention the ethical issues that many of us have not faced for quite some time.

At the beginning of the health crisis, we in Europe acted quickly to protect our national space and that response continues today. The free movement of people in the European Union was also challenged, at times far beyond what would be considered reasonable. The time has come for European action at the health, social and economic levels. Historic decisions have been taken to ensure a way out of the crisis and an environmentally-friendly recovery and to meet the challenges of sustainable development. We will continue to be tested in the coming months but I believe that we will be successful at the national and European levels.

In addition to the temptation to focus solely on ourselves, we have also seen an, at times, a level of extraordinary international cooperation between State and institutional actors, in particular in the field of scientific research. Formidable efforts

are under way to develop a COVID-19 vaccine. However, only by ensuring equitable global access to a vaccine will we put an end to this pandemic.

We have also seen a myriad of concrete examples of solidarity among countries and peoples, for example, in the case of medical evacuations. Responses to the challenges of the severity of the crisis have also led to the improvement and adaptation of medical and health equipment on the ground and to strengthening the resilience of rapid-response systems.

That said, we know that, globally, the situation in a large number of countries is of great concern. The COVID-19 crisis has become a health crisis that extends beyond COVID-19 because of the burden it places on health-care systems, and, more generally, because we now question the strategies used to combat other diseases, such as malaria, tuberculosis and AIDS. The disruption of supply chains and obstacles to the distribution of personal protective equipment and other materials have also posed a major challenge. In this regard, I would like to thank the States that helped us acquire personal protective equipment at the height of the crisis.

Mr. President,

Friends,

The dire warnings from the World Food Programme and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs are simply frightening. There is a genuine risk that famine could return in large parts of the world, beyond conflict zones or countries hit by recent natural disasters.

The social crisis has a disproportionate adverse effect on the countless people who survive on the informal economy and are deprived of resources in developed economies.

The economic crisis affects all countries and in particular developing countries. Emerging countries have not been spared. These countries cannot guarantee the resilience of their social security or health systems in response to the crisis. Nor do they have the means to fund their emergence from the crisis through the capital market. Proportionally, their debt burden is much higher than that of developed countries.

Luxembourg fully supports efforts to establish a moratorium and reduce the debt burden of the least developed countries.

Financing needs are again on the rise for developing countries, whose progress could be rolled back 20 years. However, the means of meeting those needs may be lacking.

Official development assistance must continue to play a key role. In the current circumstances — all the more so now than prior to the COVID-19 crisis — assistance cannot be mortgaged with the vagaries of financing through the capital market or other financial instruments, however innovative they may be. I say this even as my country leads in the area of microfinance, in particular in Africa.

Luxembourg's official development assistance will remain at 1 per cent of its gross national income, in addition to its international climate and migration expenditure.

The role of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is to ensure financing for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. The initiative of the Secretary-General, together with the Prime Ministers of Canada and Jamaica, to convene a high-level meeting on financing sustainable development post-COVID-19 should be welcomed. It will provide an opportunity to gain a comprehensive overview of an issue that is often addressed piecemeal in forums with very different processes. This does not mean that the proven expertise of institutions, such as the Paris Club or the OECD, should not be revisited and even expanded.

Luxembourg's financial centre is fully involved in efforts to develop sustainable financing. The green stock exchange of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg is one of the largest and most active in the world. Last week we launched a green bond that has been remarkably successful, with demand 10 times greater than the initial offer.

We are now working to extend the climate finance model to other Sustainable Development Goals.

I just mentioned one of the high-level meetings of this session. There are other meetings at which the representatives of Luxembourg will make a statement or have already made a statement. The event to mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations, the Summit on Biodiversity and the Beijing +25 meeting are of particular interest.

What does this demonstrate? It shows that even in extremely difficult circumstances, our Organization is capable of consultation, proposals and action.

As early as March and April, the Secretary-General submitted a series of COVID-19-related analyses that paved the way for resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

The Assembly has been able to respond to the challenges posed by the crisis and take decisions that were crucial for the smooth functioning of the Organization thanks to the efforts of your predecessor. In the absence of physical meetings and despite the procedural limitations this entailed, the Assembly has demonstrated to the world that the United Nations was indeed present in meeting the challenges posed by the crisis. The management of the Assembly has set an example on how to sensibly improvise. I believe that, in the future, we will have to consider other arrangements to offset the disadvantages of consensus decision-making.

Our Assembly has also prepared for the future by adopting a series of substantive resolutions designed to provide a United Nations response to the crisis. The adoption of the Omnibus resolution, which gives coherence to our approach, should be particularly noted and welcomed. At its special session in December, the General Assembly will have the opportunity to review the system's response and initiatives that might be adopted in the future.

The Security Council was somewhat slow to act on our Secretary-General's call in the early spring for an immediate global ceasefire. Thanks to the persistence of some of its members, it finally did so, but it must be said that the obstacles that were encountered in the process are unfortunately emblematic of the Council's difficulty to act and make decisions even in the most urgent situations.

While New York-based United Nations agencies, such as UNDP and UNICEF, were of course quick to react, so were United Nations agencies based elsewhere. I am thinking of those based in Rome that had to act to address the food emergency and the emerging danger of starvation.

Recent experiences in global health governance can and should be reviewed in the aftermath of the current pandemic, and the relevant key lessons should be learned. The World Health Organization (WHO) is the appropriate agency to conduct such a review. Its role in global health governance needs to be strengthened. We are confident that that will enable us to better deal with future pandemics.

Mr. Chairman,

Dear friends,

I said earlier that the world is in danger of undoing 20 years of development with regard to a significant number of Members of the Organization. Unfortunately, I do not see those as the only achievements at risk. The COVID-19 crisis has further incentivized curtailing civil liberties excessively. In many regions and States, civic space is shrinking dramatically. The suppression of opponents and human rights defenders is becoming widespread. When it is suppressed, civil society is often not heard. At the General Assembly during its seventy-fourth session, the Luxembourg chairmanship of the Third Committee committed to ensuring that civil society receive its rightful place in that forum, which is responsible for dealing with human rights issues. Civil Society's involvement in United Nations forums will be one of our priorities as a candidate in the Human Rights Council elections to be held in October 2021.

Overall, we are concerned about the rise of authoritarianism, to our dismay, in every region of the world — which is at times manifests itself more covertly and deviously, and, at others, openly, as we have recently seen in Belarus. The rise of authoritarianism often goes hand in hand with a rise in simplistic populist, and even anti-scientific and irrational, narratives.

Unfortunately, backsliding in the progress made in the recognition of certain rights also affects sexual and reproductive health, spilling over into United Nations bodies. With regard to my country, which is pursuing a feminist foreign policy, maintaining the gains made over many years of struggle must remain an absolute priority. We demonstrated that during our recent chairmanship of the Commission on Population and Development.

I also take this opportunity to recall my country's commitment to defending the rights of sexual minorities and its active participation in the LGBTI Core Group. In that regard, Europe is unfortunately of concern.

Mr. President,

Authoritarianism fuels conflicts as it thrives on them. One has only to look at the number of regions and countries that have become the arena of diverse geographic Powers, entailing all kinds of trafficking and migratory pressures, especially in the Mediterranean.

The Middle East remains a hotbed of tension. I welcome the recent rapprochement between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, as well as Bahrain, which should help stabilize the region. Nevertheless, the peace process between Israel

and Palestine has stalled. The parties' commitment is needed to negotiate a just and lasting peace and reach a two-State solution living side by side in peace and security. While Iran's actions in the region give cause for concern, the abandonment of the nuclear agreement with Iran is not likely to improve the situation. The agreement remains in force and cannot be simultaneously rejected and invoked.

Let me say a few words about the situation in West Africa and the Sahel. Much of my country's international cooperation is focused there. All stakeholders of the region must come together by implementing the commitments made, including the restoration of civil authority in Mali. The effectiveness of the international community's commitment is predicated on that. For its part, Luxembourg further strengthened its commitment at the beginning of the year through its direct participation in MINUSMA, the first such involvement since its participation in UNPROFOR and UNIFIL.

I will not list the concerns that my country has about active or potential conflicts in every region of the world. The list would be too long. It must be noted that sources of tension are on the rise and that the appearance of new actors on the international scene hardly always leads towards calm.

Calling into question multilateralism is playing its role in increasing risks. It is more and more frequent and is not the product a single actor of the international community, as one would like to make us believe on occasion. For our part, we adhere to an international order based on the rule of law and the sovereignty of States. There is no contradiction between the two.

I take this occasion to reiterate my country's full support for the International Criminal Court and its representatives. The recent attacks against the Court and obstacles created to prevent it from acting must cease.

The United Nations is the umbrella organization of the international system and, as such, the guarantor of multilateralism. In our globalized and interdependent world, isolated and uncoordinated action constitutes a risk for all, including those who do not feel bound by accepted norms. The coronavirus crisis reminds us of that in the clearest and most unmistakable way.

For its part, Luxembourg will maintain its long-standing international commitment through its participation in the work of the universally participatory bodies of the Organization, its voluntary financial contributions, its presence on the ground together with the United Nations and its candidature to elected positions in various bodies, such as the Human Rights Council for the term from 2022 to 2024.

I sincerely hope that next year I will once again be able to participate more directly in the great conversation that is the high-level week and address the Assembly in a more lively and interactive way.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear friends,

I thank everyone for their kind attention and for listening to me, and I hope to see everyone physically once again in the very near future.

Thailand (see also A/75/PV.11, annex VII)

Address by General Prayut Chan-o-cha, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Thailand

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

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

Mr. President,

First of all, please allow me to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the 75th session of the General Assembly.

This year is one of the utmost significance as the United Nations marks its 75th Anniversary. The organization has symbolised solidarity and cooperation and has inspired the world's humanity to trust in the unity of purpose of its Member States in building peace and well-being for all people on earth.

Throughout the past 75 years, the United Nations and its Member States have relentlessly overcome global challenges. This year, the world has been facing a health crisis from the spread of COVID-19 which has widely affected the living conditions of our people as well as economic and social systems — overshadowing the special nature of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations. Indeed, this great challenge shall be the litmus test that faith in multilateralism and the unity of Member States can provide sustainable solutions to overcome this threat.

To do so, every country must renew its trust in international cooperation, which must remain steadfast and not be shaken by nationalist sentiments or anti-globalization tendencies. Instead, it should motivate us to unite as one to overcome this crisis together, since it has been proven that no nation can face the challenges alone. Such is the future we want.

I take this opportunity to express Thailand's solidarity with all affected countries. We wish all the patients a speedy recovery, and to the medical personnel, public health workers, volunteers and other sectors around the globe who are at the forefront in the fight against COVID-19, we wish you success in this challenging mission, and please keep safe.

Mr. President,

The Royal Thai Government is committed and determined to control the spread of COVID-19. It has established the "Centre for COVID-19 Situation Administration" (CCSA) headed by myself to take full command in all aspects of pandemic control. Thailand's comprehensive measures in combatting COVID-19 are implemented in accordance with the International Health Regulations 2005 and the World Health Organization's guidelines. They encompass "upstream, midstream to downstream" measures including: health screening and risk assessment for all inbound and outbound travelers; the "stay home, save lives for the nation" campaign to apply social distancing in public spaces; and the provision of comprehensive, timely and transparent information on the pandemic situation while strengthening efforts to combat fake news and disinformation.

Over 1 million Village Health Volunteers throughout the country have played a vital role and all patients, regardless of nationality, have been guaranteed equal access to medical treatment. Furthermore, the Royal Thai Government has also fully supported the strategy on COVID-19 vaccine development. Thailand has started its vaccine research programme since quite some time and has also fostered collaboration with international partners. In this regard, I urge that COVID-19 vaccines and medicines be considered as ‘global public goods’ which can be accessible to all. And the United Nations must play an important role in this matter.

Furthermore, the Royal Thai Government has also introduced economic response packages to relieve the financial burden on the people and business operators, whether low-income groups, women entrepreneurs, farmers, or vulnerable groups and ensured that they are guaranteed equal access to government assistance. Efforts have focused on boosting financial liquidity for entrepreneurs so that they can sustain their businesses. In this regard, I have set up the “Centre for Economic Situation Administration” (CESA) to act as the main mechanism to formulate comprehensive policies for economic and social rehabilitation by synergizing efforts between the public and private sectors.

As a democratic society, Thailand places people at the centre. The people have provided the vital social synergy that helps drive the national agendas, integrating all the sectors in the country. With the cooperation and generosity of all Thai people in this time of crisis, the impacts of the outbreak have been minimized and the situation brought under control. And on this note, I wish to thank the World Health Organization for recognizing Thailand as one of the countries which has provided the most effective response to COVID-19. However, I continue to remind all sectors and the public not to underestimate the situation and to remain vigilant to prevent a second outbreak.

The key factor behind Thailand’s achievement in pandemic control and role as a model of effective healthcare management has been the determined political will to develop a robust healthcare system through the Universal Health Coverage scheme. This recognises that a healthy population is an important force in driving national development towards security, prosperity and sustainability. In this regard, Thailand has been sharing our knowledge and experiences with interested countries through the Foreign Policy and Global Health (FPGH) initiative.

In this time of hardship, I trust that all countries will provide mutual support and exhibit solidarity at both regional and global levels. I commend the Secretary General for calling on Member States to show global solidarity in overcoming this crisis in a sustainable manner and for his initiative to establish various Funds to assist affected countries. Thailand is proud to have contributed to the “UN COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund”, while at the regional level, Thailand is gratified that the leaders of ASEAN and its Dialogue Partners agreed with Thailand’s proposal to set up the “COVID-19 ASEAN Response Fund” to address the public health emergency and to support research and development of medicines and vaccines to strengthen ASEAN’s resilience in the long term. Indeed, a strong ASEAN will provide a good partner for the United Nations and the international community. Moreover, in order to prepare for the post-COVID scenario and to respond to other future challenges, Thailand stands ready to cooperate with all countries in other areas such as food and energy security as well as sustainable development.

In our efforts to revive the economy, Thailand launched the “Stop COVID, not the Thai economy” policy and embraced the new business model of the “Bio-Circular-Green Economy” or “BCG” which places emphasis on the Bioeconomy, the Circular economy, and the Green economy. Thailand has also applied the concept of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP), recognized as a locally driven approach towards sustainability, building strength from within, connecting Thailand to the world, and moving forward leaving no one behind.

Mr. President,

On the occasion of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, we should take this opportunity to assess our previous successes and failures. Although the United Nations has not been able to solve all global problems we have faced, it has become clear that multilateralism that is inclusive can prevent large scale armed conflict, and protect the world from the arbitrary exercise of power. We should therefore commit to further strengthening the multilateral system and cooperation under the framework of the United Nations in order to respond to the changing world situation, new global challenges, and live up to the expectations of the new generation. And this is the United Nations that we desire, and the United Nations that we need.

Throughout 75 years of our membership in the United Nations, Thailand has continuously and consistently played a constructive role, adhering to our international obligations and respecting the principles of the UN Charter.

On peace and security, for 75 years, the United Nations and the international community have been recognized for the success in peaceful dispute settlement, as well as in providing assistance to the population in post-conflict areas. On our part, apart from a strong commitment to disarmament, over 27,000 Thai military, police and civilian personnel have proudly served in more than 20 UN peace missions around the world since 1958. And Thailand’s contribution to peace operations continues amidst the current pandemic crisis. The Thai peacekeepers have attached importance to the sustaining peace agenda and introduced the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP) as a development approach to address the root cause of conflict and prevent a recurrence, which is in line with SDG 16 (Peace, justice and strong institutions). Furthermore, I would like to reiterate our commitment to strengthening cooperation with friendly countries to enhance ASEAN’s constructive role in maintaining peace and security in the region. On this occasion, I wish to thank Member States for supporting Thailand’s candidature to be a member of the Peacebuilding Commission for the term 2021-2022 and wish to affirm that Thailand intends to discharge its duty as a member of the Commission for the benefit of the international community.

On development, we have ten years remaining to accelerate our actions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. However, the COVID-19 pandemic is one key factor delaying such achievement. We must, therefore, work harder, cooperate closer and further promote the development path with people at the centre. We must also prioritize the participation of all stakeholders and emphasize utilizing technology for development.

As the co-host of the Global South-South Development Expo 2021 in Bangkok next year, together with the United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation and the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, and as a member of the ECOSOC, we stand ready to share our experiences and best practices in

sustainable development as guided by the principles of the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy (SEP).

On human rights, international agreements and instruments have established principles and obligations on the protection of human rights, the rule of law, and good governance, with the emphasis on vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, low-income earners, as well as migrant workers. It is therefore our responsibility to remain committed to these obligations and continuously ensure progress on implementation. As for Thailand, we are currently implementing the 4th National Human Rights Plan with a results-oriented mindset. I am also proud that Thailand is the first country in Asia to enact a National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, which we have been implementing since 2019.

This year further marks the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action on gender equality. For its part, Thailand continues to drive the implementation of the Beijing Declaration by integrating cross-cutting issues to realize gender equality, women's empowerment, and women's rights.

Crisis necessarily brings suffering. But at the same time, it teaches us useful lessons that help us develop stronger and more effective responses to future challenges. What the "new normal" and the future social landscape will look like does not depend solely on our generation, but also on the youth and the new generations. Together we must create a space for all generations to join hands in collaboration in order to plan for a future that we want.

Finally, I take this opportunity to reaffirm Thailand's commitment to support the agendas of the United Nations, be they peace and security, development, climate change management, commitments to human rights, and the promotion of partnerships between various sectors. This is because multilateralism will guide us out of this crisis together, as it has done so throughout 75 years, for a future where peace prevails and a better world for this and for future generations.

Thank you.

Canada (see also A/75/PV.11, annex VIII)

Address by Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

[Original: English and French]

Mr. President, fellow delegates, my friends.

Thank you for the opportunity to address this Assembly. Like many of you, I have spoken in this forum before, but never like this, at a time like this.

The world is in crisis.

And not just because of the last few months. Not just because of COVID-19.

But because of the last few decades. And because of us.

This is our wake-up call, and we cannot ignore it.

Time and time again, history has shown us that the price to pay for turning away, for failing to act, is much too high.

Our parents and grandparents remember all too well what things were like in the 30s and the 40s.

Economies collapsed. Governments — and systems of government — crumbled. Millions died.

That was the world they faced. That was the challenge they had to meet. And this is what they did about it.

Our parents and grandparents chose to get up and rebuild.

They set up multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations. They created international financial institutions, such as the World Bank, the IMF and other Bretton Woods institutions.

And they laid the foundations for a rules-based international order through which we enjoyed an unprecedented period of common prosperity in the second half of the twentieth century.

We had a system — we had a generation — that learned from crisis and set us on a better path.

In their era, those systems worked. But that was 50, 60, 70 years ago.

Today, all those institutions no longer serve us well enough on what they were designed for — defending multilateralism and international law. Protecting human rights and open markets.

That is what the crisis of COVID-19 has shown, beyond a shadow of a doubt. That things have to change. And not just on the world stage — but at home, too.

We are not doing enough for the most vulnerable — whether it is the elderly, who are dying in health-care facilities, or the homeless, for whom every night is a struggle. We are not going far enough to eliminate systemic injustice, whether it be racism against black or aboriginal people, homophobia or sexism.

In the difficulties of our citizens, we can see the failures of our institutions — of our world.

After the pandemic decimated their economies and basic services, many countries are now on the brink.

This is what I heard from so many of you at the meeting on financing for development that Canada hosted last spring with Secretary-General António Guterres and the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Andrew Holness.

We need to do more to ensure that children around the world are fed and can attend school.

If we do not, the consequences will be dire.

We are facing a global humanitarian crisis.

And of most concern in all of this is that this pandemic, and the crises it has brought to light, are not even our greatest threat.

Right now, our world is facing a climate reckoning.

We are at this point because of our collective inability, over the past decades, to make the tough decisions and sacrifices needed to fight climate change and save future generations.

The pandemic has not changed that. Our shared failures have continued. And our citizens are paying the price.

We need a new way of thinking. On climate, on inequality, on health. Because the way we're doing things just isn't working well enough.

Too often, concerted action is blocked — the needs of our citizens are denied — as a result of gridlock at decision-making bodies.

And why?

Because there are few consequences for countries that ignore international rules. For regimes that think might makes right.

Few consequences for places where opposition figures are being poisoned while cyber tools and disinformation are being used to destabilize democracies.

Few consequences when innocent citizens are arbitrarily detained and fundamental freedoms are repressed. When a plane of civilians is shot from the sky. When women's rights are not treated as human rights. When no one has any rights at all.

We are in deadlock.

The international approach we've relied on since the second half of the 20th century was built on an understanding that countries would work together.

But now those same countries are looking inward, and are divided.

We need to recognize where we are. The system is broken. The world is in crisis.

And things are about to get much worse unless we change.

Right now, we have a chance — not a big chance, but a chance — to shift course. To realize that the only way through this is together.

Putting some people ahead of others does not work. A healthier, cleaner, more equal future cannot be the privilege of a lucky few. It must be the right of us all.

The only way to make things right and the only way to build a better future for our children and grandchildren is by working together and by standing up for each other, no matter what cards we are dealt.

The Rohingyas in Myanmar, the demonstrators in Belarus, the people of Lebanon, the citizens arbitrarily detained in China, the indigenous peoples in Canada and around the world.

Genuine and constructive global collaboration is the only way forward.

But who are we to demand that?

Canada is not a country that can make a lot of difference on these major international issues. Like so many others, we are subject to the whims of the super Powers.

But, as Canadians, we know that we are not alone.

As Canadians — a trading nation where we trace our origins to every corner of the planet — we know that we are in this together.

And I know other countries — your countries — see this too.

Instead of hunkering down and hoping that we come out the other side ok — let's remember that we're all in this together.

Instead of crossing our fingers and hoping that the big powers will figure this out — let's look at what we can do to make a difference together.

Let's use our shared power not just to get a vaccine, but to get it out to everyone. Let us be inspired by our citizens' call to restore the global economy while we tackle climate change.

In other words, let's not wait for someone else to act.

Let's do it ourselves.

Each one of us, here in these United Nations. Each one of us uniting around a shared future.

Canada has a long history in peacekeeping and we will continue to step up, and continue to move the dial on lasting peace by empowering women.

Canada has always supported the work of agencies like UNICEF, the World Food Programme, and the UNHCR. Not only will we keep supporting these efforts, we'll keep increasing our international assistance budget every year.

There's so much more still to be done.

Children all over the world are wearing masks to go to school, or are not going to school at all. Older people are dying. Demonstrators are being killed. Sea levels are rising and forests are burning.

People who think only of themselves continue to increase inequality and conflict.

It is time for us, as the United Nations, to join forces and do what we were created to do: to ensure peace and security and to avert global crises.

These days we are fighting a battle unlike any other against an invisible virus. At the same time, we are struggling against the consequences of our own actions, which are causing the level of carbon in the atmosphere to become unsustainable.

Everywhere around the world, people are becoming mindful of this reality. They're refusing to accept inequality. They're refusing to close their eyes to the peril we're facing.

Our citizens will no longer shrug off as someone else's problem a failing status quo.

And that's a good thing. Because there is the path forward.

After a wildfire rips through a forest, life adjusts and begins anew.

After an earthquake hits a city, people work together and rebuild.

As we face these layers of crises, this is what we must do.

We must understand our opportunities and our responsibilities to take real action, together. To protect each other, to support each other.

If we meet this moment, if we rise to this challenge, I know that, like our grandparents did 70 years ago, we will lay the foundations of a better world.

Antigua and Barbuda (see also A/75/PV.11, annex IX)**Address by Mr. Gaston Alphonso Browne, Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Corporate Governance of Antigua and Barbuda**

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr President

Secretary-General

Distinguished Delegates

Happy 75th anniversary

Collectively, the member states of these United Nations are failing in our responsibility to our one planet and in our duty to the peoples, of our one world.

At each of the past 74 sessions of this General Assembly, many pledges have been made, to make the international community less inequitable; many commitments have been given to lift-up the poor and the vulnerable; and many declarations have been issued to end the scourge of war.

Yet, in the 74 years that have passed since the first session of this General Assembly, on 10 January 1946, the world has experienced only brief efforts to deliver these pledges, commitments, and declarations.

Those efforts were vital.

They made a difference.

With each of them, mankind made some progress on the path to human equality, environmental safety, and global security.

But, despite them, the benefits of wider inclusive international cooperation are now being sacrificed by the powerful, on the altar of attaining their narrower exclusive national advantage.

Never before, has the world had such ample technical and financial resources to address the challenges facing all mankind, including the ravages of Climate Change, pandemics, food security, malnutrition, hunger and poverty.

The problem is, that these resources are concentrated in the Capitals of a few nations, which have retreated from contributing to meet those challenges and to overcome them for the good of all humanity.

As this Assembly is held, developing countries — particularly small states — are trapped, in a downward spiral of economic decline and environmental degradation which they did not create, and over which they have no control.

There are no trends identifiable today, no programmes, or policies that offer hope of narrowing the gap between rich and poor, let alone to bridge it.

What the world is witnessing, is a march by the richest nations away from any obligations to global good.

The drums of nationalism are drowning out the cries for global solidarity without which, the world's peace, progress and prosperity will never be assured, nor will the principles upon which the United Nations organization was founded, ever be satisfied.

This is not the future we want. That is not the future we deserve.

If ever there was a time for the nations of the world to jointly confront threats to all of them — the time is now.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought that realization directly in the face of all our nations.

It is global in its sweep and universal in its dangers.

Not only has it visited a public health emergency on each nation; it has wreaked economic havoc in all of them.

The perils of the pandemic loom large across the globe, jumping across the divides of national borders and defying the belief that rich nations can survive, while poorer nations succumb.

The pandemic has added to the dangers of Climate Change which is, as pernicious as the COVID-19 pandemic in its reach, and insidious in its impact.

The poor and the vulnerable are already the first to suffer from the economic impact of COVID-19 and Climate Change, but the rich have not been spared.

And narrow nationalist policies that undermine international cooperation will make matters worse, not better.

Every nation of the world is a marketplace for others.

The chain of supply and sales are global.

Countries are now inextricably interlinked for tourism and business by air and sea transportation, and also, by the goods and services we each buy and supply, including in science and technology.

No nation, however wealthy, can survive if its markets dwindle and its sources of supply decline.

We are all inter-dependent, however large or small.

The unity of human needs, requires a functional multilateral system that respects the democratic principles of sovereignty, participation and consent; rejecting the bullying doctrine of exclusion, imposition and abuse of economic sanctions.

Yet, even though the countries of the Caribbean are among the greatest victims of the profligacy of others, in relation to the creation of Climate Change and its effects; and, although our economies are among the worst impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, in whose creation we played no part; we are denied a voice in international decision-making and we are subjected unfairly to the will of others.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) is forecasting that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the Caribbean will contract by 6.9 per cent in 2020, because of the effects of COVID-19 on our economies.

This is eroding the gains made by my own country, Antigua and Barbuda where, in January of this year, we were set to achieve over 6.2 per cent growth, in addition to an average growth rate of 5 per cent in the previous six years.

As a country, highly dependent on tourism, the closure of borders, the cessation of cruise tourism and the limits on aviation, effectively devastated our economy overnight, resulting not only in serious loss of revenues, but also in sudden and significant loss of jobs.

Governments have had to expend enormous resources, spending as high as, 8 per cent of GDP, to mitigate the impact of the public health crisis, amid this extraordinary decline in revenues and foreign exchange.

In the case of my own small country, we have been denied loans from the International Financial Institutions (IFIs) because of the skewed per capita income criterion, applied by their policy-making Boards.

The result has been that, apart from a line of credit from the Inter-American

Development Bank, that is yet to be consummated, Antigua and Barbuda has received not one cent from the International Financial Institutions, to help us meet the enormous challenges that have brought much larger countries to their knees.

In our own case, the approach of the Paris Club of official debt holders has been particularly callous; absolutely insensitive during this unprecedented global pandemic.

The Paris Club has not found it possible to agree to suspension of debt payments, debt rescheduling, or debt forgiveness, to allow countries like mine an opportunity to cope with the extraordinary challenges confronting us and in which we played no part in creating.

Amidst, the circumstances of dwindled revenues and extraordinary expenses, the Paris Club is demanding repayment of decades old delinquent loans that simply cannot be repaid at this time.

What is worse, with no sympathy for the dire conditions we face, the Paris Club blocked the IMF from considering financial assistance and debt service relief, provided to many others, unless we subject ourselves to a programme that would lead to an increased debt service burden and even more austere conditions for our people than presently exists.

That, we cannot do and certainly will not entertain.

As our economy weakens, with an insufficient response by the international community for debt rescheduling and access to concessional financing, unemployment and poverty are growing.

Nonetheless, the people of my country are moving on with resilience, bravely and resolutely.

We reaffirm our commitment to multilateralism, and we are doing our part in tackling COVID-19 within our boundaries and by contributing to multilateral action.

I am proud that, despite all the challenges with which we were confronted, Antigua and Barbuda has successfully managed the COVID-19 pandemic, by quickly

detecting and treating infected persons and through effective contact tracing to prevent community spread.

Antigua and Barbuda has recorded only three deaths since the pandemic started.

Presently, we have just one active laboratory confirmed case of COVID-19 infection, despite re-opening our borders on June 1st, to daily commercial flights from North America and Europe, in an attempt to earn some revenues from the vital tourism sector to protect lives and livelihoods.

My Government has also invested in modern medical facilities, including a well-equipped Infectious Diseases Centre, manned by trained, qualified and experienced personnel.

In addition, we have expanded and upgraded our health facilities to three beds per 1,000 of population and improved our tertiary health care services.

All of this has been achieved despite inadequate assistance from the International Financial Institutions, to mitigate the impact of the pandemic on our economy.

If this situation continues without an appropriate response from the international community, many countries, like mine, will be unable to pay existing debt and will not qualify for new borrowings.

Even if, these countries all end up in IMF programmes to give them short-term relief, unless there is suspension of debt payments, debt forgiveness and debt rescheduling, they will not recover their economies; they will certainly not achieve the UN sustainable development goals, and their debt stock will be enlarged by the compound interest that will result from unpaid debts.

Unfortunately, the economic development they have so far achieved will be reversed with little prospect of recovery.

This is not the world we want; proactive financial intervention by the IFI's is needed now, not tomorrow; tomorrow's intervention may be too late.

As Alicia Bárcena, the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean has pointed out:

“The leaders of the G20 should be in favour of multilateral organizations making loans at favourable interest rates and alleviating the debt of countries that are highly indebted, deferring it or forgiving it. If that does not occur, the payments will be impossible and fiscal space will be compromised. Exceptional measures are required to confront an unprecedented crisis. There will be no progress without international cooperation and solidarity.”

This is a statement we endorse in its entirety. The socio-economic sustainability of the region will be compromised without a proactive debt suspension and restructuring and ultimately debt relief.

Distinguished delegates, the future we should all want requires the establishment of a new era of multilateralism, based on the premise that the life of every human being matters.

And that, in living their lives, every human being should be given the opportunity to prosper — free from intimidation, hunger, malnutrition, disease and war.

Our nations — united — should affirm their commitment to that goal and work diligently to achieve it.

That is the United Nations we need.

Thank you.

Australia (see also A/75/PV.11, annex X)

Address by Mr. Scott Morrison, MP, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr President,

This is an historic and unusual gathering of our General Assembly.

We gather not in the great city of New York, but from among our people, from across the nations of the earth, as together we face the same storm.

A global pandemic that has claimed the lives of at least 1 million souls that we know of and has plunged our world into a global economic recession.

These events reminds us of our shared humanity, our interdependence and, indeed, the value of our common hope.

To get an education, a job, a livelihood.

To be safe, healthy and free.

To live in a clean and unpolluted environment.

In such times of crisis, there is actually an opportunity for our shared humanity to overwhelm the differences that usually beset us and to focus once again on pursuing our common hope. Which is why we gather.

I speak to you today from Sydney, Australia's largest city and the ancient home of the Gadigal people.

One of Australia's many Indigenous peoples who have cared for our continent for more than 60,000 years. The world's oldest continuous living indigenous culture, and so I acknowledge their elders past, present and future as I make these remarks from Sydney today.

Australia is contending with this storm of the global COVID-19 pandemic and recession with great determination.

Our aim is simple, to deny the virus the destruction it seeks to visit upon us, upon our lives and our livelihoods.

Sadly, over 800 Australians have lost their lives to COVID-19. But in comparative terms we have fared better than most and we are grateful for that.

Our COVID-19 case and fatality rates are a fraction of those across the globe.

And while our economy has not been spared the blow of recession, our first in almost 30 years in Australia, the impact has been far less than almost every other developed economy in the world.

Almost half the jobs that we had lost to the virus early on have been already recovered. Australia is getting on with the job.

Our national COVIDSafe action plan has been straight forward.

Secure our borders early and consistently.

Entrench COVIDSafe behaviours in our community and in our economy.

Social distancing, mask use and sanitation measures, to deny the virus the opportunity to move amongst us.

To build and ensure strong testing, tracing, and outbreak containment capabilities, shutting the virus down, before it can take hold.

Investing in our hospitals and our medical supplies to ensure the virus does not overwhelm our health system.

And to provide an economic lifeline to millions of Australians, their families and businesses, who have lost jobs and livelihoods as a result of the recession with income and investment supports worth more than 15 per cent of our GDP.

Our approach, though we have been tested, has saved lives and livelihoods and has protected, as best as we have been able to, our most vulnerable.

And we have done this consistent with our principles as an open, liberal democracy, respecting the dignity of each and every individual, every citizen, every life.

In Australia, we have also been mindful of our wonderful Pacific family during this pandemic, our wantoks, our vuvale, our whanau, particularly the island nations of the South West Pacific.

Australia is the single largest development partner for these nations.

So we've provided personal protective equipment, testing equipment, medical expertise, and we're maintaining an essential services and humanitarian corridor so experts and supplies can get in and out.

In Southeast Asia, we're also providing much-needed equipment and expertise, as well as supporting collaboration to develop a vaccine.

And we've contributed \$80 million to the Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment.

When it comes to a vaccine, Australia's view is very clear.

Whoever finds the vaccine must share it.

This is a global responsibility, and it's a moral responsibility, for a vaccine to be shared far and wide.

Some might see short term advantage, or even profit.

But I assure you to anyone who may think along those lines, humanity will have a very long memory and be a very, very severe judge.

Australia's pledge is clear: if we find the vaccine we will share it.

That's the pledge we all must make.

At home, our Australian efforts are about producing and providing a vaccine to our citizenry, sovereignly produced, once a vaccine is safely available and we've invested \$1.7 billion in that task.

And that includes being committed to ensuring our neighbours in the Pacific and other parts of South East Asia can also access a safe, effective and affordable vaccine.

The World Health Organization has a vital role, ensuring that if and when there is a vaccine, people around the world can get access to it.

Australia supports the WHO's efforts to develop a global framework so that vaccines and therapeutics are allocated fairly.

In facing a global health threat, we have all been reminded about the importance of multilateral cooperation.

And I acknowledge the efforts of the WHO in containing the spread of the virus, including in the Indo-Pacific region.

I'm pleased that the WHO has established an independent panel to evaluate the global response.

There is also a clear mandate to identify the zoonotic source of the COVID-19 virus and how it was transmitted to humans.

Australia strongly advocated for this review.

This virus has inflicted a calamity on our world and its peoples. We must do all we can to understand what happened for no other purpose than to prevent it from happening again.

When the resolution was put to the World Health Assembly in May, a record 145 countries were co-sponsors.

And as we try to control the spread of COVID-19, we also need to shine a spotlight on the dangers of disinformation.

Disinformation costs lives, and creates a climate of fear and division.

It goes against Australia's values and beliefs as a free, open society.

So we recently worked through the United Nations to co-author a statement countering widespread disinformation, one signed by more than 120 countries.

I acknowledge the other UN bodies that are also making vital contributions.

The World Food Programme is transporting much-needed medical equipment and humanitarian supplies across the globe.

And the UN Development Programme is sending food into nations in dire need.

In fact, the UN is fulfilling its high purpose, the purpose that 75 years ago brought the world together in a united hope, and in goodwill.

Mr President, 75 years is a remarkable milestone.

Of course, much has changed since 1945.

When the UN Charter was signed, 51 countries were listed.

Australia was proud to be one of them and we are proud of the role we have played since then within the UN, to the present day.

Today, there are 193 UN member states.

That's a good thing.

More voices. More ideas. More partners.

But with more voices and challenges comes complexity, negotiation, processes, bureaucracy that would test any organisation.

At 75, we know that the UN, like the humanity it serves, the nations that form it, are not perfect.

So against this backdrop, we should think about what the next 75 years look like for the UN, its structures, its functions and for multilateralism more generally.

We want these multilateral institutions to continue to deliver for us and all nations.

So we're committed to ensuring they are fit for purpose, that they're effective, that they're open and transparent and, most importantly, that they are accountable to the sovereign states that form them.

The UN is its members, not its committees, processes, institutions or officials.

Its authority and efficacy is derived from the free participation, contributions, cooperation and collaboration of the sovereign states that comprise the United Nations, in a common purpose, to pursue our common hope.

We know that sovereignty doesn't mean turning inwards though.

We value rules that protect sovereignty, peace and security, and curb the excessive use of power.

As Australians we also prize respect for international law and the peaceful resolution of disputes through dialogue.

This includes ensuring that competing territorial and maritime claims are based on, and determined in line with, international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

As an outward-looking, sovereign, trading nation, Australia also values the rules and institutions that enable international trade.

We know that trade creates wealth and brings nations together. It makes us more prosperous, all of us.

We won't retreat into the downward spiral of protectionism in Australia.

So we're leading efforts to reform the World Trade Organization.

We're advocating for trade rules that are predictable, transparent and non-discriminatory.

We're helping to design the first-ever set of global digital trade rules so we keep pace with modern realities.

And we're working hard to preserve crucial elements of the WTO's dispute settlement system so trade rules can continue to be enforced.

Australia also relies heavily on the international standards that UN technical bodies set, especially in areas like aviation, telecommunications, and health.

These issues are vital to all of our prosperity, and we want to play a bigger role alongside business and civil society in setting relevant and efficient standards.

We need to make sure these standards serve all countries rather than any single power, and that they are developed in line with the fundamental principles of the global order.

Australia is helping to shape the norms for other emerging issues, also.

Like ensuring states abide by agreed rules in cyber space, maintaining a peaceful outer space, and managing critical minerals resources.

Australia is also committed to ongoing counter-proliferation efforts.

We played a major role in negotiating the establishment of the

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in the 1980s and 1990s, and we see it as a critical pillar of international peace and security today.

As signatories to the Kyoto and Paris Accords we are reducing our carbon emissions, effectively. Most recently Australia beat our Kyoto target commitments by 430 million tonnes of CO2 abatement.

Between 2017 and mid-2020, more than \$30 billion was invested in renewables in Australia.

In 2019 we saw investment at more than three times, in renewables than the per capita rate of countries like Germany, China, or France.

Across 2019 and 2020, Australia will add more than 12.6 GW of renewable capacity, now that's over four times that of our largest power station in Australia. And nearly one in four households have rooftop solar systems.

As a liberal democracy, we're also committed to promoting universal values like human rights, gender equality and the rule of law.

We've always believed in these values, it's what makes us who we are.

Australia was one of only eight countries involved in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We're proud of that role.

And today, we're serving as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

We're the first country from the Pacific region to serve on that body.

Our term ends this year, and we're pleased to have served but I'm proud that we've raised our voice and been heard on important issues like the rights of women and girls, the rights of Indigenous peoples, and the global abolition of the death penalty.

Australia will continue to bring its influence to bear to make sure it responds to the interests of its members and the needs of our time.

Mr President, 1945 was a defining year in human history.

The year the Second World War ended.

The year the United Nations was founded.

It was a year when humanity found hope amidst despair.

This year is one of the hardest since then.

So let our resolve now also be undiminished as it was at the beginning of the United Nations as we commit again, together, to realising the common hope that binds us all together.

Bhutan (see also A/75/PV.11, annex XI)

Address by Dr. Lotay Tshering, MBBS, MD, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bhutan

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr. President

Mr. Secretary General

Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

I would like to present warm greetings of His Majesty The King, Her Majesty The Queen and the people of Bhutan, from the land of Gross National Happiness.

To begin with, we express our solidarity with the international community as we cope with COVID-19. We offer prayers for lives lost to the pandemic and we wish strength to their loved ones.

Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you on your election as the President of the 75th Session of the General Assembly. I assure you my delegation's full support in the discharge of your important responsibilities. I also commend your predecessor's exemplary leadership in steering the 74th Session of the General Assembly.

COVID-19 and Bhutan's unique story

Like never before, at least in our lifetime, we are witnessing a pandemic that has heavy bearings on our lives and livelihoods.

But, it is comforting that the UNGA is happening around this time. It provides us a platform to share and learn from each other in these extraordinary times. And I know all nations represented here are always ready to lend their ears on matters of global concern.

We are tackling COVID-19 as a single global community. We came this far sharing knowledge, information, experiences and evidences on the disease. I thank you all for the support. Bhutan has learned a lot in this exercise.

And today, I seek your attention as I share the COVID-19 story of our small Himalayan Kingdom. This story revolves around a compassionate, wise and an astute 21st century King. A King we view with divine reverence and yet is so learned about every modern detail.

His Majesty The King has always been the symbol that held Bhutan together in its purpose and pursuits. It was always his Royal priority to protect the people of Bhutan at all times.

And in this pandemic, our King spearheads the battle to guard the country from the virus, making sure all Bhutanese, home and abroad, are safe and their spirits uplifted.

And then, we have Her Majesty The Queen, so passionately complementing all of His Majesty's efforts.

Under direct supervision of our King, we have meticulous surveillance systems in place. Which includes close monitoring of our international entry points and timely institution of 21 days quarantine, which is mandatory for everyone entering Bhutan and fully sponsored by the government. Reliable and free testing facilities are also set up across the country.

We have a professional health minister leading the team to execute every detail of the royal guidance. All these are being ensured without any compromise on routine health services like vaccination, MCH and NCD packages. And as I share this with much sense of achievement on this forum. I cannot help but thank all our frontline workers.

Reciprocating the royal initiatives, all Bhutanese have gladly embraced the new practices of wearing face masks, maintaining physical distance, hand washing and avoiding unnecessary crowding to complement the efforts of the government. I am very grateful to the Bhutanese people for their support.

It is through this act of unity that we managed to keep the number of cases low. As of today, we recorded 261 positive cases, of which 192 have recovered. Mortality from COVID-19 remains zero.

On all occasions, His Majesty expresses appreciation to the people for their hard work and solidarity. And in turn, people have their hearts filled with gratitude and devotion for our King. This unconditional unity under His Majesty's leadership is the most distinct winning factor in our fight against COVID-19.

COVID-19 and GNH

For anything to thrive, we need a fertile ground. For Bhutan, to display innate qualities of harmony, we have the ambience of Gross National Happiness. It builds around the intrinsic values of interdependence, humanity and compassion.

As a key component of GNH, our visionary monarchs emphasised on protection and preservation of our environment. We have the Constitutional mandate to ensure 60 percent forest cover at all times and to maintain 'inter-generational equity' of our natural resources.

So today, when the world is dealing with issues of climate change, we are grateful for the wise decisions that kept Bhutan carbon negative.

Similarly, our Constitution mandates free healthcare and education for all Bhutanese. Our monarchs have always insisted on strengthening the social sector saying it is an investment not an expenditure.

Despite being a resource constrained country, access to these sectors is not an issue for the Bhutanese people. Which is why our existing public healthcare system needed only minimum adjustment to cope with the pandemic.

I personally feel this pandemic brought out the very essence of GNH, which seeks wellbeing of the people, not just of oneself but everyone around us. This disease, being highly contagious, requires us to act responsibly, so that our actions don't compromise the safety of those who are more vulnerable.

Understanding the pathophysiology of COVID-19, as a medical person, I am convinced that until we have effective vaccine the combination of professionally

designed and well implemented physical distancing (which in extreme sense is called lockdown), and easily accessible and reliable testing is the best approach.

Our lockdown template elaborates three phases that adds up to three weeks, followed by 10 days of gradual unlocking phases. Bhutan experienced our first lockdown last month. To break the chain of transmission, people cooperated by staying home all through, allowing front-liners to do their jobs day in and out. (COVID-19 and social, economic interventions)

Even before COVID-19 was declared a pandemic, His Majesty expressed concerns that Bhutan will not be spared by this outbreak. He reminded us that if we are not strategic, the health crisis could easily lead to economic problems and subsequently to social crisis.

Which is why, all interventions to look after the livelihood of the people , are designed within the magnanimity of our King. The conventional fiscal and monetary measures attend to the affected entities and individuals. Special teams are formed to look after both informal and formal sectors.

However, His Majesty's biggest concern is for those who could fall into the cracks within the system, which happens particularly in times of crisis. Thus, the King's Relief Fund ensures no one is left behind.

The royal intervention goes to the extent of taking care of the interest payment on all loans of the citizens for a year. A special package is designed for the elderly and people with co-morbid medical conditions. Besides other social supports, essentials are delivered at their doorsteps. This unique feature is designed particularly to protect the most vulnerable group.

His Majesty has always commanded that we should not lose even a single person to the disease. Hopefully, with all these interventions, we will be able to live up to our King's expectations.

75th Anniversary of the UN

We all know UN has come a long way and achieved major milestones. When the UN celebrated the 25th anniversary, it was on the theme of Peace, Justice and Progress. Despite challenges, we have seen so much improvement in these areas.

Twenty-five years later, on its 50th anniversary, it committed to the theme of poverty eradication. Had it not been for the pandemic, we were well on track.

And the theme for the 75th anniversary on "multilateralism" cannot be more relevant. Like climate change, COVID-19 also knows no borders, and similarly affects developing countries disproportionately.

We do not know what is coming next. We also do not know when SARS-CoV-3 will hit us. In that sense, are we not interconnected? Is there a second option to multilateralism? These are questions we must keep asking ourselves frequently peaceful coexistence among ourselves and with the nature around us is the best vaccine for humanity to thrive on this planet.

In this small, intricate world, while fighting a highly infectious disease, it will be a big blunder if we do not help the developing world to have access to all the critical resources including vaccine when it actually becomes available.

I emphasize on the global message of no one being safe until all of us are safe. This is so true that for a highly contagious disease, you can never be safe until everyone else is safe.

2030 Agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Now let me touch a bit on the SDGs, the universal goals for our sustainable future.

For us, the SDGs resonate well with our developmental plans based on the principles of GNH. For the same reason, Bhutan was on track to become an early achiever of the SDGs, as shown by the voluntary review in 2018.

But these were the goals set before the pandemic. Our planning commission is closely studying the impact of COVID-19 on our developmental plans. Even otherwise, trends around the world and back home offer evidence enough that we will now be falling short of the targets.

All 17 SDGs are interconnected, and not a single sector will be spared by the consequences of this pandemic. Most obvious ones are the goals on health, education and our economy.

If individuals or agencies or even governments are re-aligning with the realities of COVID-19, shouldn't we revisit SDGs too? I feel it is time to field a special team to work on a new framework of SDGs, which should encapsulate all elements that will help us walk the path of new normal with more prudence.

LDC graduation

Just as we see the need to review the whole SDGs, this pandemic has also derailed us off the LDC graduation track. Our current plan was designed to help Bhutan graduate from LDC category in 2023. Now everything has changed, as our focus has shifted to saving lives and livelihoods from the challenges posed by this pandemic.

We know millions are pushed back into poverty, and more lost their jobs. We would have gone back by decades. Bringing our developmental achievements back on track will not be easy. And for some developing countries, it will be almost irreversible.

Therefore, I would like to request the UN to reset this global developmental path and help us regain our grip for smooth transition from the LDC category.

UN Reform and Peacekeeping

Mr. President, at a time when the relevance of multilateralism is often questioned, Bhutan's faith in the Organisation remains unwavering and firm. The challenges we face as a global community are numerous and multifaceted for individual states to tackle on its own. From our perspective, there is no alternative but to work together.

At the same time, the UN must also evolve and match the changing realities. In particular, the existing structure and composition of the UN Security Council do not reflect the current realities and circumstances of the world.

Bhutan has also long supported the aspirations of the G4 to serve as Permanent Members to an expanded Security Council, of course, with Africa also appropriately represented.

As a peaceful country, we have enjoyed the benefits of the UN membership for almost five decades. We joined the fraternity of troop and police-contributing countries in the year 2014. Since then, our engagements in peacekeeping operations have gradually increased. We stand ready to be deployed at all times. (Conclusion)

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, with health and education being the priority of this government, may I remind you that last year I shared with you all, the gratifying news of making our teachers the highest paid civil servants in my country.

With such historic initiatives, my government was excited to redefine our education system that was not just about school enrollment and conventional teaching. We were going all out to engage our children in learning process that is meaningful, and built around relevant skills and innovation.

But it is disappointing when we have to opt for online and distant learning due to circumstances. This robs our young minds of opportunities to play and eat together with peers and teachers on the same campus.

In the process, they are deprived of all the values of human connection, which we all know, have huge psycho-social impact. We may not realize it today but will have to bear the brunt down the line. It could impact an entire generation of our children if we are not mindful of that today.

The COVID-19 has revealed a stark fact that our investments in these social sectors are far and lacking. No one can be sure when SARS-CoV-3 might trigger another pandemic.

Therefore, we must redesign our developmental path and double up our investment in these social sectors. Going forward, relevantly educated and healthy global citizens will have to be at the heart of the new normal.

If we all are convinced that spending more on health and education is an investment and not an expenditure, if we live by this commitment it would be a different ball game hereafter.

That way, when we celebrate UN's next milestone, the 100th anniversary, we would have achieved 100 per cent literacy rate, which empowers everyone with relevant skills and knowledge for a meaningful life.

This would also enable everyone to be 100 per cent digitally competent to help them derive advantages of technology from all corners of the world.

And as a medical practitioner, it would be wish fulfilling if our health system improves so much that our life expectancy touches 100 years when UN turns a century in 2045.

Finally, in wishing the 75th session of the UNGA every success, we send prayers for good health and happiness of every living being on this planet.

Thank you and *Tashi Delek!*

Japan (see also A/75/PV.11, annex XII)

Address by Mr. Suga Yoshihide, Prime Minister of Japan

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

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

Mr. President, Excellencies,

It is an honor for me to deliver my first statement after assuming office on 16 September as Prime Minister of Japan, at the United Nations which is celebrating its 75th anniversary.

The novel coronavirus disease has pulled us into an unprecedented crisis, which in turn has brought the international community back to cooperation from its tendencies towards division and isolation. For the last 75 years, multilateralism has become stronger and made progress in the face of multiple challenges. I call on all of you to unite in solidarity so we can turn the current crisis into an opportunity to reinforce our cooperation.

Mr. President,

In our fight against the virus, Japan has been doing its utmost for the health and safety of the people of Japan and around the world, harnessing the wisdom of public and private sectors alike. Now we are at the stage of revitalizing socio-economic activities while maintaining measures for preventing the spread of infections. Let me share my thoughts with you based on Japan's experiences.

The spread of the coronavirus is a human security crisis, posing a threat to the lives, livelihoods and dignity of people across the globe. The guiding principle for us to overcome this crisis must be "leave no one behind." The concept of human security, which focuses on individuals, has been debated for many years at this very forum of the United Nations General Assembly.

Mr. President,

As we face the current crisis, and guided by the principle of human security, I think it is essential to set the goal of "leaving no one's health behind" as we work towards achieving universal health coverage. I expect this to be our shared goal. On that basis, Japan will proactively lead international efforts with a focus on the following three perspectives in collaboration with other countries.

First, we need to safeguard lives from the novel coronavirus diseases. Japan fully supports the development of therapeutics, vaccines and diagnostics, and works towards ensuring fair and equitable access for all, including those in developing countries. Japan also works with international organizations so that relevant international frameworks will be able to deliver results. We are also proposing a framework of "patent pooling". Public-private partnership is essential particularly in the health sector, and Japan is going to promote it steadfastly.

Second, we must prepare ourselves for future health crises. Japan is committed to expanding its efforts in developing countries to build hospitals as well as to assist strengthening health and medical systems through providing equipment and supporting human resource development. Working with the ASEAN, Japan is

supporting the establishment of an ASEAN Centre for public health emergencies and emerging diseases. Japan has also been supporting the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. As a matter of fact, in Africa, we are witnessing the concrete result of our longstanding cooperation through the TICAD process for human resource development as well as for provision and maintenance of facilities in the health sector. Japan has provided support for the establishment of the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research in Ghana and assisted in the training of its medical laboratory technologists. The Institute serves as the hub of the country's response to the coronavirus and processes up to about 80% of PCR tests carried out in the country.

Third, we will take measures to ensure health security in an even broader context. We will continue to work with other countries to improve the conditions of water, sanitation and hygiene, nutrition and other environmental factors. In response to the current crisis, Japan has provided foreign aid of over 170 billion Japanese Yen or \$1.54 billion to medical and health sectors.

Along with these initiatives, it is critically important to take steps towards revitalizing the economies hit hard by the crisis. To bolster economic activities in developing countries, Japan is implementing the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan of up to 500 billion Japanese Yen or \$4.5 billion over the course of two years. Reviving the economy rests on the safe movement of people. We will make our utmost efforts to ensure universal distribution of vaccines and therapeutics. Free trade should not stop even with the restrictions caused by the crisis. We continue to promote WTO reform and economic partnership agreements with other countries. Times of difficulty are in fact times of innovation. Japan, for its part, will work on digitalization as a matter of urgency.

Now we must look to the human security concept of the new era in responding to various challenges, accelerating efforts to achieve SDGs and to tackle global issues. To this end, I propose that we tap into the wisdom from around the world to deepen our discussions.

Mr. President,

Looking forward, we need to “build back better” from the COVID-19 pandemic and create a flexible yet resilient society where the SDGs have been achieved and a virtuous cycle of environment and growth is generated. The ongoing crisis is heavily impacting the education of children and the youth who shape the future. It is also affecting women among others. In order to create a better and more inclusive society, there are three points that I consider to be of paramount importance.

The first is the significance of the United Nations and multilateralism. The UN should be a forum where all stakeholders engage constructively to respond to crises and work together with transparency. While I greatly respect the activities and efforts of the UN thus far, I would also like to emphasize that the Organization is in need of neutral and fair governance more than ever. The WHO is key in our collective response to infectious diseases. Through its review and reform, I believe the WHO will be able to make even better use of necessary expertise at the right time, in the right manner. With this conviction, Japan stands ready to cooperate in the review and reform process. Likewise, UN reform, including the reform of the Security Council to reflect the realities of the 21st century, is an urgent task as the UN marks its 75th anniversary.

Second, I am convinced that the current crisis must not jeopardize international peace and security. UN engagement in peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding remains vital. Based on the policy of “Proactive Contribution to Peace”, Japan will continue to contribute to sustaining peace, drawing on its experiences, including through our role in the Peacebuilding Commission, and engaging in strengthening institutions and building capacities. We also remain committed to the capacity building of peacekeeping personnel in collaboration with African and Asian countries.

Third, we must not allow challenges against the rule of law in times of increasing uncertainties. The rule of law as we ourselves set forth in the SDGs is the foundation of order, both domestic and international, and the very spirit which the UN is built on. In March next year, using virtual platforms, we will host the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in Kyoto with the aim of advancing the rule of law. Japan continues to promote a Free and Open Indo-Pacific, the foundation of regional peace and prosperity rooted in the global rule of law.

Mr. President,

The issue of abductions by North Korea is a matter of serious concern for the international community. I myself have worked on this issue for many years. This year, two parents of the victims passed away. It is heartbreaking to imagine the pain of the family members who passed, after working so hard to rescue their dearest children and yet not achieving a reunion in the end. As the families of the victims continue to age, there is no time to lose before we resolve the abductions issue. Japan’s position remains unchanged. Japan seeks to normalize its relationship with North Korea, in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration, through comprehensively resolving the outstanding issues of concern such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settlement of the unfortunate past. As the new Prime Minister of Japan, I am ready to meet with Chairman Kim Jong-un without any conditions. Establishing a constructive relationship between Japan and North Korea will not only serve the interests of both sides but will also greatly contribute to regional peace and stability. I will miss no opportunity to take actions with all my dedication.

This year marks the 75th anniversary since the first use of nuclear weapons. Hiroshima and Nagasaki must never be repeated. With this resolve, Japan will spare no effort in realizing a world free of nuclear weapons while firmly upholding the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. This year also marks the 50th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which serves as the cornerstone of the international regime for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. I wish to emphasize once again the importance of maintaining and strengthening the Treaty. We, as the international community, need to stand united to work on arms control and disarmament of conventional weapons, or “Disarmament that Saves Lives.”

Mr. President,

In the summer of next year, Japan is determined to host the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games as proof that humanity has defeated the pandemic. I will continue to spare no effort in order to welcome you to Games that are safe and secure.

I thank you for your attention.

Malta (see also A/75/PV.11, annex XIII)

Address by Mr. Robert Abela, Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Secretary General,

President of the General Assembly,

Excellencies,

The current global pandemic has taught how truly interconnected and interdependent our world is.

It affected our health, our economies and our societies.

However, at a time when multilateralism is threatened, a health crisis brought into focus the need for global cooperation.

And 75 years after the setting up of this organisation — the United Nations, we find ourselves yet again in a position where we need to work together to overcome another common challenge.

It gives us a chance to create a better life, a better future.

A future where solidarity is global.

A future for which we have the opportunity to prepare and to identify better and more creative ways to deliver on our 2030 Agenda.

In this regard, whilst the pandemic has dealt a devastating blow to the economic and social development of all countries, especially developing countries, we must not be disheartened.

Yes, years will be needed to come back to the stage where we were before the start of the pandemic.

But it is also true that the stage has been set to build a healthier, greener, fairer and more resilient and sustainable world that ensures that no country or person is left behind.

I therefore firmly believe that our collective efforts need to be stepped up. As does our coordination to ensure the successful implementation of the Goals in their entirety.

Achieving the SDGs and harnessing the potential they represent is beyond the reach of any single country.

Reaching out to the hardest hit countries, the most fragile economies and also those populations in vulnerable situations remains crucial.

Here, I wish to recall a point that in my opinion is very important — food security. This goes hand in hand with agriculture and has also been highlighted in the Global Humanitarian Response Plan and recognised as one of the strategic priorities to mitigate the problems associated with hunger.

The agricultural sector is the fulcrum if we want to end hunger.

We need to continue working on achieving a more sustainable agriculture through adaptation of sustainable practices.

Practices that respect our ecosystem and our environment.

Earlier this year, at the height of the pandemic, Malta was facing a crisis in its agricultural exports.

Conscious that it is our collective responsibility to promote food security and provide adequate nutrition, under the initiative of “Solidarjeta’ Malta” — an initiative aimed at addressing food shortage in afflicted countries, we sent food to Namibia. Malta is a small country and our contribution is an act of solidarity with the people, taking into consideration the effects the severe drought the country had experienced.

This initiative fed around half a million persons in Namibia, prevented food waste in Malta and yielded an opportunity for the long-term benefit of both countries.

It also puts into practice our belief that we cannot build our future without helping others to build theirs. We need to establish meaningful and effective partnerships through which to combine efforts and programmes for more substantial and durable results.

This we are currently doing also through our co-Chairing of the UN Steering Committee on

Partnerships for Small Island Developing States.

Malta has also contributed a significant percentage of its annual humanitarian budget towards appeals launched by United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, International Committee of the Red Cross, Food and Agricultural Organisation, United Nations Children-Fund and World Food Programme, in support of the agencies’ operations to mitigate the effects of the pandemic in vulnerable places.

Aside from hunger, COVID-19 also posed another serious obstacle to the wellbeing of the already vulnerable civilian populations of war-stricken countries. As the Prime Minister of a country that advocates peace and has a neutrality clause in its Constitution, I cannot but reiterate the message for all parties involved in such conflicts to desist from ongoing hostilities.

To take immediate action to protect civilians within their areas of effective control.

And to ensure the depoliticization of the humanitarian infrastructure, through the lifting of restrictions imposed on humanitarian workers and life-saving aid deliveries

Against this background, Malta welcomes the announcements made by the Libyan President of the Presidential Council, His Excellency Fayez al-Serraj and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, H.E. Aguila Saleh, for a ceasefire in Libya.

This is an instrumental and constructive step to overcome the current stalemate and terminate all foreign interference in the country.

Now is the time to translate the outcomes of the 5+5 Joint Military Committee into a permanent ceasefire to enable the resumption of talks with a view to achieve a successful political transition under the auspices of the United Nations.

Similarly, the recent announcements made concerning the lifting of the blockade on oil infrastructure need to be substantiated and coupled with the implementation of economic reforms.

Reforms that enhance the governance of Libya's economic and financial institutions, and that enable the fair and transparent distribution of oil proceeds to all of Libya's society.

This will enable Libya to address challenges related to its already strained healthcare services, worn thin by the ongoing nine-year conflict, to the detriment of Libya and the Libyan People.

At the same time, we must also ensure that all actors found violating international humanitarian law and human rights in Libya will be held accountable.

This will send a clear message to all involved in the proxy war playing out in Libya that their impunity will not go unanswered.

A political solution to the conflict in Libya remains the only viable solution. The driving force to resolve the conflict needs to be wholeheartedly Libyan-led and Libyan owned.

In this regard, I want to commend the Security Council for endorsing the conclusions of the Berlin Conference on Libya through Resolution 2510 (2020) and support the request of the Security Council in tasking the Secretary General to implement those aspects ascribed to UNSMIL in the operationalisation paper of the Berlin process.

In the same spirit, I wish to recall and reiterate the importance of the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2532 (2020), calling for a for a global ceasefire to address the pandemic.

A pandemic that has affected economies at their core.

A pandemic where we needed to act fast to implement tailored responses to aid the recovery when faced with increased poverty and inequality globally, as well a situation where wealth, progress and development were hindered.

With this in mind, Malta acted swiftly. We put forward initiatives that prevented an even larger economic and financial downturn.

Several measures were implemented as part of a financial package to help the Maltese economy during the COVID-19 outbreak, mainly aimed at easing pressures on the liquidity of businesses, protecting jobs and helping the most vulnerable during this challenging period.

These included initiatives to protect employment and targeted assistance to those sectors that have been negatively affected.

This through an economic package worth €1.81 billion, equal to 12.9 per cent of Malta's GDP in 2019.

We were helped in no small way by the fact that we are a small nation, which brings decision-makers in close proximity to those effected by the said decisions as well as ensuring that they are not insulated from realities on the ground.

In all this, in hindsight, if I had to single out one area which was more important than others, this would be the world of work.

The pandemic has devastated the world of work, laying bare the extreme vulnerability of millions of workers and enterprises.

The virus does not discriminate in medical terms, however it has brought to the fore major inequalities which have been further exacerbated through threats to livelihoods.

This has brought a dramatic increase in poverty, and the warning from the World Food Programme that the next pandemic we face could be one of hunger.

Therefore, in this case more than others, the future of our people is going to be determined by our actions today.

Keeping this in mind, Malta implemented a series of social security measures in order to deal with the economic and social impact of the pandemic, ensuring that the economy remains afloat, safeguarding jobs, and assisting workers and vulnerable persons.

Social benefits helped to alleviate the financial difficulties.

To date, almost half a billion euro were paid out in contributory benefits whereas almost hundred million euro were paid out in non-contributory benefits.

As Heads of Governments we have a strong responsibility to protect our workers.

For in protecting livelihoods, we are protecting our social fabric.

Malta holds a strong track record in the field of employment. The overall positive labour market outlook is a direct result of an integrated make-work-pay reform package aimed at investing in human capital through a number of targeted policies and measures to reach those groups identified as being most at risk of labour market alienation.

The exponential economic growth which Malta has experienced in the last few years has been connected with sustained employment. And prior to the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic, Malta enjoyed the highest employment growth rate in the European Union.

To protect our achievements, during Malta's worst period of the COVID-19 pandemic, we encouraged employers to implement, where possible, teleworking, flexible working hours and to implement temporary short-time working conditions so to avoid redundancies.

Despite the urgency of the matter and the necessary short-term measures that needed to be implemented, we always kept in view the long-term repercussions of the pandemic on the world of work, and tailored measures to provide protections for both employees and employers alike.

This resulted in around 25,500 jobs out of a workforce of around 250,000 being saved while protecting many businesses from closing their doors.

Today Malta's employment rate has also exceeded both the national and EU headline targets for Europe 2020.

And as we look towards a "new normal", Malta continues to work towards taking a human-centred approach to reform related to the world of work.

Our priority for the upcoming period is to continue building on what has been achieved so far by enhancing labour market access for all groups through continued upskilling, labour market incentives and by facilitating the transitions towards labour market participation as well as working towards promoting long term employability.

It is for this reason that we are seeking to prepare our youths for their future.

For if we cannot prepare a future for our youths, we owe it to them to provide them with the skills and tools necessary to succeed.

Investment in education and training, outlines Malta's long-term strategic outlook for an up-skilled society which is able to adapt to a modern, digital and sustainable labour market.

In doing so, we are also adapting to the situation, learning from the opportunities that have surfaced to increase our competitiveness and growth.

Looking ahead, prior to the pandemic there were already discussions taking place at international level regarding the implications of technology on the future of work, the role of digitalisation and the green transition.

That future has arrived sooner than anticipated.

It is up to us to shape this future.

Mr President,

We can all agree Covid-19 has been a wake up call.

Pandemics know no creed, ethnicity, gender or social standing.

We are all equally susceptible and potential victims. It has been indeed a lesson in humility.

It is with this in mind that I look towards a future that is all about giving a voice.

Economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights are fundamental to the success of the public health response and recovery from the pandemic, which is why it is imperative that these rights are fully respected even in difficult times such as the present.

With this in mind, we made it a must that our integrated approach was disability inclusive and thus ensured that this equally important section of our society is safeguarded and protected.

The outbreak of this pandemic put a spotlight on the resilience of health systems. I hereby quote the United Nations Secretary General when I say "we are only as strong as the weakest health system."

We all have a lot to learn from each other, and this pandemic has shown that international cooperation and collaboration across continents is paramount. It is for this reason that I look towards a future where the global public good is upheld above all.

It is with pride to note that throughout this pandemic, Malta has worked in close collaboration with the World Health Organization and European Centre for Disease, following guidelines and contributing regularly through the sharing of best

practices at ministerial level in regular European Region and global updates, as well as bilaterally at country level.

We strongly support the WHO in its work.

And for this reason we advocate for WHO's important role in ensuring early, equitable and universal access to a safe, quality, and, effective COVID-19 vaccine, as a global public good, once this becomes available.

Only by joining forces can we prevent, contain and stop transmission in order to bring the pandemic to an end. This is a time for solidarity and for continued collaboration to mitigate the crisis — each individual's health depends on the health of us all.

Mr President,

Before concluding, I must say a couple of words about the deep rooted link between humans and the environment.

Whilst the immediate priority of countries around the globe is the restarting of the economy and the protection of people's health, we cannot side-line environmental issues and the need to move closer to carbon neutrality.

It is for this reason that I look towards a future where we have a carbon neutral planet by 2050.

Because if anything, the pandemic has highlighted the value of our quality of life and the protection of human health.

This is why, when we announced my country's long-term economic vision for 2050 a couple of days ago, we made it a point to include carbon neutrality as one of its pillars of our economic policy.

As economic growth has very little meaning if people are not living a better life.

We must therefore invest all our efforts to address challenges related to pollution, air quality, cleanliness and emissions. We cannot forget the millions of premature deaths linked to air pollution every year. We have an obligation to act without delay.

Mr President,

To conclude and above all I we look forward towards a secure future, where victims and peoples who are most at risk feel protected and safeguarded.

In this vein, I cannot but add my voice to that of others to identify a good humane approach to deal with the global challenges being brought about by illegal migration.

In the past 12 months Malta become a member of the UNHCR Executive Committee and acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons, and more recently, it officially joined the UNODC Blue Heart Campaign against Human Trafficking.

But unfortunately, in recent months we have also seen an exacerbation of the situation with COVID19 having a major impact on migrants and refugees.

Furthermore, the socio-economic impact of the pandemic on migrants and refugees, the loss of livelihoods and the significant blow to remittances worldwide are expected to create a situation where more people are vulnerable to exploitation by smugglers and human traffickers.

On this, Interpol has advised that the COVID-19 pandemic has not blunted the determination of organised crime groups to prey on the vulnerable and make a profit from these crimes, which all too often cost these victims their life.

Malta, as one of the frontline countries at the EU's external border, is faced every day with irregular crossings.

These people want a better life but my country is small and our capacity to handle such flows is very limited. The EU has today launched its migration package but the UN also has a major role in addressing this human and global challenge.

It must work with its agencies and partners around the world to help people build a better life so that less people are victims of people smugglers and lives are saved.

The UN can also support States in the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and the Global Compact for Refugees adopted in December 2018.

Migration is a phenomenon that needs to be managed not turned into a business commodity traded at the cost of the most vulnerable.

Furthermore, at a time when the international community is still seeking to chart the way forward in an ever-uncertain landscape, the role of multilateral institutions — with the United Nations at their core — remains crucial to preserving stability and security and addressing threats that defy physical or imagined borders.

It is for this reason that our future should be one where multilateralism is indispensable.

Therefore, Mr President

Excellencies

My parting message in this first virtual United Nations General Assembly is on the importance of multilateralism.

The effect of this health crisis will be felt for much longer than expected unless we engage in the strategic rebuilding of social and economic systems.

And this can only be made possible using a multilateral approach, based on the principles of social justice and solidarity, that leave no one behind.

Going forward, we need a frank discussion on how to ensure resilience in our supply chains. The objective, should be that of strengthening and stabilising our commercial ties and seeking cooperative approaches to address any future crisis that might with similar implications to the one we are experiencing today.

As we celebrate the 75th Anniversary since the setting up of the United Nations, if we want to ensure that its legacy lives on, we need to act now.

To do this we cannot shy away from working together.

Firm in this belief, Malta is seeking to serve the international community within the highest and most important of bodies. A country whose aspiration is to promote peace and security, equality, social solidarity, Malta is seeking election as a non-Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council for the term 2023-2024.

Thank you

Papua New Guinea (see also A/75/PV.11, annex XIV)**Address by Mr. James Marape, MP, Prime Minister and Minister for Bougainville Affairs of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea**

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

His Excellency, Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the United Nations General Assembly;

His Excellency, Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations; Excellencies and distinguished delegates;

On behalf of the Government and people of Papua New Guinea, I am pleased to address, for the first time, this august body in an unprecedented manner via a pre-recorded virtual video.

This has emanated, courtesy of the COVID-19 pandemic, impacting worldwide and devastatingly on all aspects of our livelihoods. Our sympathies, condolences and prayers are with the many victims of this virus and we stand in solidarity with all nations and peoples affected by it.

Mr. President,

I congratulate you and the Government of Turkey on your election to lead the important work of the General Assembly over the next year.

I pledge Papua New Guinea's support during your tenure under the well-chosen theme of a strengthened multilateralism that reinforces the collective good of "We the peoples of the United Nations", as called for by the Charter of the United Nations.

I also want to thank the outgoing President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for his outstanding leadership, including over the past seven months, amidst the COVID-19 pandemic challenges.

Similarly, we thank Secretary-General Guterres for his decisive and robust leadership of our collective work.

Mr. President,

This year, as we reflect on the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, the importance and necessity of the United Nations, particularly for small nations like mine, cannot be overstated.

Though much more work, including strengthened reforms of the UN, is needed for a better and fairer world for all, it has also made much progress on global peace and security, human rights and social issues.

We have seen this firsthand in my own country in support of our development priorities, including through the transformative partnership for sustainable development, to combat COVID-19, measles, polio and TB, foster peace and security in Bougainville and in our Highlands region, supporting our women and girls equality, empowerment and protection from gender-based violence and environmental protection and combating climate change.

The onus is on all of us as succeeding generations to work collectively through multilateralism under the UN to stop the scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, to reestablish the basic conditions for justice and the rule of law, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in the future we want.

My Government also recognizes the important role of the UN system in support of the UN Member States development priorities.

In this context, I want to place on record my Government's appreciation to the UN Deputy Secretary-General, Ms. Amina Mohammed for being the first-ever female and highest ranking officer to visit Papua New Guinea in the past 45 years of the partnership between Papua New Guinea and the UN.

This was indeed a landmark UN visit and most welcomed by my Government to further consolidate the strong, cordial, expanding and constructive bonds that exist between Papua New Guinea and the UN.

Mr. President,

COVID-19 continues to test our resolve as countries and peoples, like never before with its multifaceted impacts.

To protect our country and people, my Government took leadership and ownership to set in place the necessary early preventive measures in policy and law, including passage of the National Pandemic Act 2020 to deal with it and such similar outbreaks in future. This has cushioned, to some extent, the loss of lives to just six, so far, in the country.

We are also working closely at the Pacific regional level through the Pacific Islands Forum to tackle COVID-19 and this has been relatively successful with minimal loss of lives.

The net effect of COVID-19 has resulted in job losses, export and other revenue decline, and development priorities put on hold, as I outline last July in our first ever Voluntary National Review Report on the implementation of our 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development to the High-Level Political Forum.

Unless and until an effective vaccine is developed and available for use the health threats of COVID-19 cannot be underestimated. It is important that any COVID-19 vaccine developed should be for public health good and accessible and affordable to everyone.

Mr. President,

My Government is firmly committed and determined not to let COVID-19 overwhelm us. It is in this spirit that my Government's "Take Back Papua New Guinea" vision is framed to build back better, be resilient, be greener and take us forward as we strive towards achieving our long-term development Vision 2050.

To build back better from COVID-19, my Government has adopted a fivepronged strategic approach. First, the response will be PNG-owned, led and driven, which includes a vision for the future — using this crisis as a way to reshape our society into one that is fairer, united and more inclusive.

Secondly, the response will be broad, comprehensive and inclusive, covering households in both rural and urban areas and also businesses — both small and big, formal and informal.

Thirdly, it will be smart and forward looking, where focus is on practical projects that build our economic capacity with Public Investment Program focused on projects ready to go and procurement arrangements streamlined to allow early commencement of activities.

Fourth, we want the response to be responsible. This means managing our debts in a way that it does not further burden the country in the medium to long-term.

Fifthly, leveraging appropriate development partnerships. In this regard, we also welcome with interest the Financing for Development initiative spearheaded by Canada, Jamaica and the UN Secretary-General.

Mr. President,

We have re-opened the economy for business to resume operations and invested in an economic stimulus package valued at PKG 5.6 billion or \$1.6 billion, by far the largest in our nation's history, to support our local small-to-medium-enterprises, including particularly small farmers in the rural areas and women entrepreneurs, aimed at also strengthening food security and livelihoods.

This was done with the support of our development partners' in-country such as national banks, superannuation funds and state-owned enterprises and also from the IMF, World Bank and the Asian Development Bank as well as our bilateral partners including Australia and Japan. We are grateful to our development partners for their continued support.

Mr. President,

Most recently, my Government has passed legislative amendments to our resource laws to address imbalances in major resource development projects. These amendments were to the Oil and Gas Act 1 998, the proposed 2020 Organic Law on Hydrocarbon and the Mining Act 1992.

By doing that, we can now negotiate fair and equitable returns for all stakeholders including multinational companies from exploitation of our renewable and nonrenewable resources.

Despite the reforms, I place on record that PNG is still an attractive investment destination, and I invite foreign direct investment in all sectors including in hydrocarbon, mining, energy, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and tourism

Mr. President,

In terms of good governance, I am pleased to inform that Papua New Guinea continues to meet its obligations as a member State party to the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC).

It is also anticipated that the Organic Law on an Independent Commission Against Corruption will be passed in this term of Parliament. The draft Organic Law has been debated in Parliament and an Interim Office of ICAC is in operation and is being funded by Government.

In addition to that a separate Whistle Blowers Act has been unanimously passed by the current Parliament to protect and encourage reporting on corruption. Simultaneously reforms to the Judiciary for a separate tract on corruption related offences for speedy proceedings have also been undertaken.

Mr. President,

My Government through its recently launched Connect PNG Policy (2020-2040) which is focused on building, rehabilitating and expanding key enabling high quality economic infrastructure such as roads, airports and sea ports.

These are critical enablers to create economic corridors to connect our provinces and provide our MSMEs and SMEs access to good markets and export opportunities.

Mr. President,

My Government is now rolling out an extensive Rural Electrification Program to light up 70 per cent of the country which has been without reliable and affordable electricity by 2025, when we celebrate our 50 years of Independence.

Mr President,

My country recognizes the importance of ICT and recently completed construction of a domestic fibre optic submarine cable nationwide and launching of the international Coral Sea Cable linking our country with Australia, Solomon Islands and the rest of the world.

This will enable PNG to access reliable and affordable high-speed internet aimed at improving connectivity to all sectors, build e-commerce channels and enhance Government online services.

Mr. President,

Also as a maritime nation, my Government is placing high priority on investment and protection of our fisheries and maritime sector. This sector contributes a quarter of our annual budget and also employs 80 per cent women workforce in our tuna canneries.

In further support of this sector, we launched in July 2020 our first-ever National Oceans Policy 2020-2030, which will ensure that our oceans and seas and their resources are properly coordinated, managed, protected, governed and sustainably used. This will also contribute to further strengthening our national efforts to implement our SDG 14 commitments and obligations.

It will also supports the August 2019 decision of the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders under the Blue Pacific Continent narrative to ensure that our maritime zones delineated in accordance with the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea could not be challenged or reduced as a result of sea-level rise and climate change.

We therefore look forward with keen interest to the outcome of the International Law Commission's Study Group on sea-level rise in relation to international law.

We are also interested to harnessing regional and global efforts including the Second UN Ocean Conference in 2021, the launch of the UN Decade of Ocean Science next year, and for the successful conclusion of the BBNJ treaty negotiations, to further protect our maritime zones, their natural resources and sustainable Use.

Mr. President,

As we embark on the Decade of Action to deliver on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, I reaffirm my Government's commitment to this important universal agenda.

Our Voluntary National Review Report to the High-Level Political Forum last July which I presented virtually clearly outlines and articulates the status of our national SDGs implementation, the gaps and challenges. The unexpected COVID-19 challenges will compound and undermined many of our development gains.

Notwithstanding this, my Government is taking leadership and ownership of this under our Strategy for Responsible Sustainable Development (StaRS) and the Medium-Term Development Plan III, as well as our Development Cooperation Framework.

We recognize that governments alone cannot achieve the SDGs. We therefore welcome development and multi-stakeholder partners to join us in delivering on the future we want.

Mr President,

Under SDG 13, PNG continues to comply with the Paris Agreement under the UNFCCC and presented our National Determined Contributions (NDC) report to the United Nations which was recently reviewed.

On deforestation and forest degradation, I call upon the UN to assist to find a balance between cutting our trees and forest for revenue against preserving them to mitigate the adverse impacts of climate change given that PNG has 13% of the world's rainforest and 7 per cent of the world's biodiversity.

This continues to be an ongoing challenge for my Government in terms of meeting the peoples' basic needs to sustain their livelihoods against preservation of the forests in response to global warming.

My Government has recently approved PNG's National REDD+ Strategy and its Country Report which is a prerequisite to accessing the fund.

Mr. President,

The Bougainville peace process remains a priority for my Government and we are committed to the Peace Agreement, which has enabled nearly two decades of unbroken peace in Bougainville. I thank the UN for its continued support to the Peace Process on Bougainville.

In 2019, a Referendum was conducted on Bougainville.

The result of the Referendum is 'non-binding' wherein it does not determine a political future but rather, the responsibility rests with the National Parliament on a political future for Bougainville. As I speak, ABC elections are being conducted for a new Government by September 2020, and we are confident of a successful election.

My Government stands ready to welcome the newly elected members of the Bougainville House of Representatives and look forward to a cordial working relationship and a fruitful consultative process before a decision by National Parliament on the future of Bougainville

Mr. President,

As we also commemorate this year the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of the Beijing Fourth World Women's Conference, I would underscore that ensuring gender equality and empowerment cannot be taken for granted. In my country, we have a long way to go yet but this is work in progress and some level of success has been witnessed.

The scourge of gender-based violence is of serious concern to my Government and we are now not only reviewing policies and laws to address it effectively but also taking enforcement measures to prevent this unacceptable situation. There is an upswell of support at all levels, both in government, the private sector and civil society to stamp out gender-based violence in the country.

An important recent development was the launch of the Spotlight Initiative in March 2020, a joint initiative between my Government, the European Union and UN.

This is a long-term priority requiring sustainability and partnerships as the government cannot achieve alone. Another important development my Government is pursuing is to increase the level of women's representation in our Parliament, which at present does not have a women Parliamentarian.

It is incumbent on us to ensure that half of our country's population constituting women and girls have voice in the highest political level and it is the right thing to do.

Mr. President,

Finally, we reiterate our call, once again, of the necessity and urgency for the holistic reforms of the United Nations. Particularly the Security Council, whose binding mandate on global peace and security with practices that are inconsistent with today's realities necessitates reforms that will make it more transparent and accountable to the wider UN membership.

Mr. President,

In closing, and speaking of UN reforms, Papua New Guinea welcomes the long overdue establishment of the UN multi-country office for the North Pacific region and looks forward to its opening and operations soon to support the sustainable development efforts of our Pacific sisters and brothers from the Micronesian subregion. Thank you

Eswatini (see also A/75/PV.11, annex XV)

Address by Mr. Ambrose Mandvulo Dlamini, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Eswatini

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr. President,

Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government

Mr. Secretary-General

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President,

I am honoured to address the 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly. I congratulate you, Your Excellency, following your appointment as President of this session. I also express my appreciation to your predecessor for his outstanding work and contribution to the success of the 74th session.

Mr. President,

As we commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, it is only proper that we reflect on who we are, where we come from and where we are going. The United Nations has stood for the lofty ideal of building an international system of collaboration and common purpose. This system allows us to collectively call to account those who choose conflict over peace, it recognizes the dignity and equal worth of all people. It values each and every one of us and the input that we make towards that end.

Though we have been faced with multiple challenges, as a collective, we have pressed forward, slowly, steadily, to forge an agreed system of rules and norms that are better, stronger, transparent and more consistent than ever before. It has resulted in an international order that has overseen unparalleled advances in human liberty, the attainment of dignity amongst peoples, given rise to prosperity and a global economy that has sought to uplift more than a billion people from poverty.

Yet we come together in reflection here, knowing that our work is far from complete, acknowledging that the spirit of cooperation that has held us bound, is faced with its' greatest challenge thus far. It is for this reason therefore that we welcome this year's theme, "The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism — confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action".

This year's theme, rightly challenges us to critically self-examine. The 75th session of the United Nations General Assembly, must be a year when we come together to discuss our priorities as a human family, and how we can build a better future for all. It is a reminder to the United Nations to revisit and stick to the ideal that recognizes dignity, prioritizes the value of cooperation and the equal worth of all, leaving no one behind.

Mr. President,

Earlier this year, the United Nations held a commemoration of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations, presenting an opportunity for us all to reflect on the relevance of the Charter today, and recommit to those goals and principles laid down therein. The Kingdom of Eswatini welcomed the hosting of the event and joined others in sharing our thoughts related to that initial signing and the developments that have occurred between then and now.

Further, we cast our sights forward to imagine the potential challenges that could arise for us to deal with. What remained as an absolute fact for us, was that, whatever challenges had come before, whatever strife we are facing today and whatever incidents as may lay in wait for us, we deal with it best, when we deal with it together.

Mr. President,

There is a common acceptance that multilateralism and diplomacy underpin the advancement of the three pillars of the United Nations, namely, sustainable development, peace and security and human rights, which are interlinked and mutually reinforcing, while observing respective specific mandates and the Charter of the United Nations.

However, we still must recognize the inconsistencies in our collective behavior. Many of our countries continue to live in poverty amid great natural wealth. In many instances, national interests continue to impede resolution of crises. The challenge of migrant flows requires a collective approach.

If we continue to seek solutions in an individual manner, this will result in an impasse. This organization has become more necessary than ever to foster the kind of collective action to today's global challenges.

Mr. President,

The Kingdom of Eswatini, like the rest of the world, has had to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. For us, this came at a time when the Kingdom was faced with multiple battles against the scourges of HIV, Malaria and Tuberculosis, all of which had placed a huge strain on our resources. As a relatively small economy, we did not boast huge reserves with which to finance the fight against the new onslaught. We welcomed the recently held High-Level Event on Financing for Development in the Era of COVID-19 and Beyond.

Global challenges and crises have a tendency of either pulling us together or pushing us apart; true to form, the COVID-19 crisis has created an unprecedented bond between and among countries. The crisis has taught and reminded us that we belong together, irrespective of location, distance and time on this planet. This is the time in history where our reflection and focus must be candid and transformational to deeply explore the lessons we have learnt and therefore, rethink generational to shape the future we want. Therefore, this is the opportune time to ask big questions, make great decisions and commit and act in solidarity.

Mr. President,

The intensity of the crisis has demonstrated glaring socio-economic gaps within and between countries. It has better defined and exposed our uniqueness in financial and human resource endowment and our strength, capacity and ability to cope with challenges. The pandemic underscored that our individual strength is weak

without collective but differential commitment and solidarity. It has reiterated and re-emphasized that we are living in a global village and therefore, we need each other. We can conclude that, without collective commitment to multilateralism, we will never accomplish the ideals of the “Decade of Action and Delivery” and pinnacle of the 2030 Agenda — to leave no one behind.

Our community of Nations must accept the reality that the crisis has forever changed our way of life; and we must resist the temptation of reverting back to what we knew as normal, but our duty is to prepare for a “new normal”. Opportunity beckons as the pandemic revealed that what we considered as normal has been shown to have lacked the ability to deliver on many socio-economic needs. Therefore, our focus should entail both response to the crisis but more so, shaping our future in the face of other possible crises.

The most successful preparedness and response plans must incorporate strategies that strengthen our nations beyond recovery. Relevant strategies will mark the birth of a new society that will present the future we want. There is no easy and isolated way to fix the present and prepare for the future, except through collective commitment to multilateralism. The United Nations is not only an international body, but it is a family of nations, therefore, it will always be at the center of and a catalyst to multilateralism and support the future we want, and in extension, the United Nations we need.

Mr. President,

At this juncture, let me commend the President of the General Assembly, Secretary General and staff of the United Nations, the international financial institutions, developing partners and everyone for the quick response and reaction to mitigate the impact of the pandemic in the midst of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and sustainable goals. Many countries have benefitted and this has not gone unnoticed. As the world committed in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, this is the opportune time to reiterate and recommit to sustainable development and promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations.

Making the United Nations work for us all, calls for collective commitment at individual, communal, national, regional and global levels. The pandemic has also demonstrated the weakness in the classification of our development levels, which have jeopardized many countries’ opportunities to access development finance and debt restructuring, among others. It has further revealed the need to revise and extend countries’ success and development beyond traditional measurements of Gross National Income, but fully consider their vulnerability, particularly in crises such as we are experiencing. Every country’s needs must be considered in isolation, but tackled in the multilateral context. This will help us collectively commit to bottom-up multilateralism and help us collectively progress to the future we want and the United Nations we need.

As a ‘United Nation’, we must dissuade any tensions between nations that have been created by the play out of the pandemic. Every public and private institution must be ready to promote international cooperation, get better prepared to deal with future global threats and commit to multilateralism. COVID-19 has generated a strong global viewpoint where all people dread to think backward and inward but to think forward and outward, with the hope to create the world we want. Achieving

effective and all-benefiting multilateralism and building back better together calls for ensuring that no one is left behind. This will entail leveraging of existing innovative partnerships, coordinating responses, refraining from protectionist measures, strengthening inclusion, investing in technologies that will sustain economic and social sectors in the midst of crises, among others

Mr. President,

We welcome the mandated events that are scheduled to be held on the margins of the General Assembly this year, namely the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the high-level meeting to commemorate and promote the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and the Summit on Biodiversity. We trust that these events shall be a success.

Mr. President,

As intimated earlier, 2020 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This is a significant year for the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Nonetheless, it is lamentable that though the global community celebrates the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, no country has achieved full gender equality. Poverty, violence against women and girls, the relentless pushback against women's rights and gender equality remain prevalent across the world.

We believe that this anniversary is the appropriate occasion to give new momentum to action. We encourage Governments, Civil Society and other stakeholders to assess gains, identify gaps and challenges, and critically set priorities for this generation and future generations. With all the challenges the world is facing, it has never been more important to advance the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, than it is now. We need renewed political will to deliver on the commitments made. Let us all recommit ourselves to our common goal of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and their enjoyment of human rights, everywhere.

In this regard, it pleases me to note that the Government of the Kingdom of Eswatini has adopted numerous pro-gender policies that promote gender equality. Female representation in positions of power and decision-making compare favorably within our region.

Mr. President,

As we evaluate the current status of our Organization, we must reflect on the ongoing process of reforms. This process, is, in itself, a tacit admission on our part that change needs to happen to ensure the continued relevance of the UN and its' subsidiary bodies. The time that has elapsed since the discussions began, is a cause for concern. However, we believe that this year gives us the moral imperative to push for accelerated progress in those reforms.

We support ongoing discussions within the framework of the Ad Hoc Working on the revitalization of the work of the UN General Assembly (AHWG) that seeks to find mechanisms to enhance the role and efficiency of the General Assembly. We recognize the work that has gone into streamlining the work of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), in particular how it relates to the functions of the General Assembly to enhance synergies and reduce overlaps between the two bodies.

The reform of the Security Council is a key aspect of the process and no transformation could be complete without its fundamental reform. To this end, the Kingdom of Eswatini wishes to reiterate Africa's call for permanent membership to the Security Council in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus.

Mr. President,

As we conclude, among the political issues that have continued to fester for too long is the continued denial of the right of the People of Taiwan to participate in the UN system.

Taiwan has shown significant commitment to the ideals of the United Nations and has aligned her priorities with those of the organization. Taiwan has, further, committed significant resources to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, not only within her own boundaries, but going so far as to assist other Countries to do the same.

Earlier we reflected upon those who have assisted the Kingdom of Eswatini in our fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, Taiwan deserves a special mention in that regard. In these uncertain times, where resources are dwindling, Taiwan has not only expressed commitment towards collaborative global citizenship, but has shown manifest support to development initiatives undertaken by some of our countries and, in particular, the Kingdom of Eswatini.

In this globally interdependent world, it is crucial that we work together where we can and constructively counsel each other where appropriate. The United Nations is home to these interactions and in this role, retains the unmitigated support of the Kingdom of Eswatini.

I THANK YOU AND MAY THE ALMIGHTY GOD BLESS YOU.

Tonga (see also A/75/PV.11, annex XVI)

Address by Mr. Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa, Prime Minister and Minister for Public Enterprises of the Kingdom of Tonga

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

It is a distinct honour for me, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and the people of the Kingdom of Tonga, to address the United Nations General Assembly, for the first time, as Prime Minister. I thank the God Almighty for enabling us the opportunity to meet virtually in the midst of this global pandemic.

I warmly congratulate Your Excellency on the assumption of your presidency at this historical milestone, where the United Nations commemorate the 75th anniversary of its founding.

Tonga pledges our unwavering support towards the success of your term, and we welcome the theme for this session "The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism".

Allow me to also pay tribute to your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Tijjani MuhammadBande, in successfully spearheading the 74th session of the General Assembly during these unprecedented and most difficult times.

I applaud the oversight and dynamic leadership of His Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres in safely navigating the operations of the United Nations in coordination with Member States in the fight against the pandemic.

Mr. President,

In the context of the defining health crisis of our time, Tonga stands in solidarity with all Member States, who have been affected by the deleterious impact of the global outbreak, resulting in the loss of precious lives and loved ones. I express our sincere sympathy and heartfelt condolences to those Member States.

While the virus has not arrived on our shores, Tonga is not immune to the overwhelming global challenges that beset us at this juncture. We have activated emergency measures to that effect while undertaking risk assessments and prioritizing the procurement of medical equipment to strengthen our health system preparedness and response.

In that connection, I express gratitude to all of our Development Partners and the international community for their generous financial and humanitarian assistance, in addition to logistical support, which have aptly facilitated Tonga's response to remain vigilant amidst this global pandemic.

The economic impacts are affecting different sectors of our economy. According to the Asia Development Bank (ADB), Tonga will encounter a zero economic growth in 2020, however, the situation is astutely managed within, through activation of financial stimulus while priority is given to health-related activities. In regard to education, digital divide is made more evident by COVID-19, requiring accelerated solutions for the new norm of teaching via internet, radio and television considering thousands of students in Tonga that will be affected if education is disrupted by COVID-19 or a similar pandemic in the future.

Given the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Pacific Island Forum Leaders invoked the Biketawa and Boe Declaration, pronouncing the pandemic a major crisis to our Pacific peoples and economies. The activation of this declaration has expedited assistance and cooperation between member countries as well as cooperation with the international community in response to the COVID-19, including facilitating the timely repatriation of our stranded Tongan people abroad.

Mr. President,

While Small Island Developing States, including Tonga, contribute to no more than one percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, it is unfortunate that we continue to bear the brunt of this climate injustice. As a result, the Pacific Island countries continue to be imperiled by many tropical cyclones of unprecedented magnitudes and destructive in nature. The most recent one was Tropical Cyclone Harold in April of this year which wreaked havoc on four Pacific Island nations, namely, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and my own country, Tonga. This is while we grapple with the distressing effect of the COVID-19 outbreak.

Our Pacific Island Forum Leaders have consistently echoed the need for urgent climate action in their communique, every year, for at least the last 30 years. This year marks the fifth-year anniversary of the adoption of the Paris Agreement. And it is only befitting for us to capture this historic moment through reaffirming our commitment to achieving the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C. Tonga is currently reviewing its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and its Enhanced NDCs will be submitted to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat this year.

Though the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC that was to be held in Glasgow, United Kingdom, has been postponed to 2021, Tonga remains committed to prepare its Long-Term Low Emission Development Strategies (LT-LEDS) which will be communicated to the Secretariat of the UNFCCC at COP 26.

While 2020 is marked as the “Year of Delivery” for powering the sustainable development for our Kingdom through the attainment of 50 per cent Renewable Energy penetration, the project delays caused by the global pandemic, through the sudden halt to the market supply chains, has led to a major disruption on Tonga’s NDCs in the achievement of this target.

However, agreements have been signed for grant funding, by way of public private partnership and the fervent support of Development Partners, will continue to drive Tonga’s SDG7 and its objectives through the composition of innovative technologies such as Solar, Wind, Battery Energy Storage Systems coupled with the Network Rehabilitation and increase accessibility of electricity to the furthest most islands of Tonga.

Mr. President,

Tonga continues to recognize the importance of the ocean-climate nexus, and further continues to note with grave concern the detrimental impacts of climate change on our marine environment.

We endeavour to achieve SDG 14 through advancing our commitment to conserve and sustainably use the world’s ocean, seas and marine resources through measures taken to establish Special Management Areas (SMAs) initiatives, and

the implementation of the Tonga Marine Spatial Planning Project. Government has approved the inclusion of a network of 30 per cent Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) for the Kingdom. Tonga progresses well in relation to improved fisheries management and the fight against illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing to secure oceans contribution to food security and the well-being of the country's economy.

In the fight against plastic pollution, it is worrisome for Tonga to note the alarming 12 million tonnes of plastic wastes that are leaked into our oceans annually. We place great interest in addressing this threat by beginning the process to ban single-use plastics. While this is not only a national and a regional problem, it is also a global problem, requiring a global solution.

Mr. President,

While countries around the world are enforcing lockdowns and restrictions in varying degrees in the fight against the COVID-19, it may not occur to many that the "ocean" plays a pivotal role in this context. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (or UNESCO), the bacteria used to detect the presence of COVID-19 is found in the depths of the ocean.

We cannot overemphasize the urgency for action to protect and sustainably use the world's ocean, seas and marine resources. However, actions can only be meaningful and effective if derived from science-based and innovative information and data. We support the proclamation by the United Nations of the Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development from 2021-2030 which provides an overarching framework that will allow ocean science to support countries in their sustainable development of the ocean.

Mr. President,

Tonga maintains that the baselines which presently determine our territorial boundaries, once established under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, should remain unchanged despite effects of sea level rise and any climate change modification that might ensue. Our Sovereignty must not be compromised to that effect. We continue to support the work of the International Law Commission in the Sixth Committee.

The much anticipated Fourth Session of the Inter-Governmental Conference on an international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction has been postponed to March 2021, tentatively, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We look forward to participating in this very important process.

Tonga is greatly invested in engaging as a State Party to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea in the International Seabed Authority and its continuing work on the draft exploitation regulations with other State Parties and stakeholders to ensure agreement on the appropriate balance between the need to conserve, protect and replenish the environment, and to mine the seabed for minerals that will contribute to the sustainable development of Tonga as a Small Island Developing State in the Pacific.

Mr. President,

Tonga is pleased to have ratified and become a State Party to the following conventions this year: (1) the United Nations Convention against Corruption; (2) the United Nations Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Foreign Arbitral Awards; and (3) the International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 on the Worst Forms of Child Labour.

Following Tonga's presentation of its first national review at the High-Level Political Forum in July 2019, it made good progress in the implementation of its SDG targets, however, the intervening devastating impacts of the COVID-19 have impeded progress going forward. These have intensified the vulnerabilities of our country and affected the implementation of some of Tonga's national outcomes under the Strategic Development Framework, which are ultimately linked to the achievement of the priority areas of the SAMOA Pathway and our SDG targets. Tonga is committed to engaging with the High-Level Political Forum which remains an integral platform, even more so, as we brace to embark on this much anticipated Decade of Action from 2021-2030, geared for accelerated solutions to achieve the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We acknowledge with gratitude the positive engagement of our Development Partners and all United Nations agencies including the UN Office of the High Representative for Least Developing Countries (LDCs), LLDCs and Small Islands Developing Countries (SIDS); the World Health Organization (WHO); the UN Department for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA); the UNDP; the UN ESCAP; the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, as well as the Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs).

Mr. President,

Allow me to conclude by reaffirming our commitment to a revitalized post COVID-19 multilateralism in support of the theme for this session. A multilateralism comprised of global solidarity and cooperation, empathy, inclusivity and resilience, noting the importance of protecting vulnerable individuals, addressing inequalities and ensuring universal access to affordable COVID-19 medical vaccine, while building back better, and leaving no one behind.

Chad (see also A/75/PV.11, annex XVII)

**Statement by Mr. Amine Abba Sidick, Minister for Foreign Affairs,
African Integration and Chadians Abroad of the Republic of Chad**

Delivered on Friday, 25 September 2020, at the 11th meeting of the General Assembly

[Original: French]

Mr. President;

Ladies and gentlemen Heads of State and delegations;

Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations;

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Field Marshal of Chad, Mr. Idriss Deby Into, President of the Republic, Head of State, who would have liked to address this august Assembly personally but was unable to do so, has instructed me to deliver the following message to you.

“I would like first of all to congratulate the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, His Excellency Ambassador Volkan Bozkir, whose election comes during this particularly difficult time of the COVID-19 pandemic, and assure him of my country’s full support in carrying out his mandate.

“At the same time, I would like to express my sincere thanks to His Excellency Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, the outgoing President, who was able to carry out his mission successfully despite the unexpected outbreak of the pandemic, which must have impacted on his work agenda.

“Allow me to pay a glowing tribute to His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, for his wise leadership and management of the crisis throughout this challenging period.

“I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Director-General of the World Health Organization, His Excellency Mr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, and all his collaborators, for the remarkable work they are doing to fight this pandemic on a daily basis. The lessons learned from this pandemic provide us with an opportunity to rethink our health systems. Therefore, the WHO must adapt in terms of how to prevent and combat the occurrence of such pandemics in the future.

“I would like to acknowledge the leadership of His Excellency Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa and the Chairperson of the African Union, as well as the African Union Commission. They have been able to put a continental strategy in place to respond to the pandemic by taking timely measures aimed at pooling medical supplies for Member States, safeguarding the African economy and researching the vaccine against COVID-19, inter alia.

“Excellencies;

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“The revised format of this year’s general debate is a perfect illustration, if any were needed, of the scale of the upheaval in the world caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which unfortunately continues to rage. This invisible and relentless enemy has not only caused enormous human damage, but has also had a profound impact on all aspects of economic and social life, putting our national and global response capacities to the test.

“The highly relevant theme of this session, ‘The future we want, the United Nations we need: reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism — confronting COVID-19 through effective multilateral action’, fully underlines the importance that we must all attach to international cooperation and multilateralism as an irreplaceable means to address major common challenges such as pandemics, climate change, terrorism, poverty and inequality, to name but a few.

“The COVID-19 crisis has laid bare our common weaknesses and, at the same time, demonstrated the need for enhanced collective efforts to better understand and overcome global challenges for the benefit of each and every one of us. This is an opportunity for this great family of nations, at this celebration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of our Organization and in the current particular context, to reaffirm the central place of the United Nations and the primordial role of multilateralism in international relations.

“It is also the occasion to underline the absolute urgency of strengthening multilateralism through the reform of global governance, which has been severely tested during this period, with a view to adapting it to today’s world in order to better face up to and resolve current and future challenges.

“Chad emphasizes the imperative need for increased international cooperation through meaningful solidarity with the most vulnerable countries, the least-developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States so that the promises of the Charter of the United Nations are fully realized and that the ultimate goal of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to leave no one behind becomes a reality — not just another broken promise.

“Excellencies;

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“The whole world is currently experiencing the devastation of the COVID-19 pandemic, but the ability to deal with it varies by country. Developing countries, particularly African ones, owing to their multiple structural weaknesses, are more exposed to the adverse consequences of the scourge.

“As a landlocked Sahelian country, which is already confronting a number of crises, Chad is suffering full-on the many repercussions of the pandemic at the various levels of national life. Attending to the country’s national priorities has been upended, and the State’s limited resources have had to be redirected to deal first and foremost with health, humanitarian and socioeconomic emergencies.

“As in other countries in the same situation, the socioeconomic situation in Chad is of concern. Growth for the current year has been revised to be

negative; the budget deficit has increased; several hundred thousand workers have become officially unemployed; household life has been significantly affected; and the macroeconomic data for 2021 are not looking good. The Government's ability to implement the development activities emanating from the national development plan of Chad for the period from 2017 to 2021, as the main lever for implementing international agendas, in particular the first 10-year implementation plan of Agenda 2063 of the African Union and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has been eroded.

"Chad's national development plan, which was firmly supported by donors at the round table held in Paris in 2017, has not seen the expected results owing to the low level of anticipated resources. Therefore, in order to support the Government in its efforts to promote sustainable development, honouring the pledges to finance that effort is crucial for Chad, which is currently preparing its second national development plan.

"Excellencies,

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is worth recalling that, last year, at the General Assembly during its seventy-fourth session, we assessed the progress made and the enormous gaps that remained relative to fulfilling the commitments we made within the framework of the 2030 Agenda in terms of ending extreme poverty, ensuring access to quality education, combating climate change, reducing inequalities and ensuring inclusion.

"In particular, in Africa the gap in financing sustainable development is enormous. The promises made in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda have not been fulfilled.

"This is the moment to underscore that, without robust action taken by all stakeholders, it is highly likely that our shared goal of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda will not be met. That is why the Decade of Action is key to translating words into action to marshal the resources needed and ramp up the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

"The international community, in particular the UN, must increase momentum and double efforts to ensure that development on the African continent, where the greatest number of least developed countries are located, is placed at the centre of international priorities through concrete actions reflecting that commitment. Only the increased involvement of the UN, whose leadership is more crucial than ever and the renewed commitment of all stakeholders will make it possible to provide the decisive impetus required to mobilize the resources needed to achieve the promises of the 2030 Agenda and support those countries already on the path to achieving the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

"In that regard, it is fitting to recall that debt was already a major handicap that the pandemic has accentuated. As the African Development Bank has noted, nearly 50 million additional people could be at risk of falling into extreme poverty in Africa in 2020. Moreover, Africa's losses resulting from the pandemic will reach several hundred billion dollars for the period

from 2020 to 2021. Many countries could then be forced to borrow, further aggravating the debt burden.

“In view of the magnitude of the challenges to be met and the present and future multisectoral needs, Chad once again calls for the outright cancellation of the external debt of African countries so that they can successfully respond to the COVID-19 crisis and adequately commit to addressing the post-COVID-19 socioeconomic reconstruction on a firmer foundation.

“Excellencies,

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“At the same time that the world is facing the coronavirus, terrorism continues to rage on the ground in Africa, particularly in the Lake Chad Basin and the Sahelo-Saharan region, while claiming innocent victims on a daily basis and seriously compromising the development efforts of countries in the region.

“Such was the case with the deadly 23 March attack perpetrated by Boko Haram against the Chadian defence and security forces in Boma in the Lac province. A vigorous response was launched by our forces, which led to clearing the islands of Lake Chad of Boko Haram terrorist elements.

“But we are under no illusions. The terrorist threat will not disappear overnight. We will continue to remain vigilant and engaged until security is finally restored in the affected areas through the eradication of the terrorist threat.

“In this context, we emphasize once again that the responsibility to combat terrorism in the Sahel and the Lake Chad regions is also international, as our struggle is part of the global efforts to ensure international peace and security.

“We therefore call once again on the international community for greater and sustained support for the Multinational Joint Task Force in the Lake Chad Basin and the G-5 Sahel joint force established by the countries of the region to combat Boko Haram and jihadist groups in the Sahel.

“If the situation in the Sahel is not improving despite the many initiatives and commitments by partners, it is because the fault lies primarily with the failure to fulfil promises made in support of G-5 Sahel joint force and the G-5 Sahel Priority Investment Programme.

“That is compounded by the low level of synergy among the various initiatives and forces present in the Sahel. We therefore believe that it is time to translate words into actions in the Sahel by honouring pledged contributions and marshalling additional resources to make the G-5 joint force fully operational and implement the development projects of the G-5 Sahel Priority Investment Programme.

“Our States have made considerable efforts of their own despite their modest resources. We have certainly benefited from the multifaceted support of bilateral and multilateral partners to whom we once again express our sincere gratitude. But given the magnitude of the challenges, continued and reliable international support is crucial.

“We take this opportunity to call once again on the Security Council to place the G-5 Sahel joint force under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in order to ensure its sustainable and predictable financing.

“Furthermore, we welcome the launch of the Coalition for the Sahel, based on the agreement among the G-5 Sahel countries and their partners to pool efforts and resources to combat terrorism.

“In that regard, it is important to continue working on strengthening the coherence of the goals and activities of all initiatives in support of the G-5 Sahel in order to respond more effectively to challenges and produce tangible results on the ground in terms of security and development.

“Excellencies,

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“Concerning the issue of climate change, Chad — a Sahelian country subject to the harmful effects of this existential threat, which strongly affects the sectors that make up the foundation of its economy — remains committed to the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

“In that light, the urgent need to implement the measures adopted within the framework of financing the fight against climate change, particularly those aimed at marshalling substantial resources for developing countries, is no longer in doubt.

“Excellencies,

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“At the international level, we welcome the ceasefire in Libya, declared simultaneously by the President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord and the Speaker of the House of Representatives. Chad reiterates its call on the Security Council to shoulder all its responsibilities to end external interference. It once again urges all Libyan stakeholders to respect the ceasefire and to resolutely engage in a process of inclusive negotiations leading to true national reconciliation.

“With regard to the Sudan, Chad welcomes the signing of a peace agreement among Sudanese parties on 31 August in Juba thanks to the mediation efforts, in which Chad is a stakeholder, under the leadership of President Salva Kiir Mayardit of the Republic of South Sudan, whose personal involvement I commend.

“Chad calls on the other armed movements to join the process in order to achieve a comprehensive and lasting peace, which the Sudanese people greatly need.

“Concerning the tension surrounding the Great Renaissance Dam in Ethiopia, Chad calls on the brotherly Governments of Egypt, Ethiopia and the Sudan to continue to prioritize dialogue in order to reach a negotiated solution under the aegis of the African Union.

“With regard to the situation in Palestine, Chad welcomes the agreement reached between Israel and the United Arab Emirates, which provides, inter alia, for the suspension of the annexation of certain parts of the West Bank.

It also welcomes the agreement with the State of Bahrain. Chad reaffirms its commitment to the two-State solution within their pre-June 1967 borders, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions and the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative.

“With regard to the embargo imposed on Cuba, Chad reiterates its call for its definitive lifting.

“Excellencies,

“Ladies and Gentlemen,

“The UN we need must meet the aspirations of all Member States. Africa must have its full place in that decision-making organ of the United Nations. Disputes over UN and Security Council reform seem interminable to us while challenges urgently require our attention.

“It is time for justice and equity to be restored for Africa. In that regard, Chad remains committed to the Common African Position articulated in the Ezulwini Consensus.

“I wish our work every success.

“Thank you for your kind attention.”
