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Seventy-eighth session

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Official Records

President: Mr. Francis (Trinidad and Tobago)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Pary Rodríguez (Plurinational State of Bolivia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.50 p.m.

Address by Mr. Luis Alberto Arce Catacora, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Mr. Luis Alberto Arce Catacora, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Luis Alberto Arce Catacora, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Arce Catacora (*spoke in Spanish*): Brother Vice-President of the General Assembly, Diego Pary Rodríguez, it is a source of joy and pride for Bolivia to see you lead the General Assembly of the most important multilateral Organization created by humankind, and we are sure that, together with President Dennis Francis and his leadership, you will elevate the names of the countries of our Latin American and Caribbean region.

A year ago in this forum (see A/77/PV.5), we denounced the fact that the world was facing a capitalist crisis that put humankind and the very existence of the planet at risk. Unfortunately, a year after that declaration, that sensitive scenario has not changed. The capitalist system, in its eagerness to impose its decadent hegemony, replicates practices of colonial domination and exploitation that should already have been overcome. Unfortunately, many of the brilliant proposals that have emerged from the heart of the Assembly have been ignored or simply omitted, owing to the functional interests of the savage system of capitalist exploitation that prioritizes the production and reproduction of capital, rather than safeguarding the lives of human beings and the existence of the planet.

It is evident that we are facing a weakened economy due to the effects of the multiple armed conflicts that are currently shaking the world and our reality. Peace and security are at imminent risk due to the lack of will of the international community to propose solutions that privilege dialogue and put an end to the belligerent efforts promoted by transnational war corporations.

Added to this are the serious effects of the ecological crisis on life systems in all corners of the world. According to experts, due to the prevailing system, we have exceeded six of the nine planetary limits within which humanity and Mother Earth as a whole can continue to develop and prosper. It is worth highlighting that this tragic situation has deteriorated even further over the recent decades of unipolarity and unilaterality, of inaction and unfulfilled commitments.

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The pending challenges remain numerous and enormous, but today we find ourselves at the dawn of a new international configuration. We are convinced that we are witnessing the construction of a new world order, a situation in which the General Assembly, in accordance with the principles by which it was created, must play a main role; a new world order in which we all participate with equal rights and obligations, without impositions of any kind, without masters or slaves, without double standards to measure one another, without sanctioners or sanctioned; a new order in which solidarity, complementation and collaboration are set above selfishness and meanness. In the certainty that this better world is possible and necessary, the Plurinational State of Bolivia wishes to share the following seven ideas and approaches:

First, we reiterate, as we did last year, our proposal that the world be declared a territory of peace. We must put an end once and for all to the arms race and prioritize sincere dialogue and peoples' diplomacy to resolve the armed conflicts that threaten the existence of humankind. It is urgent that our nations join together in a collective effort with diverse voices, especially those that come from regions far from confrontational rhetoric and that nevertheless suffer the repercussions of war in its various dimensions. We must give peace a chance, and in that task the United Nations has a fundamental role to play in reducing tensions and advancing dialogues that allow us to consolidate political and diplomatic solutions to the conflicts on the agenda of our Organization.

In that order of ideas, we reiterate our deep concern about the escalation of violence in the conflict in Eastern Europe and the threat emanating from several countries to exacerbate the situation through a confrontation using weapons of mass destruction, weapons that incorporate depleted radioactive elements and unconventional weapons, which are prohibited by international law through various binding international instruments.

We see with great concern that military spending in the world has reached historic heights. As of April, the world had invested more than \$2.24 trillion in weapons and the war industry. If those resources were invested in peace, mediation, dialogue, the development of peoples and life instead of in destruction and death, we would not find ourselves on the brink of a crisis that amplifies inequalities in the world and which, contrary to the objectives that we have set in this Hall, deepens poverty on the planet.

The ways and means of waging war cannot be unlimited. A growing number of countries are seeking to use outer space to improve their military capabilities in order to protect their national security, further endangering the peace and security of our planet. We deeply regret that the maintenance of peace and security has become an increasingly challenging goal. Genuine peace can be achieved only through the effective implementation of the mechanisms provided for in the Charter of the United Nations and the complete elimination of all types of weapons.

Bolivia will always be committed to defending and strengthening multilateralism and to continuing to contribute to disarmament in compliance with international law and international humanitarian law, based on a vision focused on peace with social justice, the well-being of people and peaceful coexistence. .

We reiterate our regional commitment by proclaiming Latin America and the Caribbean a zone of peace, based on the promotion and respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as we set out in the framework of the seventh Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC). Likewise, at the CELAC-European Union Summit held in Brussels in July, we expressed our desire for a peaceful Latin America, Caribbean and Europe. May our peoples achieve the peace that the capitalist model has not been able to offer them, abandoning practices that, historically, have not resulted in an equitable and complementary relationship between our regions.

Second, it is necessary to break as soon as possible with the unjust international order that overwhelms our people, to sit down now to debate within the framework of the United Nations and to build a new pact for the future. In Bolivia, we have begun to discuss the possibility of a new pact for the future, but to do so we must remember the past, resolve the present and prepare for the future. We are obliged to address the needs of present and future generations equitably. We cannot allow a child to die of hunger today to ensure a snack for another child who has not yet been born. Eliminating poverty and inequalities today will prevent unimaginable economic and ecological distribution conflicts in the future.

To rebuild trust we need to abandon petty interests and build reciprocity, for example by enabling all technology transfer that helps to save lives and restore Mother

Earth. To revive global solidarity, we need to recognize ourselves in each other and repair our relationships as human beings. For example, in the context of climate change, let us agree that each State shall dedicate resources to the Loss and Damage Fund in proportion to its historical responsibility for greenhouse gases.

Action on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development can be accelerated if we make peace and solidarity the engine of prosperity. Let us dare to transform the expenses of war and death into investments for life. With those resources, the sustainable development objectives could be far exceeded. Likewise, we will be able to keep Mother Earth within a safe operating space for humankind only if sustainability with ecological and social justice becomes the only path to progress. But we must achieve those objectives in a fair and equitable manner, with everyone and for everyone, and without political or financial impositions.

Third, it is necessary and urgent to change the capitalist system in times of neoliberalism, which multiplies and reproduces the forms of domination, exploitation and exclusion of the great majorities. The multidimensional crisis of capitalism has been exposed in the post-pandemic context and exacerbated by the effects of the military conflict in Eastern Europe. Those are nothing more than expressions of the transition towards the configuration of a world order different from the current one.

In response, and as has never happened before, the global South is rising peacefully and constructively through regional and interregional processes of cooperation and integration. We are hearing a rising call to reconfigure the international financial system and transform our understanding of what scientific development, respectful of Mother Earth, should be and how to pursue it equitably, recognizing the respective historical responsibilities of our nations in all dimensions.

Given the irreversible march towards a multipolar world, the increasingly stronger influence of new initiatives of economic, commercial integration and cooperation between countries is undeniable. The emergence of trade blocs such as those in Asia, Africa, South America or the BRICS countries Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, today allows nations to access international markets without the need to compromise their sovereignty.

In that context, despite an adverse international context, Bolivia has developed its Economic and Social Development Plan 2021-2025, “Rebuilding the Economy to Live Well, Towards Industrialization with Import Substitution”, which lays the foundations to confront the global economic crisis and develop public policies to strengthen the national economy and promote our development capabilities. In that regard, the actions taken for the economic and reproductive reconstruction of our economy exceeded 6 per cent in 2021, and in 2022 reached 3.5 per cent. Our nominal gross domestic product (GDP) increased from \$40.703 billion in 2021 to \$44.315 billion in 2022, the highest figure in our history. In the same way, GDP per capita increased by 7.4 per cent compared to the 2021 figure, reaching \$3,691, which was also the highest figure in the history of our country.

I also note that so far this year, accumulated inflation is only 1.6 per cent, the lowest figure in our region and with respect to many countries of the planet. We have achieved that indicator without raising interest rates, without practicing neoliberal monetary policies and always taking care of the pockets of the poorest, which is where inflation hurts the most. The achievements of our country are based mainly on the civilizational concept of living well, which vindicates the culture of community life in fullness, respecting the coexistence in harmony, balance and complementarity of the human being with the rest of nature on Mother Earth.

Fourth, the climate crisis requires concrete actions and renewed commitments. Bolivia proposed the recognition of Mother Earth in the General Assembly through resolution 63/278, adopted on 22 April 2009, in an effort to ensure that we, as an international community, became aware of the importance of restoring natural processes for the survival of human beings, proposing an alternative, anti-colonial vision against capitalism and mercantilism. In that understanding, our vision for the sustainability of development has strong roots in our vision of living well and in harmony with nature. That vision is born from the ancient and ancestral thinking of the nations and indigenous peoples who constitute the basis of our plurinationality.

Regarding the needs for mitigation, adaptation to the climate crisis and growing losses and damages, it is important that all countries shoulder their responsibilities. In that framework, the developed countries must assume their corresponding share of the climate debt and compensation and historical reparations to developing countries. The first step

towards that end is to fulfil outstanding commitments on the provision of financing, technology transfer and capacity development.

In that global problem, there is a common problem that is beginning to take its toll on the poorest countries: water scarcity and the increase in the evaporation rate of fresh water. We urge our Assembly to pay unflagging attention to that problem, which mainly affects the poorest of the five continents and is already beginning to affect social sectors that are not found in the conventional frameworks of poverty.

Bolivia highlights the fact that this year the High Seas Treaty on marine biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction was concluded and adopted by consensus because it represents a significant step towards the protection of our oceans and the sustainable use of their resources, greatly benefiting developing countries and especially landlocked developing countries. The Treaty will establish rules and regulations to prevent the sustainable exploitation of resources, which will protect the interests of landlocked countries and prevent the depletion of marine resources. The Treaty is a historic opportunity to make a difference in the protection of our oceans, because they constitute a common good of humankind. In that context, we highlight the special mention of indigenous peoples and landlocked developing countries. Together, we can ensure that the oceans continue to provide life and prosperity for present and future generations in an equitable manner.

Fifth, we must continue promoting a broader view of rights humans and democracy. Despite the progress achieved, the world remains unequal. While it is true that people build their own destiny, it is also true that the well-being of our peoples has been undermined for centuries by legal, economic and ideological colonialism.

Representatives here know better than I do that it has not been possible to exercise the right to development due to a matter of historical magnitude. The systematic transfer of wealth from the South to the North has put us at a disadvantage to this day. We have had to navigate the gale of a crisis imposed only on the South. From that perspective, talk of economic, social and cultural human rights — such as the rights to health, education, food, access to knowledge and technologies — is different on one continent than it is on another, in the South or in the North.

In that context, it is not possible to plan without addressing historical responsibilities. Unless we do so, it will be impossible to reach our full potential as peoples and make our right to development possible. In the Plurinational State of Bolivia, we understand that no democracy is possible without development, and development cannot have a better indicator than the exercise of collective rights, promoted, protected and guaranteed by the State, but also combined with a high democratic participation of social groups.

In Bolivia we understand that economic stability also means a substantive change in favour of food sovereignty, access to intercultural and multilingual education, and the sexual and reproductive health of Bolivian women. From our experience, I want to highlight that the active participation of indigenous peoples in State affairs is what has made our recent achievements possible, and I therefore call on the Assembly to continue advancing in strengthening their rights and participation.

Another topic of special interest to my country is women's rights. It is estimated that 736 million women in the world — that is, one in every three women — have been subjected to physical violence and/or sexual violence. The violence suffered by women must stop being a solitary and private experience and be recognized as a public issue concerning which we must take urgent action.

Maternal mortality is another of the major problems that we must face, given that 800 women die every day from causes related to pregnancy. Sustainable development will not be possible if we do not give women the opportunity to live without fear of violence and to exercise their sexual and reproductive rights with access to universal health services.

Sixth, we must banish the implementation of sanctions and unilateral coercive measures from the international system. Another issue that I cannot fail to mention on this occasion is related to the unilateral coercive measures and sanctions that are applied to brother peoples, undermining their development and most basic human rights. Such measures are an example of a dysfunctional system alienated from international law and multilateralism. A clear example of such measures is the illegal, inhuman and criminal economic and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba. The restrictions imposed have made it difficult for Cubans to access food, medicine and other

basic goods, generating human suffering and impacting their economy and development. We call for compliance with the multiple resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and to build a more just and supportive world in which all countries can prosper regardless of their political differences.

Likewise, we reject and condemn the inclusion of Cuba as a promoter of terrorism within the unilateral lists of the United States, using that argument to impose greater restrictive measures against the Cuban people. Those measures are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and the mandate of the Security Council, and they therefore have no support or validity in the light of international law; worse still, they seriously affect the right to development of the Cuban people.

Seventh, let us stop the abuse of the Palestinian people as soon as possible. Regarding Israel's occupation of Palestine, we cannot continue to allow the suffering of the Palestinian people. We reiterate our support for global and regional initiatives, international law and United Nations resolutions that seek to guarantee a solution whereby the Palestinian people can exercise their right to self-determination and build their own free, independent and sovereign State withing its pre-1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Finally, the current crisis demands a strong United Nations consistent with the principles that created it and committed to peace; a United Nations that maintains its intergovernmental character but without subordination to any hegemonic Power, be it economic, political or military. The solutions to the multiple challenges facing humankind will become a reality only with the genuine commitment and political will of all countries and their actors, prioritizing the common interest of humankind, the peoples and the most vulnerable sectors of society.

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

Mr. Luis Alberto Arce Catacora, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Tokayev: Today humankind faces enormous shifts unseen in a century and has entered yet another period of geopolitical confrontation. The essence of the threat comes from the simultaneous erosion of fundamental principles of international law embodied in the Charter of the United Nations. The displacement of those pillars puts an increasingly heavy burden on the existing structure of international relations and creates confrontations.

The pattern of non-compliance, suspension and withdrawal from key international legal instruments is extremely concerning, as it could lead to the point of no return. This situation disrupts the trading system, weakens the supply chains that drive economic life, damages food security and accelerates inflation. Current negative trends further exacerbate human suffering. Some 108 million people have been forcibly displaced, more than 1 billion live in poverty, and 2 billion do not have access to essential medicines. The ultimate result is humankind's loss of confidence in the future stable development of the world. The younger generations no longer believe that the world they inherit will be a better one.

Therefore, Kazakhstan finds it necessary to restate its unwavering commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The leaders gathered here are responsible for the fate and future of humankind, yet as we approach the United Nations eightieth anniversary, we have come almost full circle back to the Organization's point of departure. The resolution of political issues by force in fact results only in deadlock. Dialogue is the only way to create a conducive environment that enables agreement on new principles and norms.

Despite our best efforts, conflicts persist in many regions of the world. We urge all parties to seek diplomatic solutions to conflicts based on the United Nations Charter and universally recognized international law. In that regard, Kazakhstan commends all the efforts and plans proposed by different States and groups of countries in support of a political settlement of the Ukrainian crisis.

Diplomacy and dialogue should always prevail in seeking the resolution of international disputes. We must therefore together make the greatest efforts to stabilize the only system of global institutions we have. We will not succeed in tackling those challenges without a comprehensive reform of the Security Council. That is an urgent need of our time that meets the interests of the vast majority of humankind. I am strongly convinced that the voices of the middle Powers and all developing countries on the Council need to be amplified and clearly heard. Since the Security Council appears unable to move beyond deadlock, it should become more representative so that other countries — including Kazakhstan — can play a greater role in the maintenance of peace and security.

In our own region, the growing engagement of Member States has been a positive force in the transformation of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia into a full-fledged international organization that can contribute to continental mediation and peacemaking.

Similarly, as the current Chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Kazakhstan has put forward the initiative of World Unity for a Just Peace and Harmony. The initiative, which we invite Members to join, comprises a new security paradigm, a fair economic environment and a clean planet. Open dialogue between the global South and the global North is its central pillar.

Of all the challenges we face, perhaps the most destructive is the threat of use of nuclear weapons. Thirty years ago, Kazakhstan voluntarily renounced the fourth-largest inherited nuclear arsenal. That is why the logic of the nuclear agenda must be reversed. Only mutual trust and cooperation among nuclear Powers on the path to a world free of nuclear weapons can produce global stability.

In that context, Kazakhstan declares its continuous commitment to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We support the development of

new mechanisms in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation. A strategic plan for the complete renunciation of nuclear weapons by 2045 could well be the most significant contribution to global security of this generation of leaders.

At the same time, the coronavirus disease has painfully illustrated our vulnerability to future biological risks and threats. Kazakhstan appeals to the Secretary-General and the President of the Assembly to launch the process of establishing an international agency for biological safety.

We welcome the Secretary-General's New Agenda for Peace. That strategic document must confront the trust vacuum and growing hostility in the world. At the upcoming Summit of the Future next year, Kazakhstan will play a constructive and supportive role in adopting a pact for the future.

But the search for peace is not just about the banning of weapons or the signing of declarations. Interreligious and interfaith dialogue plays a key role in fostering a culture of peace. We are therefore concerned about recent acts of profound disrespect towards holy books. Such barbaric acts against Islam or any other religions cannot be accepted as expressions of freedom, free speech and democracy. All holy books, including the Holy Quran, deserve legal protection against vandalism.

Finally, a culture of peace can be based only on the principles of unity in diversity and mutual respect. I am proud therefore of the outstanding role of the Astana-based Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions.

In brief, Kazakhstan is a peace-loving nation that pursues its own national interest while continuously searching for peaceful solutions to pending international issues. Independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty are core principles that will guide my people now and in the future. We will continue cooperation with our major allies on all strategic issues.

We need new assessments that will enable us to tackle pressing global economic problems while ensuring the right to development. To do so, we require an open, transparent and inclusive multilateral trading system based on the principles and rules of the World Trade Organization. We also need to think about a better global food security system. Nearly 10 per cent of the world's population faced hunger last year. We must

boost voluntary information exchange on food security, including volumes of production, and the export and import of food products. In concert, we must enable the transparent tracking of funding from the international community in response to food crises.

Kazakhstan is ready to act as a regional food supply hub. We have all the required resources, infrastructure and logistics in place for those purposes. Kazakhstan is already a reliable link for nearly 80 per cent of overland transit traffic between Asia and Europe. The Trans-Caspian International Transport Route — the so-called Middle Corridor — can significantly strengthen East-West engagement. The route could increase the pace of trade between critical markets, cutting by almost half the amount of time required to transport goods via the maritime route.

The urgency of climate action risks become a cliché, but it is a dangerous cliché because immediate, effective and transformational steps are urgently required to prioritize environmental protection. Central Asia is one of its front lines. Even if we successfully limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C by 2030 — which is looking increasingly unlikely — we will experience between 2°C and 2.5°C of temperature rise in Central Asia.

Despite the long road of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, we must all remain committed to a carbon-free future. The climate agenda should not be used to introduce measures restricting trade and investment cooperation. Instead we must focus on positive change, such as the climate-positive actions identified by the United Nations, including investing in green jobs, ending fossil fuel subsidies, and ensuring that all climate actions are fair and inclusive and involve women at all levels.

Yet without proper funding, ambitious plans to combat climate change will remain unmet. In that regard, we propose to launch a just energy transition partnership in Kazakhstan. A gradual, sustainable and socially responsible transition away from coal would be a big bonus for global climate change goals. Kazakhstan's initiative to open a project office for Central Asia on climate change and green energy in Almaty can lead on those issues. We look forward to hosting a regional climate summit in Kazakhstan in 2026 under United Nations auspices.

In our region, we have seen how water scarcity has created serious economic and other challenges in transboundary river basins. That will be replicated

across the world — by 2040, global demand for water may outstrip supply by as much as 40 per cent. We must therefore combine political will and economic resources to address that critical global issue, simultaneously with climate action.

Next year we will assume the chairmanship of the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. We will continue our efforts to prevent the further degradation of the environment and its impact on livelihoods around what was once the fourth largest lake on the planet. Today it is the world's largest lake — the Caspian Sea — that also faces ecological challenges, including shallowing, water diversion and the pollution of flora and fauna. Saving the Caspian Sea must be a matter of common priority that requires long-term international cooperation.

Kazakhstan is committed to further enhancing multifaceted cooperation with the countries of Central Asia. Our region can play a more active role as a cohesive and independent part of the international community, while contributing to global development processes. Fortunately, economic activity is growing. Over the past five years, intraregional trade has doubled to \$10 billion. Our regional agenda includes Afghanistan, which must become a stable and prosperous State and a reliable trade partner. In that context, the time is right to establish a United Nations regional centre for the Sustainable Development Goals for Central Asia and Afghanistan in Almaty. I call on all Member States to support our initiative.

Let me also present a brief update on our domestic reform efforts. Despite global, regional and geopolitical challenges, our society and Government are building a just and fair Kazakhstan. In a very short period of time, we have reformed our institutions, amended our Constitution, curtailed the powers of the presidency, reset political and economic systems and battled corruption. Much has been done in only two years. The mindset of our people, particularly of the younger generation, has already changed substantially in that time.

The presidential mandate has been limited to one seven-year term. That proposal was supported by the people of Kazakhstan in a public referendum and will remain unchanged in the future. We will firmly adhere to the formula of “a strong President, an influential Parliament and an accountable Government”. Those reforms are based on principles of justice, equality,

fairness, and freedom. It is my personal credo that the rule of law must prevail in all circumstances. We understand that only political reform and investments in human capital can make our economy more resilient and robust.

Kazakhstan has made significant progress in achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls. We have introduced a 30 per cent quota for women, youth and persons with disabilities in the electoral party lists. It will allow them to participate more actively and equally in the political life of the country.

In my recent State of the Nation address, I presented a new economic policy that is designed first of all to provide all citizens the opportunities necessary for decent life. We are giving greater attention and value to young people who work hard and, with the support of the Government, will contribute to the sustainable development of the country and its leading position in international forums. The health, well-being and good education of the younger generation are key priorities of Kazakhstan's State policy. I place my hope in the younger generation. They will drive our country into future.

At home and abroad, we are working for that better future. Let us rekindle the spirit of unity and collective action that underpins the United Nations. Let us remember that our shared commitment to a better world transcends our differences. Kazakhstan stands ready to collaborate with all Member States in the pursuit of a brighter, more just, and sustainable world.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, President of the Republic of Kazakhstan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Raisi (*spoke in Farsi; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I congratulate President Francis on the occasion of the opening of the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly.

Since last year, when I addressed everyone from this rostrum (see A/77/PV.6), the world has witnessed bitter as well as sweet events, but nearly eight decades following the establishment of the United Nations, the new session of the General Assembly is beginning as the world is experiencing unprecedented and historic changes. Meanwhile, the assurance of a luminous future for human society lies in the devoted observance of lofty virtues that guide people towards excellence and noble ideals. What better source is there than the word of the Creator to encapsulate the essence of humanity and elevate the inherent values of humankind? The Holy Quran beckons humankind towards rationality, spirituality, truth and justice. It expounds upon the unity of humankind, embracing all earthly inhabitants. It seeks to guide all towards human dignity, which will lead to the blessings sought by humankind.

What has the Holy Quran said to infuriate and focus the attention of those who seek power and hold the reins of power? The Holy Quran says that humans do not accept oppression and that in their pursuit against it they will be able to attain elevated divine values. The Holy Quran speaks of equality among humans. It says that they were all created equally from a single mother and father. Even though there are natural differences between men and women, the Holy Quran sees them as completing one another and equal in the eyes of the Creator. The Holy Quran defends the sanctity of the family and sees children as gifts entrusted to us by God. Moreover, the Holy Quran calls on us to serve those who have less than we do and directs our beliefs and faith to recognize the sanctity of those values.

Is this the first time that the words of God the Omnipotent have been burned by those who presume that, while they do so, they can extinguish the divine voice for eternity? Did Nimrod, Pharaoh or Caesar triumph over Abraham, Moses and Jesus? The Holy Quran forbids all forms of violence in human interactions and deems respect towards Abraham,

Moses and Jesus on a par with and equal to the sanctity of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. Those understandings, which bring unity and divine teachings that inspire and build human character, societies and progress for human societies will never be burned. They are eternal. They remain impervious. The fires of disrespect will not overcome the divine truth.

Islamophobia and the cultural apartheid witnessed in Western countries, and evident in actions ranging from the desecration of the Holy Quran to the banning of hijabs in schools and numerous other deplorable discriminations, are not worthy of human dignity. Even more concerning is the fact that, behind the scenes, there seems to be an agenda that seeks to divert attention by using the tool of freedom of speech. As one Westerner has said, now that the West is faced with a crisis of identity, it sees the world as a jungle and presents itself in the best of lights as a beautiful garden. Some powerful interests see that fabrication as their tool of choice. That apartheid has targeted the Muslim community, particularly immigrants, who are themselves victims of colonial policies.

In alignment with all adherents of faith and advocates for freedom, we firmly believe that reverence for religions should hold a prominent position on the United Nations agenda in order to inculcate the proper framework of respect for all world religions.

Concurrently with the war on Islam, we are also seeing a war against the institution of the family. The family is the most fundamental column supporting human development, which is now under attack. Today crimes against humanity include not just the occupation of lands, the oppression of peoples and mass killings, but also a concerted attack on the family itself. That, too, is a crime against humanity. The protection of the nucleus of the family, which is the sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman, is an inherent truth to be accepted by the entire world. The proper education of populations throughout the world will not yield the desired results unless it is undertaken within the framework of the family. "Mother", "father" and "family" are divine and natural words and concepts.

We are seeing actions that can be viewed as seeking the end of the human race itself. We are today in need of a world movement that ensures commitment to the survival of the framework of the family, so that all family members can experience life in peace and stability side by side. We therefore ask all religious

leaders to assume their historical responsibilities in defending the sanctity of the family and to move against fabrications. We expect the United Nations to give this issue very high priority on its agenda and to offer the proper protection to the framework of the family.

We find ourselves at a critical juncture in history. The global landscape is also undergoing a paradigm shift towards an emerging international order. That trajectory is not reversible. The equation attributed to the hegemony of the West no longer resonates with the diverse realities of today's world. The old liberal order, catering to the ambitions of voracious rulers and capitalists whose hunger has no end, has been relegated to obsolescence. In short, efforts to universalize American ideals throughout the world have proven to be a failure.

The Iranian nation takes pride in having instrumentally unmasked the true nature of the rulers in both the East and the West through its Islamic revolution. In conjunction with other nations of West Asia, Iran has played a significant role in defeating the global arrogance. Now, nations throughout the world are engaged in heightened resistance and awareness. As non-Western Powers have emerged, there is collective hope for the establishment of a novel and equitable world order.

Central to the coming international order is the abandonment of global arrogance in favour of regional cooperation and orders. The Islamic Republic of Iran advocates maximal economic and political convergence within and between regions and is interested in interacting with the global community under the principle of justice. However, as independent nations increasingly align themselves towards cooperation and convergence, certain Powers are attempting to incite conflicts in various regions. Employing a Cold War mentality, they strive to reconstitute blocs on a global scale. That regressive endeavour poses a significant threat to the security and prosperity of nations.

The Islamic Republic of Iran staunchly maintains that the formation of new East-West divides should not be permitted to take shape. Making trade corridors unsafe, diminishing the status of countries from allies to dependents, stifling the economic progress of sovereign nations, and fomenting proxy wars across Asia and Europe are all elements of that sinister chain. Ironically, such actions are undertaken in the name of defending democracy. However, the global community,

including nations of West Asia, have discerned the true essence of Western democracy — a designation that is all too often a code word for coups d'état, occupations and ongoing wars. The true nature of the liberal democracy project has become evident to the world and has been revealed to be nothing more than a velvet glove hiding a cast-iron hand. A school that was once envisioned as a beacon for the world has been transformed into a cautionary tale illustrating the limitations and shortcomings of a system nearing the conclusion of its trajectory.

At the very moment when certain Powers are steering the world towards more wars, the Islamic Republic of Iran has put forward a policy of neighbourhood and integration. The policy of neighbourhood is benevolent towards the region and is prioritized on the regional agenda. The Islamic Republic extends a warm welcome to any hand that is extended in friendship, firmly believing that an independent and robust neighbourhood represents an opportunity for the entire region. We will welcome any extended hand quite warmly. A stable and powerful neighbour is healthy for a stable region. Having endured two decades of imposed tensions and crisis within our region — the fruit of the resilience of free nations from Syria and Palestine to Yemen and Afghanistan — the future prospects of the region can be secured through the cultivation of profound mutual political trust, fostering extensive economic cooperation and establishing indigenous security measures.

In alignment with that vision, Iran has established a new chapter of constructive relationships with likeminded neighbouring countries through membership in such regional and international mechanisms as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Northeastern Economic Corridor. We have prioritized those developments in order to bring their benefits and their fruits to all peoples of the region. The Islamic Republic of Iran also stands ready to work to mitigate the effects of climate change, to bring its national capacity to bear on renewable energy production, and to share those with other countries.

In the security sector, the good-neighbour policy seeks to increase regional cooperation and prevent external meddling from the Caucasus to the Persian Gulf. Any type of foreign presence is not only not part of the solution, but is the problem itself. We view the security of our neighbours as our own security and any type of insecurity for them is insecurity for us. With benevolence and goodwill, we have taken initiatives

throughout the region, although the convergence of politics and security still needs to be strengthened and can be realized only when it is accompanied by meaningful economic cooperation.

Due to continued military attacks and occupations, many opportunities for progress and development in the West Asian region have been set back. Under the holy leadership of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Revolution, Imam Khamenei, we have been able to drive back the rotten foundations of terrorism and create new opportunities for the region. The power of the Islamic Republic of Iran is an empowering security. We seek to extend our hand to neighbouring countries in order to establish new horizons of hope and success for the entire region. We believe that this must be a collaborative effort in the Muslim world. It requires the participation of all and is the only pathway to blessings and success in West Asia. The Islamic Republic of Iran has many and rare opportunities for investment that represent a great opportunity for countries throughout the world and the region.

Last year was the year of the victory of the people of Iran. Over the past year, certain Western nations and their intelligence services made a grave mistake and miscalculation that sought to diminish, undervalue and underestimate the power of the Iranian people. Ever since the Islamic Revolution's victory under the leadership of Imam Khomeini, the enemies of Iran have sought, through various ongoing and never-ending plots, to impose their will on our people. For more than 44 years, those policies have been defeated by the Iranian people and the Iranian people have stood victorious again and again.

Now our enemies are faced with an Islamic Republic whose power and progress are based on profound ties with its people. Over the past year, the people of Iran have endured the powerful repercussions of a media and psychological war waged against them. Can the United States of America, which now possesses the world's largest prison for women — and therefore for mothers — sincerely call itself the defender of women's rights? The picture of Iran that it has sought to introduce to the world is a pastiche commingling legitimate and illegitimate news, lies and fake reports. Realities from Iran are censored throughout the world in order to negate the truth.

Have we heard anything at all about the chemical bombardment of the Iranian people, using chemical weapons supplied by certain European countries to

Saddam Hussein? Have we been shown those whose bodies are severely and gravely damaged by chemical attacks and who are still alive but have been hospitalized for 35 years? Have we seen their photos and images? Have we been shown the sick children who cannot survive diseases of the immune system because of the sanctions imposed on us, preventing us from obtaining proper medication for their treatment. Have we seen their photos? Have we seen any pictures of the patience, sacrifice and steadfastness of the Islamic people of Iran? Have we seen those pictures? Has anyone seen the unprecedented movement of the remembrance of the martyrdom of Imam Hussein, the Prophet Mohammed's grandson — 22 million-strong marching towards his burial site for the anniversary of his martyrdom?

The security of many countries throughout our region is owed to the sacrifices of our martyr General Haj Qasem Soleimani. Had it not been for the sacrifice of that hero of anti-terrorism activities, many countries of the region would have burned to the ground in the fires set by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS). Who has heard the steadfast stories of his heroic fight against terrorism in the Hollywood-like reports generated by the news media? Did anyone see the 25 million mourners of the late commander General Qasem Soleimani throughout Iran? Those were censored throughout the Western world. The terrorist act of his assassination was a prize given on a silver platter to Daesh, which, according to certain American officials, had confessed that ISIS was an American creation. His martyrdom was a gift to that same ISIS. Instead of being recognized for his sacrifices, he was assassinated. Why?

The Islamic Republic of Iran, through the use of all tools and capacities in order to bring to justice the perpetrators and all those who had a hand in that Government-sanctioned act of terror, will not sit idle until that is done. The blood of the oppressed will not be forgotten, and the guilty will be brought to justice.

The most serious threats in West Asia are extremism and fundamentalism. The eradication of terrorism, through an all-encompassing fight against its very roots and the very causes that gave rise to it throughout the world, will not be easily achieved. The surgical use of terrorists as a political tool by certain Western Governments will be overcome by the collective will of the people of the region. Certain intelligence and security services of Western countries, by moving terrorists in a very targeted fashion from area to area

in the region in order to capitalize on their devastating capacities, continue to be asked — including by our Head of State, Prime Minister and congressional representatives — why they have given refuge again and again to officially recognized terror groups that have the blood of over 17,000 Iranian martyrs on their hands?

Why do the Europeans behave in this way? They must give a reasonable answer. Why do they claim to be fighting against terror even as they give refuge to terrorists? This is a double standard. Discrimination in the fight against terrorism is a green light given to terrorists themselves. Iran, which has itself been a major target of terrorists, has been at the forefront of fighting terrorism in the region. The people of the region see Iran as a secure partner for their own security, and the occupying regime in Jerusalem as the perpetrator of much of the violence in the region. Has the time not come to bring an end to seven and a half decades of the occupation of the Palestinians' lands, of the demolition of their homes, and of the shedding of the blood of their women and children, and for the people of Palestine to be recognized officially as a country?

The continuation of the occupation by the Zionist regime of certain Syrian, Lebanese and Palestinian territories and the lack of recognition for the people of Palestine have been a negation of their inherent rights. The failure to form a proper Palestinian Government, with its rightful capital in Jerusalem, has been a tool in the hands of certain Governments in the region. Given the foundations that have been laid in the region by certain countries based on lies and destruction and occupation, those countries cannot be partners for peace.

The situation today in Afghanistan represents another example of foreign meddling in the region, which has led to the killing of over 70,000 men, women and children in that country. Iran insists on an all-encompassing Government with the participation of all Afghan groups and population, but the assistance of the world is needed in order to address the crisis of refugees who have been driven from Afghanistan, a great many of whom are being given refuge in Islamic Iran today.

With respect to the Ukrainian crisis and the war, I again recall our unambiguous position. As the Islamic Republic, we do not tolerate or support any war anywhere — not in Europe or anywhere else. We do not see how any war can benefit any side in Europe. Any

type of tension and fanning of the flames of violence in Ukraine is the work of the United States of America in order to weaken the European countries. This is a long-term plan, unfortunately. We support any initiative for a cessation of hostilities and the war and announce our full support for such initiatives.

In leaving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the American Government officially trampled upon its commitments. Breaking the agreement reached in the framework of Security Council resolution 2231 (2015) was an inappropriate response to our fulfilment of commitments within that framework. The United States of America has committed egregious and unilateral crimes in the international arena. It must explain itself transparently, demonstrate in a verifiable fashion that it wishes to reach a proper conclusion, prove its commitment and choose a path, be it the JCPOA or not. By the same token, those European countries that ignore resolution 2231 (2015) and their commitments within the framework of the JCPOA will ultimately lose on that path.

Members of the General Assembly may rest assured that nuclear weapons have no place in the defensive and military doctrine of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The appropriate international organizations and multiple official reports have stated as much. Today just as two decades ago, the Islamic Republic of Iran will never stop short of obtaining the inherent right of the Iranian nation to peaceful nuclear energy. We have lived up to our commitments, but unfortunately the United States not only does not adhere to its own commitments within any framework of international treaties such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but it imposes sanctions as a political tool on nations such as the people of Iran. However, I reiterate today that those sanctions have not yielded the desired results. It is time now for the United States to stop traveling the wrong path and to choose the right side.

Humankind is entering a new framework. Old Powers will maintain their current downward trajectory. They are the past and we are the future. I repeat once again, they represent the past and we represent the future. We are the future; our view of the future is one of hope. The world awaits the day that has been promised by all Abrahamic faiths throughout the world. The ultimate seeker of justice does exist. We do believe that, in accordance with divine will and just as the divine prophets have promised, justice and fairness will overtake the world and the rule of those

who sincerely follow the path of the Omnipotent will reverberate throughout the world. The world rejects ignorance. The world awaits the day in which the old paths will come to an end.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

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

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria.

Mr. Abdelmadjid Tebboune, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Abdelmadjid Tebboune, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Tebboune (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure on this occasion to offer my greetings and appreciation to all the Heads of State and delegations that are participating in the seventy-eighth session of the General Assembly.

I would also like to congratulate Mr. Dennis Francis on presiding over the General Assembly at this session, and I wish him every success in that noble task. I also want to thank Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, President of the General Assembly at its previous session, for his efforts.

I sincerely thank and appreciate Secretary-General António Guterres and reiterate Algeria's support for his tireless and commendable efforts to strengthen the role of our Organization and to promote it in order to respond to the aspirations of our peoples,

We are here in this global Hall, which embraces the entire world in all its differences and diversity, hoping to promote the urgent matter of dialogue and discussion leading to coexistence, cooperation, solidarity and equality among nations. For over 50 years, my

country has highlighted from this noble rostrum the dysfunction of the current global order and called for a new international order to achieve the equality among States for which the United Nations was established.

The conflicts and crises in our world have reached unprecedented levels. Millions of people have been displaced and international relations transformed from ties of cooperation and consensus to confrontation and conflict that threaten international organizations in the midst of a world that is enduring climate and other emergencies under extreme pressure. In the face of those geopolitical conflicts and multiple crises, the weakening of the pivotal role of the Security Council over the past few years is evident. The Council's role, as set out in the Charter of the United Nations, is to maintain international peace and security, in particular by preventing the use of force and by eliminating the causes that threaten peace and the peaceful resolution of conflicts.

The time has come for all of us to reflect together on how to uphold the principles and values of the Charter, to promote our common resolve and to build a strong foundation leading to more effective global cooperation on major issues in order to establish international peace and security and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in a multipolar world.

From that perspective, Algeria will soon be a non-permanent member of the Security Council. We are aware of the responsibility that is incumbent on us, especially in the face of the many challenges that the international community is facing. We take this opportunity to once again thank the 184 Member States that voted in favour of my country. That was an expression of trust that Algeria will seek to uphold throughout its term on the Council. We are ready to strengthen cooperation with all States members of the Security Council and the United Nations as a whole. We are also ready to use Algeria's extensive experience in mediation and to prioritize political solutions and peaceful settlements of conflicts. In that spirit, my country will join the Security Council, bringing with it the aspirations of the peoples of the African continent and the Arab world, and calling for an end to managing conflicts and focusing on achieving lasting solutions to conflicts by addressing their root causes.

Any effort to strengthen joint international action requires us to respond to the growing appeals to strengthen the multilateral system by comprehensively reforming the main organs of our Organization in

order to make them more transparent and ensure the necessary balance among the main organs and equitable geographical distribution. The revitalized central role of the General Assembly, the only organ that truly reflects the diversity of our international community, is a key element in strengthening equality among States and the pillars of true democracy. It is also essential to making progress on intergovernmental negotiations on reforming the Security Council, based on an integrated and comprehensive approach. That should be a priority for the international community if it is to reach consensus on genuine reform that ensures greater representation and transparency. I reiterate the commitment of Algeria to the Common African Position, which would put an end to the historic injustice against the African continent,

Algeria knows well the price of freedom. We will never abandon just causes and always support oppressed peoples fighting for their freedom. That is why we have always supported the Palestinian question in order to enable the brotherly Palestinian people to exercise their inalienable rights and to establish their own independent State within the 4 June 1967 borders, with Jerusalem as its capital, in conformity with the resolutions of international legitimacy. As part of our support for the just Palestinian question, and under my own personal supervision, late last year my country held a meeting attended by various Palestinian factions that was crowned with the adoption of the Algiers Declaration. In that context, I reiterate our commitment to the Arab Peace Initiative as a framework for resolving the Palestinian question and putting an end to the occupation, which is the main cause of instability in the Middle East region.

I appeal to the conscience of the international community to assume its moral and historical responsibility and allow the Palestinian people to regain their full rights and decide on their own future. Furthermore, I take this opportunity to call on the International Court of Justice to respond to the request made by the General Assembly on 30 December 2022 by giving an advisory opinion regarding the Israeli practices affecting human rights in the occupied Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem.

We aspire to establishing the truth and honouring the struggle of the Palestinian people, who have suffered and sacrificed too long under occupation. From this rostrum, I also call on the Security Council to adopt a resolution that would guarantee the two-State solution,

which enjoys consensus within the international community, and put an end to the unilateral practices of the occupying authority, foremost of which are the settlement activities on occupied Palestinian territories. We once again call for and insist on the need for a special session of the General Assembly to grant the State of Palestine the status of full-fledged membership. I repeat, we call once again for a special session of the General Assembly to grant the State of Palestine the status of full-fledged membership.

We are proud of what our Organization has accomplished in terms of decolonization in a number of regions, and we aspire to a definitive end to the colonization of the last African colony. Indeed, an entire people in Western Sahara have been deprived of its fundamental right to self-determination. It is necessary to organize a free and fair referendum consistent with the African settlement plan that was adopted by the Security Council in 1991 and approved by both parties but still awaits implementation. Given that reality and attempts to create legitimacy based on illegitimacy, it is incumbent on the United Nations to preserve the credibility of its own resolutions, to support the full implementation of those resolutions and to safeguard its reputation. In that context, I reiterate our support for the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy for Western Sahara to relaunch direct negotiations and to organize a referendum to allow the Sahrawi people to exercise their right to self-determination, in accordance with the relevant Security Council resolutions.

My country is following with great interest the troubling events in some sisterly and friendly nations. We are making every effort to find peaceful solutions and to bring the parties together in order to bring positions and points of view closer.

Turning now to the situation in sisterly Libya, I reiterate our support for the United Nations efforts to find a political solution led by the Libyan people themselves and allowing them to preserve the unity, sovereignty territorial integrity of Libya.

Turning to the situation in Mali, Algeria is playing a lead role in the area of international mediation and presiding over the Follow-up Committee on the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali emanating from the Algiers process. It is resolute in its efforts to overcome the obstacles in that sisterly nation. We reiterate our position rejecting any resort to force in order to settle conflicts.

With regard to developments in our neighbouring country the Niger, Algeria reiterates its commitment to a return to the constitutional order through peaceful means and to ensuring that diplomatic and political solutions prevail, while respecting the rule of law. We call for vigilance, given the intentions of foreign military intervention, which could have dangerous repercussions on peace and stability in the Niger and in the region as a whole.

At the same time, the concerning situation in the Sudan requires us to call on all sisterly parties to the conflict to put an end to the fighting and to pursue dialogue. That situation has serious repercussions on the humanitarian situation in the country. That vulnerable and unstable situation is casting a shadow over the entire Sahel and Sahara region, which suffers from low development rates, famine and climate change, leading to further instability and strengthening terrorist groups that use the region as a haven for their criminal activity.

In that context, Algeria is sparing no effort to support the development of countries of the region, and has been sharing its experience in the area of combating terrorism and violent extremism. In that regard, we participated in the extraordinary summit of the African Union held in Malabo on 28 May 2022 as coordinator of the fight against terrorism and violent extremism in Africa. We presented a report at that time about the threat caused by the growth of terrorism in Africa and mechanisms to address it. The report also considered a number of practical mechanisms to strengthen the fight against terrorism in Africa, and underscored the importance of making the fight against terrorism a top priority that requires common African action. Moreover, Algeria's contribution as an international mediator is not confined to its geographical region. My country also truly participated in the Arab Contact Group's efforts to relaunch direct negotiations between Russia and Ukraine.

More than eight years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Plan of Action, many developing States continue to face challenges and need more solidarity from the international community in order to achieve a better world and to have a more equitable and effective economic model that would allow them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Algeria has adopted a sustainable development plan that it has made a national priority and integrated into all of the plans, strategies and programmes that have been launched by the Government. That in turn has made it possible for us to

achieve considerable results in the area of the Sustainable Development Goals, especially with regard to education, health care, construction, electricity and water. Speaking of water, my country has launched a desalination of sea waters programme, and by the end of 2024 will be able to produce over a billion metric tons of water daily.

My country has always enjoyed the support and confidence of the Human Rights Council and is party to most international human rights treaties. We strengthen our cooperation with the Human Rights Council, coordinate with various human rights bodies and deal with the Universal Periodic Review (UPR). In the context of the UPR, my country issued its fourth national report in November 2022. My country is firmly convinced that respect for and the promotion of human rights are the very cornerstones of any credible political system. That is why we work to strengthen human rights by all means available to us. That resolve is based on the Algerian people's attachment to human rights.

Mr. Faati (the Gambia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

My country's Constitution was amended in 2020 on the basis of that conviction and our belief in the need to strengthening fundamental freedoms and human rights. The amendment explicitly bans any undermining of those freedoms; enshrines equality among all citizens, men and women, in terms of rights and duties; and strengthens the effective participation of all, especially in the promotion of women's rights, the empowerment of women economically and politically, and women's participation in positions of responsibility. We are also seeking to guarantee the principle of equality in the labour market, to strengthen the role played by women in the area of peace and security, and to enhance the status of women in all walks of life, be it at the national, continental or international levels. A practical national plan in the context of implementing Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) has been implemented. Algeria is committed to strengthening the role of women in the prevention of and resolution of conflicts, in keeping with the principles of our foreign policy.

Algeria has many young people, accounting for more than 70 per cent of our population. We have therefore adopted measures to provide institutional management with the means necessary to build capacity for young people and to make them a driving force of the process of sustainable development and in the economic, political and cultural arenas.

In conclusion, we aspire to a world where peace and prosperity will reign for all human beings under the aegis of the United Nations. We must show sincere determination and strong commitment to meeting the legitimate aspirations of our peoples.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Abdelmadjid Tebboune, President of the People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Alberto Fernández, President of the Argentine Republic

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

Mr. Alberto Fernández, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Alberto Fernández, President of the Argentine Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Fernández (spoke in Spanish): The world is undergoing a time of change. A new era is dawning while humankind is still coping with the effects of a pandemic that killed 15 million people, exposing the inequality we face. Meanwhile, the climate crisis is subjecting our planet to all kinds of inclement events. Cyclones, tornadoes, unexpected floods or extensive droughts end up affecting millions of human beings in all latitudes of the planet. All of this is happening while a war drags on, claiming more human lives and unleashing an energy and food crisis of tremendous proportions.

As all those calamities are unfolding, we are witnessing an astonishing technological revolution. Robotization and the accelerated process of installation of artificial intelligence force us to rethink education, production processes and the preservation of work. How to address changes and harmonize interests in this new scenario in which we find ourselves is the real challenge we face.

In speaking before this House, I feel obliged to express myself with absolute candour. The world's problems demand solutions. We have already spent a great deal of time diagnosing the problems. We cannot keep talking about them while walking on a razor's edge. The risks of perpetuating that reality are very high.

We have gone halfway towards achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development knowing that, as the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean points out, perhaps only a quarter of the goals will be achieved that year. That inability to envision a better future sows unease in a world that wants to develop and where the poorest and most vulnerable people on the planet live.

It is impossible to seek to achieve an equitable future by promoting the continuity of the same logic that has generated the inequality in which we live. International financial engineering appears abusive and unchanging. How can we achieve sustainable development without financing to help us do so? The international financial system does not evince the will to adapt to a world that wants to recover lost equity. On the contrary, it seeks only to impose the same orthodox policies that have deepened inequality and misery in the world. The global financial architecture serves only to concentrate income in the very few and to marginalize vast regions of the world. It puts its money in speculation rather than in development. It promotes cheap labour rather than the dignity of work. There is no longer time for words. It is time to promote social justice in the world.

The International Monetary Fund cannot raise its interest rates every time the United States Federal Reserve raises its rates to contain inflation in that country. It cannot do so, and yet it does. In that context, it is shameful that to this very day it applies surcharges to many countries that are already finding it unbearable to carry the burden of external debt. Ironically, International Monetary Fund finances Ukraine in the middle of the war, and in the midst of that war it applies surcharges to the interest it charges. That is just astounding. We need a new framework for the treatment of sovereign debt that has development with social justice as its goal. Experience shows that when a people is suffocated under the eternal sentence of debt, its strength wanes, social crises are intensified and debts become uncollectible.

We are facing the challenge of feeding a growing world population in critical climatic conditions. Droughts or floods, tornadoes or hail — everything

affects food production and supply. We know that from our own experience. Argentina lost more than 20 per cent of its total exports due to the worst drought in the past 100 years. No less than three points of its gross domestic product were wiped out. We also know today that an international food market intoxicated by financial speculation only facilitates greater income for a few and instability and misery for millions of human beings.

To find a long-term solution to the problem of food security, it is crucial that there be a fairer, more transparent, more equitable and more predictable international trade system for agricultural products. We must eliminate the distortions produced by subsidies and prohibit food from being the subject of financial speculation. Both discourage the investments needed to increase production to help meet growing global demand for food.

Argentina considers multilateralism to be the best tool to identify shared solutions to common problems. It reflects our vocation to act in solidarity and to cooperate in the search for collective well-being. Hegemonic proposals have served only to enhance mistrust, promote arms races and limit the possibilities of economic and scientific-technological cooperation.

In the current situation, as we know, the impact of more than a decade of accumulated crises have come together, ranging from the effects of the financial collapse of 2008 to the war unleashed by Russia's occupation of Ukrainian territory. The effects of that war are visible. In addition to the terrible consequences in humanitarian terms, the armed dispute is generating historic levels of inflation on a global scale, with a special impact on the price of food and energy.

The current reality is also seeing the rise of tensions that are less addressed by public opinion, but that deeply affect international peace. As an example, I highlight Azerbaijan's blockades in the Lachin corridor, which have been causing a humanitarian crisis that is once again punishing part of the Armenian people. Precisely today, as this meeting is being held, the media are reporting that Azerbaijan has launched military operations with the purpose of taking control of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The international community cannot remain passive in the face of such a reality. It must act preventively to avoid new ethnic, racial, religious or political persecutions. As we have always done, we continue to demand that the parties find the sanity

that calls them to peace and that the multilateral organizations recover the strength that they seem to have lost to enforce international rules. The countries of the global South have historically shared many views on the international system and on the responsibility incumbent on multilateral organizations in matters of development, global peace and security, cooperation and decolonization.

I represent a country that this year is celebrating the fortieth anniversary of its recovery of democracy — a country that has learned from its historical past to say “never again” to human rights violations and that has promoted as a State policy the right to memory, truth and justice. We are proud of these four decades of uninterrupted democracy, in which the promotion and protection of human rights have been a fundamental part of the path taken. Today UNESCO declared the ESMA Museum and Site of Memory — a clandestine detention, torture and extermination centre where the dictatorship perpetrated its greatest atrocities — a World Heritage Site. By actively preserving the memory that the deniers wish to hide, we will prevent that time of pain from being repeated. Faced with those crimes against humanity, our solution was not revenge but justice.

Precisely, because we know the horror involved in the disappearance of 30,000 human beings, I take this opportunity to reiterate the call for adherence to the International Convention for the Protection of all Persons against Forced Disappearances. We need more committed States so that this crime is completely eradicated. The challenge before us is to consolidate and advance the rights agenda, which means establishing democracies with greater equity and equality among its citizens.

Human rights are comprehensive and do not admit any type of regressivity. If there is regression, the cultists of authoritarianism win and hate speech proliferates. That is how democracies are delegitimized and the crisis of representation that is generated ends up putting the institutionality of the rule of law in check. Preserving the rule of law is a shared conviction on our continent. That is why we view current events in Guatemala with concern. The international community must activate the relevant mechanisms that ensure respect for the popular choice.

The climate crisis is a reality that has modified temperatures and atmospheric phenomena around the world, imposing restrictions and obstacles to

development. It is imperative to resolve the problem without further delay by creating a fair, transparent and equitable multilateral environmental financing architecture, based on the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Argentina reaffirms its commitment to gender equality and diversity as an essential condition for growth and sustainable development at the national and international levels, with a human rights approach. We have developed regulatory frameworks and public policies to promote equality for all women and diversities. Currently, our country is executing its National Plan for Equality in Diversity.

As part of the integrationist vocation embodied in the South American Common Market and the Union of South American Nations, over these four years we have proposed resuming a path of integration with Latin America and the Caribbean and strengthening dialogue with all our partners through political coordination, with a solidarity and cooperative approach. As the construction of the European Union once was, the different integration bodies of Latin America and the Caribbean are a heritage that the region contributes to a humankind in search of peace, cooperation and justice.

Our region is facing a historic opportunity. It has the energy and food that the world demands. Our development depends on our having the ability to take advantage of those resources. We must work together to carry out infrastructure works that allow us to compete industrially from our region.

Argentina condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. Terrorist acts pose a threat to peace, international security and human dignity. Terrorism must be combated within the framework of the rule of law and full respect for international law. Argentina has ratified its commitment to the Inter-American Convention against Terrorism and to most international instruments on terrorism, seeking to develop all the measures contained therein as the most effective way to end this threat.

For our part, we continue to fight against impunity, investigating the attacks that we suffered in 1992, at the Israeli Embassy, and in 1994, at the AMIA headquarters, which claimed the lives of 107 people and left hundreds injured. We want those responsible for such atrocious attacks to be identified, tried and convicted. Once again, we urge the Islamic Republic of Iran to cooperate with the Argentine judicial authorities

to advance the investigation of the attack on AMIA. We also urge the international community to accompany us in our fight by refusing to receive or harbour any of the accused, even when they enjoy diplomatic immunity. We must remember that international arrest requests and Interpol red alerts have been issued against them.

Argentina firmly opposes the use of unilateral coercive measures and the adoption of discriminatory trade practices. The perpetuation of the blockade against Cuba is unacceptable. Year after year, the General Assembly demands by an overwhelming majority the need to end the blockade. Likewise, we request once again the exclusion of Cuba from the list of countries that allegedly sponsor international terrorism.

Similarly, the sanctions imposed by the United States on Venezuela must immediately cease. Its extension over time only hurts the living conditions of its inhabitants and has led to exile for millions of Venezuelans who have left their homeland looking for a better life.

I also want to reaffirm the legitimate and imprescriptible rights of sovereignty of the Argentine Republic over the Malvinas Islands, South Georgia, the South Sandwich Islands and the surrounding maritime area. They form an integral part of the Argentine national territory and have been illegally occupied by the United Kingdom for almost two centuries. In accordance with the resolutions of the General Assembly and its Special Committee on the Situation with Regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the way to resolve the colonial situation of the Islands is through sovereignty negotiations between Argentina and the United Kingdom. We regret that the United Kingdom continues to refuse to resume negotiations. We question its ongoing unilateral activities of exploration and exploitation of natural resources in the disputed area, in violation of resolution 31/49, as well as its military presence in the South Atlantic, a zone of peace.

Argentina maintains a firm commitment to the peaceful resolution to that anachronistic colonial situation. We have proposed to the United Kingdom a renewed bilateral agenda on the South Atlantic that involves a formal dialogue process that includes, of course, the issue linked to the resumption of negotiations on sovereignty. We also express our willingness to pursue the tasks involved in the identification of former combatants killed in the Islands, within the

framework of the obligations arising from international humanitarian law and in order to provide a response and comfort to the families. Unfortunately, the United Kingdom has rejected our proposal.

Notwithstanding, Argentina reiterates its request to the Secretary-General to redouble his efforts, within the framework of his good offices, to bring both parties closer to the negotiating table.

The motto of the 2030 Agenda is “Leave no one behind”. May no one stray from the path of justice and development forever. We are convinced that it is a noble objective that is valid for individuals and peoples alike. But let us not turn it into a dead letter. When that happens, repentance serves no use. It does not repair damaged lives and lives without a future; much less does it restore lives lost.

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

Mr. Alberto Fernández, President of the Argentine Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

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

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of El Salvador.

Mr. Nayib Armando Bukele, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Nayib Armando Bukele, President of the Republic of El Salvador, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Bukele (spoke in Spanish): Since the first time I came to the General Assembly (see A/74/PV.7), I have reminded members of the need to renew and reinvent ourselves. I am referring not only to the Organization or the General Assembly, but to all countries, especially those in circumstances similar to ours. Nor have I said it just to say it, but because I believe it and because in my country we are doing just that.

El Salvador, like many developing countries, has always dreamed of being great. For some countries, that dream, at some point, seemed possible. For others, like us, it was unthinkable. We did not think it was possible to even get close to fulfilling it. I even believe that no person listening to this speech ever thought that he or she could pronounce or hear the name of El Salvador as a global reference or example of something positive. Despite all the obstacles, however, we decided to take the risk. We did not accept the destiny that others had outlined for us.

Today, four years after our Government took power, no one can or dare deny that, for the first time in its 202 years of history, the smallest country on the American continent has taken the first big steps to achieve its dream of greatness. In a very short time, El Salvador has gone from being the world capital of homicides, from being literally the most dangerous country in the world, to being the safest country in Latin America. It is no longer a promise. It is a reality that Salvadorans are experiencing and that any foreigner can go and see for him or herself.

For that reason, many in the world are paying attention to what is happening in our country. Especially in Latin America, but also in the United States and elsewhere, they see what is happening in El Salvador and wonder why it does not happen in their countries. The answer is clear and simple. They must make their own decisions and reaffirm their right to use common sense, to test their own recipes, to execute their own plans and to design their own systems. No country has the right to impose its ideas or its way of doing things, especially when those do not even work in our countries. In each of the decisions we have made, we have reaffirmed our legitimate right to govern ourselves, even if that meant making mistakes.

But we were not wrong. We were successful — resoundingly successful. We therefore reaffirm not only our right to make our own decisions, but also our right to be right. There is no single recipe or formula that works equally for everyone, but I think that there is an ingredient that all recipes should include, or at least have the right to include. That ingredient is courage. You have to have the attitude, courage and determination to do what needs to be done, even when others question or criticize you.

For decades, we tried everything that others said was best for us. They made us fight a civil war for a cause foreign to our reality, because they brought the conflict

between the West and the Soviet Union to our land. More than 85,000 dead and a country destroyed later, they told us that this was no longer the recipe — that now there was a new one. So we signed some false peace agreements, which had nothing to do with peace and served only to allow the two sides that fought the war to divvy up the country, as if it were loot. We tried every formula they gave us, and nothing worked.

Then, protected by foreign Powers, we handed the country over to the right. And then, also protected by external agents, we gave power to the left. This is the state they kept us in for 30 post-war years, during which there were more deaths, more poverty and more violence than in the civil war. Nobody did a thing to change the root of the system or the institutions, much less the laws.

Everything that happened during those years was done with the support, consent and imposition of those who have always called themselves great defenders of human rights and democratic institutions. Instead of giving us medicine to heal, they gave us poison. They wanted us to continue doing the same thing that was done in the past. They wanted the same people who had looted and massacred us to continue ruling or at least sharing power.

But this time, we told them no. We rejected their poison and decided to try, for the first time, our own medicine. Thank God, it worked. The first thing we did was make sure we were on the side of God and the people, because no worthwhile transformation can happen by obeying external Powers.

Secondly, we created our own method — one that was designed for our reality, created by those of us who live that reality first-hand. Then, the Salvadoran people gave us two votes of confidence. Actually, they have given us several, but those are perhaps the two most important so far. The first was when they elected me to be their President; the second, when they decided to give us, through the legislative body, the right to govern. We knew then that we had an obligation to the people to make the decisions that were necessary to fix our most urgent problem, insecurity.

The efforts we made to improve health or the economy would be of little use if they continued killing people and the judges and prosecutors let the murderers go free. It would be of little use to transform education if, from the same prisons, the gangs gave cowardly orders to kill our children and forcibly recruit our youth.

We could not just invest millions of dollars in building and improving road infrastructure if Salvadorans could not walk freely in the streets.

So we made the decision to purge the public ministry, the judicial system and the prison system. Additionally, we changed the laws to ensure that terrorists would not be released from prison again. It was at that moment that international condemnations began. Some countries, some media and some experts began a systematic attack against each of the decisions we made. People who never used their power and influence to demand security for our murdered people were suddenly opposed to our decisions to stop that massacre. Countries that never condemned the murder of 30, 40 and even 50 Salvadorans a day suddenly demanded explanations from us as to why we changed the prosecutor, the magistrates and the judges. Is it not absurd that they questioned us about that?

Who bears the responsibility for internal security policy in any country in the world? It is the responsibility of the executive branch, which acts through the State security forces and the penitentiary system, in cooperation with the public ministry and the judiciary. It was an essential condition for the plan to work that everyone worked together and aligned themselves on the same side. If we had left the Attorney General, the magistrates of the Constitutional Chamber and the judges who many protected and against whom others even issued sentences when we removed them, we would still be the world capital of murders. If we had listened to them, we would have continued to lose thousands and thousands of Salvadorans at the hands of terrorists.

Thank God we did not pay attention to them. Each of the decisions we have made brought us to this moment. Today El Salvador competes with Canada for being the safest country on the continent. Not only are we the country in Latin America with the fewest homicides per capita by far, but we have reduced all crimes to a minimum. People can now walk on streets that were long declared off-limits by the gangs. Businesses no longer pay extortion money and children can now go out and play in parks without fear of being recruited or killed. Those are things that will sound basic or everyday to many here, but in my country they did not exist.

They criticized and condemned us for each of the decisions we made at that time. Intellectuals, journalists, politicians and organizations from all over were engaged

in a debate about what we were doing. Today I am here to say that debate is over. The decisions we made were correct. We are no longer the world capital of death, and we achieved that in a very short time. Today we are a security benchmark, and no one can question that. The results are in. They are irrefutable. In El Salvador, we did what was right for El Salvador.

Now that we enjoy this level of security, we have been able to open our country to the entire world. This year alone, we welcomed thousands of athletes to the Central American and Caribbean Games. We are the world epicentre of surfing. We have just signed an agreement with Google to digitize the State and services such as education and health. We have more and more tourism, internal and external. More and more people want to come and meet us and invest in El Salvador. Many Salvadorans abroad who spent years without being able to return due to insecurity are now investing in the country or have plans to return. According to a study carried out in 2022 by the International Organization for Migration, from these very United Nations, more than 60 per cent of the many Salvadorans residing in the United States intend to return to El Salvador.

There is still a long way to go to achieve it, but we are on the way to achieving our goal of reversing the mass exodus of Salvadorans, a product of the wrong policies of the past and the civil war, and to fulfilling our dream of achieving reverse migration. Let more Salvadorans return to El Salvador than leave. United Nations studies are already predicting it.

In a few months, we will host Miss Universe, an event that will once again put us in the eyes of the world and attract more tourism and more investment. In addition to all that, we are building more and better relationships with allied countries that want to support us in building our country and our dream. I am not just saying this to brag, although I do feel proud of everything we have accomplished. I am saying it because it is an example of what all countries can achieve when they begin to assert their sovereignty.

Look at us. From being recognized for violence, today we are recognized for our landscapes, for our waves and, above all, for our bravery. Today the world can see our full potential. We have a country full of wonders to offer. Those who visit us can have breakfast on the beach and surf world-class waves in a sea that has perfect water temperatures all year round. They can have lunch in the mountains, where they can try the

best coffee in the world, with our superb volcanoes and beautiful lakes as a background, and dine in the capital, with all the modernity, comfort and, now, security that many first-world cities would like to have. And they can do all that in the same day.

But the best thing they will find is our friendly, hard-working people, who are always looking to do something new. When you decide to visit our country, you will realize that we Salvadorans are proud to be Salvadorans. That was not the case a few years ago. El Salvador is being reborn, because we dared to challenge ourselves and decided that nothing and no one would tell us what to do.

We are still a long way from where we want to be, but we will continue to work hard and make our own decisions, so that we can achieve the greatness we long for. We believe that the entire world also needs to be reborn, but that will be the decision of each nation. We in El Salvador are setting the example and marking a path in case someone else wants to follow it.

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

Mr. Nayib Armando Bukele, President of the Republic of El Salvador, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Sadyr Zhaparov, President of the Kyrgyz Republic

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

Mr. Sadyr Zhaparov, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Sadyr Zhaparov, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Zhaparov (*spoke in Kyrgyz; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the high representative of Trinidad and Tobago, Mr. Dennis Francis, on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-eighth session. I wish him success and fruitful work in his important position. He can count on the support of Kyrgyzstan during his presidency.

I express my gratitude to the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session, the representative of friendly Hungary, Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, for his active work and support for Kyrgyzstan's international initiatives.

Today the world is at a turning point. We are all witnessing and seeing with our own eyes the negative changes in the world order and increasing geostrategic competition between major Powers and their blocs. Geopolitical tensions are pushing the world towards fragmentation into regional and subregional financial and economic blocs and systems. It is also obvious that the Governments of various countries will be compelled to make economic, technological and geopolitical choices.

Among the shocks on a global scale that have not yet completely become a thing of the past, I would like to note the spread of the coronavirus infection, which has cost humankind millions of lives and economic losses exceeding \$12 trillion. The world today is experiencing the highest inflation rates and highest food prices ever seen in the past 60 years. The repercussions of geoeconomic fragmentation, according to the International Monetary Fund, could lead to a drop in global gross domestic product by 7 per cent. The decline in trust among different countries and groups of countries is alarming.

However, I am convinced that current global challenges and risks — from the climate crisis and the threat to food security to growing inequality — should, on the contrary, unite all the members of the international community. It is vital to build a multilateral system that does not allow the further fragmentation of the geopolitical landscape in the world.

Were international conditions easier 78 years ago, when the United Nations was just beginning its work after the bloodiest and most destructive war in human history, than they are today? Were the contradictions among countries, especially political and ideological, less acute then than in our time? What prevents Member States from hearing one another and trying to overcome their differences and establish a dialogue?

In recent years, despite the Iron Curtain and military bloc thinking, the United Nations has been and remains the most legitimate and commonly recognized platform of diplomacy, uniting developed and developing countries, large and small. Kyrgyzstan

strongly supports the United Nations as the only universal intergovernmental international organization mandated by all Member States to find solutions to the challenges and threats that constantly arise before humankind. I count on our Organization, under the leadership of Secretary-General António Guterres and with the effective support of Member States, to find mechanisms and ways to more effectively perform all its functions and assist Member States in resolving pressing global issues and overcoming challenges. That is especially crucial in supporting sustainable development through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. I call on all Member States to provide unconditional political support to the Organization and its Secretary-General at this challenging time.

I thank the Secretary-General for presenting his New Agenda for Peace policy brief, with his vision for the future of multilateral security cooperation. We agree with the main thesis that the driving force behind the new multilateralism must be diplomacy. We are ready to work closely on the active development of the pact for the future during the Summit of the Future in 2024.

Speaking of Central Asia, I would like to note that we, representatives of the Central Asian nations that are related and proud of their millennia-old history and culture, have a lot in common in traditions and customs. There is much that brings us together in terms of similarities in mentality, psychology, attitude and our view of the world. On the one hand, ongoing global processes have a direct impact on stability and security in our Central Asian region and, on the other, they strengthen its role and significance. Strengthening relations with the countries of the region is a top priority for our country.

I note with satisfaction that, in recent years, regional cooperation in Central Asia has been developing consistently and in all directions. I see our region as a single geoeconomic space in which all forms of economic cooperation and interaction are successfully developed. I see our region as a geopolitical intermediary through which the interaction and cooperation of members of the international community takes place. I see our region as a highly connected and dynamic community that shares and supports similar cultural, historical and traditional values and beliefs. Kyrgyzstan intends to contribute to strengthening regional cooperation, find new effective forms of cooperation and actively interact with various global centres of influence in bilateral and multilateral formats alike.

On the path to full regional integration, it is necessary to resolve issues related to the legal delineation of State borders. Exactly a year ago, speaking from this very rostrum (see A/77/PV.4), with a heavy heart I informed the Assembly of the tragic events of September 2022, related to armed clashes on the Kyrgyz-Tajik border that resulted in numerous casualties. Thanks to the restraint shown by our peace-loving people and the prevailing political will of both sides, we were able to prevent the further escalation of the conflict and avert full-scale bloodshed in the region.

In that regard, I would like to emphasize that Kyrgyzstan has advocated and will continue to advocate resolving controversial issues exclusively through peaceful diplomatic means based on the principles and norms of international law, such as territorial integrity and the non-use of force or the threat of its use. We have never sought to take what belongs to others, but we will not allow anyone to take a single inch of our homeland. We always strive for dialogue and the search for mutually acceptable solutions based on trust and mutual respect.

Last December, after almost 30 years of negotiations, we signed an agreement with Uzbekistan on the legal delineation of the State border. That historic decision, reached thanks to the demonstrated political will of the leaders of the two States, has opened the broadest prospects for mutually beneficial cooperation and peaceful coexistence between the two countries and peoples. We maintain the same approach in our current negotiations. We want to live in peace, harmony and friendship with all our neighbours.

Speaking of security and stability in Central Asia, it is essential to consider them in the context of the situation in Afghanistan. I believe it extremely important to remind the international community that the people of Afghanistan are experiencing significant difficulties, which are amplified by the lack of a coordinated global stance on the situation in that country. It would not be an exaggeration on my part to say that Afghanistan is threatened by a humanitarian crisis with inevitable consequences for the security of not only the surrounding regions, but also the entire world community. Kyrgyzstan is interested in a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. We call on the international community to continue providing humanitarian and economic assistance to the Afghan people.

The SDG Summit concluded just yesterday, confirming once again the importance of unwavering commitment to sustainable development, identifying challenges in their implementation and outlining specific commitments by States. We are halfway to 2030, the deadline for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Kyrgyzstan, in its pursuit of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, currently ranks forty-fifth out of 166 Member States. We aim to be among the top 30 countries in reaching the SDGs by 2030.

The international community must breathe new life into the Goals and strengthen solidarity in their attainment. It is important that we do not lose ourselves in numbers, schedules, diagrams and other economic intricacies, because the essence and core of the 17 Goals are about people themselves. The year 2030 is approaching quickly and we must ask ourselves: Have we addressed the pressing needs and aspirations of humankind? Are we ensuring its safety, prosperity and well-being? Are people happy? What does their future hold? Problems such as extreme poverty and climate change can be solved only by finding a global, collective response.

As the Secretary-General rightly notes in his *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2023*,

“without the means to invest in sustainable development and the transformation of their energy and food systems, developing countries are falling even further behind”

in achieving the SDGs. The current reality is that developing countries face a dual challenge: the need to invest in development while simultaneously adapting to climate change. In that regard, we call for urgent action to implement the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on financing for development, and specifically for the swift establishment of the fund aimed at providing compensation to countries for losses and damages related to climate change, alleviating the burden of external debt and improving the international architecture for debt resolution.

At previous climate change summits and conferences, ambitious statements and promises were made. It is also clear that the level of annual funding announced in 2015 under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change is no longer sufficient. We consider

it necessary to revise and significantly increase the level of funding that meets the real needs of countries vulnerable to climate change.

Another problem is that most climate finance is provided to low- and middle-income countries in the form of loans. There is also no difference in the procedures for allocating loans for projects worth \$1 million or \$1 billion. That undermines the very essence and purpose of climate agreements. I have already reached out to our partners with a request to exchange external debt for environmental projects. Unfortunately, we have received no reaction from many of the developed countries. The Government of Germany was the only country that wrote off €15 million of debt. We take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Germany.

We call on donors to reconsider their approaches in favour of climate finance to countries in need on a grant basis. We support the Bridgetown Initiative, proposed at the 27th Climate Change Conference, held in Sharm el-Sheikh, as well as the calls made at the Summit for a New Global Financial Pact in Paris, held in June, to mobilize the necessary financing and structural reform of the international financial architecture. If we do not start doing this now, then injustice will increase throughout the world. Rich countries will continue getting richer and poor countries will continue getting poorer.

In the light of global climate change, mountainous regions have been particularly vulnerable. In Kyrgyzstan, mountains occupy about 94 per cent of the territory. Mountain glaciers are an integral part of the Earth's cryosphere, not only influencing the climate of our planet but also providing a habitat for flora and fauna and supplying water to people.

Climate change in Central Asia has led to the intensive melting of glaciers. While it was once predicted that by 2050 the area of glaciers in Kyrgyzstan would be reduced by half and that by 2100 they could disappear altogether, there is now reason to believe that this will happen much sooner. That is leading to the exacerbation of problems throughout the region, such as lack of water for drinking and agriculture, land degradation and a threat to food security. In accordance with the latest assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the adverse effects of cryospheric changes are particularly acute for the residents of high mountain regions, where ecosystems have reached the limits of adaptation.

In order to effectively preserve mountain ecosystems and glaciers, based on resolutions previously adopted by the General Assembly on sustainable mountain development, our country, in collaboration with the Global Mountain Partnership and other representatives of the United Nations system, has developed a global action plan. We are grateful to all our partners, countries and international organizations for their joint work.

Kyrgyzstan advocates the creation of a broad coalition of mountainous countries. We believe that climate adaptation and the transition to a green economy will be among the main priorities of that future coalition. As members may know, in 2022, at the initiative of our country and the Italian Republic, the General Assembly unanimously adopted resolution 77/172, on sustainable mountain development, co-sponsored by 110 member States. That document declared the years from 2023 to 2027 as Five Years of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions. I take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to all United Nations Member States for supporting our initiative.

To further implement the United Nations resolution, I have signed a decree entitled On Declaring the Period from 2023 to 2027 as the Five-Year Period of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions in the Kyrgyz Republic. A national Road Map for the Implementation of the Five-Year Period of Action for the Development of Mountain Regions for 2023-2027 has been developed, which will be adopted shortly. The Road Map includes measures at the global, regional and national levels, including within the framework of existing and prospective projects and measures related to the Sustainable Development Goals.

As the concluding stage of the Five-Year Period of Action, we plan to host the second Global Mountain Summit, Bishkek+25, in Kyrgyzstan in 2027, 25 years after the first Summit. From this rostrum, I would like to invite everyone to actively participate and make concrete commitments to preserving mountain ecosystems. We express our gratitude to our partners from the Group of Friends of Mountainous Countries, the Global Mountain Partnership and the entire United Nations system for their comprehensive support of Kyrgyzstan's initiatives. We express our readiness to continue fruitful cooperation.

To successfully meet the challenges and threats facing us, we need to build an effective international security system. A key element of that mechanism is

the Security Council. Today more than ever, it is crucial to enhance its effectiveness in order to make that organ fairer and more representative and to increase its capacity to achieve consensus in decision-making. Progress is needed in negotiations on the reform of the Security Council.

Kyrgyzstan expresses its readiness to make its contribution to the cause of peace and security through effective peacemaking, respect for human rights and the equal participation of women in peace processes. We also aim to promote and protect the interests of developing, small, least-developed and small island nations. We have put forward our candidacy for non-permanent membership of the Security Council for the 2027-2028 term and count on the support of Member States. It is essential for all of us to adhere to principles such as trust, solidarity and universality in international relations. Only together can we restore the global and regional security architecture.

Speaking of contemporary challenges and issues, I would like to quote the words of our outstanding compatriot, Jusup Balasagyn, who lived from 1020 to 1075 and gave guidance more than 1,000 years ago. He said, "Our world is such that you must grasp its essence to unlock the gates of truth." Nothing has changed since then. It is necessary to perceive the world as it is, in all its diversity and complexity.

We, the States Members of the United Nations, must transform our Organization into the centre of global efforts to prevent conflicts, reach compromises and do everything possible to establish peace and harmony. "The one who walks the path will overcome it", as a proverb of our people says.

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

Mr. Sadyr Zhaparov, President of the Kyrgyz Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Santiago Peña Palacios, President of the Republic of Paraguay

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

Mr. Santiago Peña Palacios, President of the Republic of Paraguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Santiago Peña Palacios, President of the Republic of Paraguay, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Peña Palacios (*spoke in Spanish*): In 1945, representatives of 51 States, one of them my country, agreed to create the United Nations. By speaking for the first time before the General Assembly as President of the Republic of Paraguay, I wish to begin my speech by expressing our recognition of the work of the United Nations, which since its inception has provided a global framework of cooperation among nations to promote peace, human rights and the well-being of peoples.

Seventy-eight years later, multilateralism faces very visible challenges in terms of effectiveness and legitimacy. In a world of so much wealth, levels of poverty and inequality remain stubbornly high while mass migration associated with armed conflicts and lack of opportunities, international terrorism, transnational crime and geopolitical tensions represent challenges before which the mechanisms of cooperation and governance that have prevailed over the past almost eight decades are clearly outdated.

The lack of tangible results, the perceived ineffectiveness of multilateral institutions and the difficulties in addressing global problems effectively have generated frustration and led to a rise in the feeling that national interests should take precedence over multilateral cooperation. The imposition of certain cultural or ideological trends or approaches is perceived, not without reason, as interference in national sovereignty and values, which erodes trust and weakens the will to cooperate at the multilateral level. Consequently, increasing levels of mistrust can be observed among Member States, which hinders cooperation and the willingness to compromise for the common good.

The 2008 crisis, the recent pandemic and, today, the conflict in Ukraine have revealed the weaknesses and limitations of multilateral institutions in their ability to face challenges with global impact and systemic risk. In the latter case, the United Nations and its Security Council have adopted measures whose results are sadly far from being encouraging.

Despite having suffered the misfortunes of two unjust wars, one of which put us on the brink of extinction as a nation, the spirit and history of Paraguay compel us to bet on dialogue, and not on force, as a mechanism to resolve any controversy, as demonstrated by the 1924 Treaty to Avoid or Prevent Conflicts between the American States, known as the Gondra Convention, proposed by a Paraguayan and approved by all Latin American countries unanimously and without a single amendment, whose purpose was precisely to avoid and prevent wars between American States.

With humility but with great conviction, we urge all parties involved in the conflict in Ukraine to immediately stop military actions to avoid further victims and damage. We support the peace initiatives promoted by Brazil, a brother country and strategic ally, as well as by Pope Francis, whose moving presence is a source of inspiration to all humankind. There is no doubt that we need to work on the review and reform of the mechanisms, measures and institutional capacities of multilateral organizations to prevent new wars like that ravaging Ukraine, but with or without reforms we need to put an end to the merciless loss of so many human lives. We need to work to strengthen the United Nations with a view to building new capabilities that will allow it to respond effectively and efficiently to permanent and changing global challenges.

Within the framework of the reform and expansion of the Security Council, Paraguay considers that the organic and functional structure of the United Nations must reflect the dynamics of the international scenario on a participatory, democratic and equitable basis that observes the guiding principles of the Charter of the United Nations for promote peace, security and prosperity of our countries on equal terms.

In that regard, the Government of Paraguay expresses its support for the Republic of China on Taiwan to be an integral part of the United Nations system.

Climate change represents a great planetary challenge, and we must take both rigorous and fair measures to avoid further damage to the planet and its inhabitants.

Trade restrictions based on criteria such as agricultural practices or environmental standards generate discontent and uncertainty and are unfair and discriminatory barriers, since they try to extrapolate realities from highly developed regions to developing territories, without taking into account

their differences or adequately valuing the particular environmental mitigation practices of those territories. That has required less developed countries to assume responsibility for the environmental damage caused by industrialization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when there were no mitigation measures, and they have been obliged to do so at the expense of giving up opportunities for commercial expansion, job creation and wealth creation. There is a need to address those concerns and promote a more equitable and collaborative approach that takes into account the specific realities and needs of each country in the context of its multilateral decisions related to environmental standards.

Paraguay has shown the world that we are leaders in the production of hydroelectric energy, a clean and sustainable source that supplies both our internal needs and those of our neighbours. We have put Paraguay on the map as an example to follow in the transition towards a more sustainable world. While other countries are still arguing about reducing emissions, we have already taken concrete and effective measures. We are a concrete example of how a nation can exploit natural resources in a responsible and sustainable manner to promote economic development and, at the same time, mitigate climate change.

For more than 30 years, we have been adopting sustainable agricultural practices that not only ensure a prosperous future for our farmers, but also guarantee the integrity of our land and our water resources. We have acted with courage and responsibility, basing our public policies on science and evidence.

For years, we were the subject of criticism and unfair accusations, but today, thanks to the work of multiple administrations, I can firmly report that the facts speak for themselves. Some 44 per cent of Paraguayan territory has preserved its forest cover, while 95 per cent of the area planted with cereals and oilseeds in Paraguay in 2022 implements sustainable technologies, such as direct sowing and crop rotation, and has been free of deforestation since 2004 a result of our zero-deforestation policy. Those data are irrefutable proof that it is possible to achieve a balance between agricultural production and the conservation of our natural resources, and that the Paraguayan countryside is prepared to enter the most demanding markets internationally, respecting the principles of clean and sustainable production. .

But we do not stop there. Paraguay has also committed to the recomposition of our natural ecosystems. We are promoting reforestation and species conservation, and we have undertaken the participatory construction of the national forest restoration plan. Additionally, we have dramatically reduced extreme poverty over the past two decades, demonstrating that it is possible to protect our environment while prospering economically.

Paraguay reaffirms its commitment to the central values and objectives of the United Nations. We understand our shared but differentiated responsibilities and we are willing to lead by example on the path to a more sustainable and equitable world.

Today we face four global challenges that are generating geopolitical tensions: access to water, food security, energy sufficiency and resilience in logistics chains. Since Paraguay is a Power on these great issues, we are called to be protagonists in the concert of nations. Our subsoil is home to the world's largest reserve of fresh water, including the Guaraní aquifer that we share with our neighbours. Paraguay is a global food supplier and one of the few countries in the world capable of producing food for its population and for more than 100 million people around the world. In hydroelectric energy, we are pioneers in regional energy integration and today we are determined to move towards greater energy efficiency and sustainability.

In that context, Paraguay aspires to become the logistics centre of the South American Bioceanic Corridor, which is turning our geographical centrality into an opportunity and strengthening integration with neighbouring countries and Pacific markets. That trade corridor will be a source of renewal and empowerment for the South American Common Market and the Pacific Alliance, promoting greater rapprochement between both blocs. Furthermore, due to its intersection with the Paraguay-Paraná waterway, that multimodal network will become the most competitive way to transport products from different countries to Pacific ports, facilitating consensus for the management of river navigation. Without a doubt, it will give new impetus to the South American integration process and transform the vision with which we will resolve conflicts that may arise.

Paraguay is determined to abandon its old image as an island surrounded by land, as our Cervantes Prize winner Don Augusto Roa Bastos described

it, and, following its historical, geographical and cultural vocation, become the centre of South American integration. Therefore, one of our main strategic objectives will be to contribute to improving regional integration. In that sense, managing the waterway, the aquifers, the Bioceanic Corridor, the hydroelectric plants and the navigation of our rivers is a delicate process of balance between the integration and sovereignty of our peoples. We are aware of the progress made on the path of integration, but we cannot be satisfied and must move forward with courage and determination. Latin America is the region of the world with the greatest development potential, but we can develop that potential only by respecting each other, working together and in harmony.

Since the last decade of the twentieth century, as a country we have been going through a process of building and strengthening our democratic institutions. This year, we have renewed the political leadership of the country through a transparent electoral process, with broad citizen participation and in which the Paraguayan people expressed their will with a firm democratic vocation and full confidence in the rule of law. Today Paraguay is experiencing its greatest historical period of democratic coexistence, with more than 35 uninterrupted years of validating the noblest values of a free, participatory and pluralist democracy, and convinced that there is no acceptable system other than that of non-negotiable exercise of human rights and freedom.

Paraguay is the country of the prose of Augusto Roa Bastos, the universal music of José Asunción Flores and the ñanduti-voiced guitar of Berta Rojas. The country has a rhythm that was born to capture the spirit of its Guaraní language. The name of that music is Guaranía, and today it hopes to be recognized as a universal heritage because it is an ambassador who travels the world with our emotions.

My country values peace, sustainable development and integration among peoples because we are a country that has been reborn from its ashes following a war of extermination that truncated the early development process of a nation that, already at the dawn of industrial revolution, had developed one of the first interurban railways in South America, had shipyards and iron foundries, and, above all, was betting very heavily on the formation of its human capital through education.

The reconstruction after the catastrophe of 1870, which annihilated 90 per cent of the Paraguayan male population, was led by patriotic fellow nationals, without international financial or technological support and with a small flow of European migrants who arrived and settled in the country despite a narrative that discredited us. But, as President Bernardino Caballero said in immortal words in his presidential message of 1884, Paraguay has the incontestable merit of having risen from its ruins without having requested foreign assistance to do so. It has persevered with that rare self-denial that is the virtue of the strong, and it has triumphed. It is the architect of its own destinies.

It is impossible not to mention here the fundamental role of Paraguayan women in the heroic task of rebuilding the country. It is not for nothing that the Paraguayan woman is recognized as the most glorious in America and the cornerstone on which our nation is built.

With firm and determined steps, Paraguay continues to strengthen its institutions and its economy. After occupying the position of poorest country in South America for decades, today we are an upper-middle-income country, with high credibility in international financial markets that is bringing us closer to the desired investment grade, with high production standards certified in accordance with international standards, with transparency and, above all, with macroeconomic stability that stands out worldwide and is supported by fiscal and monetary discipline and a permanent effort to improve public management.

Paraguay today is standing and ready to fulfil its mission in history. That is why we speak of the resurgence of a giant, but we do so not with expansionist or grandiose zeal but with the firm conviction of a people proud of its roots, its heroic and brave history and with the deepest confidence in its future greatness.

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

Mr. Santiago Peña Palacios, President of the Republic of Paraguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

**Address by Ms. Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra,
President of the Republic of Peru**

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

Ms. Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Her Excellency Ms. Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra, President of the Republic of Peru, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

President Boluarte Zegarra (*spoke in Spanish*): I come from Peru, a country with a vast history and cultural wealth, which has been the cradle of civilization in our America, and whose leadership I assumed with firmness and courage on 7 December 2022, facing a coup d'état in the midst of a political and social crisis that we have been able to overcome within the framework of our Constitution.

Today, as I have the honour of being the first constitutional female President of the Republic in the 201 years of its existence, and of leading my country's delegation to the General Assembly, I am grateful for the recognition of the international community. Peru is once again on the world stage alongside the people of the world.

I am a provincial woman, a Quechua speaker born in the heights of the southern Peruvian Andes, and I lead a Government that, within the framework of the law and in the face of difficult challenges, both from nature and on the international stage, has restored stability and hope to a country that seeks economic development with social justice.

First of all, this message serves to pay well-deserved tribute to women, girls and adolescents, especially Peruvian women. As we say in Quechua, *Amana warmi maqay kachunchu*. I tell the world: No more violence against women.

Peru is a country that respects democracy, the rule of law, human rights and international law. That is why it actively promotes Latin American integration and is firmly committed to cooperation among countries. Peru promotes peace, and to achieve that peace it is necessary to apply the Charter of the United Nations

in all circumstances. For that reason, we reaffirm and defend the principle of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of all States.

As a daughter of the southern Andean region of my country, I have known first-hand the suffering caused by poverty. Therefore, I am fully aware that, as we reaffirmed in the political declaration we adopted yesterday,

“eradicating poverty... is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development” (A/HLPF/2023/L.1, *para.* 3).

That is the main objective of my Government, and that is why we are committed to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Today in this forum, I want to reaffirm Peru's voice so that the international community gives the highest priority to eradicating poverty. It is a commitment that we cannot and must not abandon. In Peru, we are adopting policies to confront not only monetary poverty but also multidimensional poverty, promoting, among other important actions, access to drinking water and basic sanitation. In nine months of management, we have unblocked more than 100 paralysed projects, which will provide water to the sisters and brothers of my country. The crises caused by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, climate change, growing geopolitical tensions, armed conflicts and increased food prices are overwhelming our people and have stymied our potential for growth and development.

If those trends continue, as Secretary-General António Guterres tells us, almost 600 million people will continue to live in extreme poverty in 2030, and only a third of countries will reach the goal of halving their national poverty levels. We cannot accept that scenario. The time has come — either we progress together, or we condemn ourselves as a whole. United, everything; disunited, we all lose.

That brings us to a next challenge. Our development agenda has the motto *Manan pitapas qipapi saqispa*, which in our Quechua means “leaving no one behind”. However, today millions of human beings move, sometimes literally, carrying their families and their scant belongings, in search of well-being or simply survival, in the face of conflict, unemployment and extreme poverty. The current situation of human mobility requires bilateral, regional and multilateral

cooperation. In that regard, Peru has been making enormous efforts, but it will be only through international cooperation that we will be able to achieve safe, orderly and regular migration.

Health has already shown us that it is a problem not for a mere few, but for everyone. My country was one of the hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, which claimed the lives of more than 200,000 compatriots and revealed the gaps and shortcomings of our health system. This year, we have faced resurgences of the dengue, measles and polio epidemics, as well as the outbreak of Guillain-Barré syndrome.

My Government is therefore firmly committed to guaranteeing access to comprehensive health care, free and universal to all, without exception. To achieve that, we are improving the coverage of the national vaccine scheme and reinforcing health infrastructure and equipment. We have been able to vaccinate more than 1,900,000 girls and boys, from the ages of two months to five years, against polio and measles, and we continue tirelessly to unblock hospital projects paralysed by apathy and corruption, which is another scourge besetting my country. In addition, we have made the prevention and treatment of cancer a national objective and twenty of the twenty-six regions of Peru now have at least one oncological service. It is possible to work when the political will is there.

In those areas, international cooperation must ensure quality health goods and services accessible to all, and mainly for developing countries, where the gaps are much wider. In Peru, we observe with concern the growing internationalization of criminal networks fuelled by the corruption of past Governments, which have undermined the credibility of institutions and democracy, affecting the development and well-being of our citizens.

It is therefore urgent to reinforce our joint work. We cannot let our guard down against crime, organized crime and drug trafficking. Those problems affect us all and we must all be part of the solution. Our children and grandchildren are at risk of experiencing the hell that a triple environmental crisis would bring, now that we are entering the era of “global boiling”, as the Secretary-General has called it.

Climate change, the loss of biodiversity and pollution are putting our very existence as humankind at risk. In Peru, we are facing it with a sense of urgency and determination. Early in the year, heavy

rains affected northern Peru, which were followed by the onslaught of Cyclone Yaku. In the south, droughts and frosts seriously harmed people, agriculture and livestock, added to recurring anomalous waves in the Pacific, which hinder the regular operations of our fishing ports. Finally, we have the growing threat of the coastal El Niño phenomenon, which will be followed by the impact of the global El Niño. An action approach with preventive measures is urgently needed. Therefore, from this high rostrum, I call for solidarity and international cooperation. For the first time, an administration in my country has undertaken a major action campaign against global El Niño with an investment of 4 billion soles, equivalent to more than \$1 billion. We have also joined the Early Alerts for All initiative, presented by the Secretary-General, so that, by the end of 2027, all the inhabitants of the planet will be protected against meteorological phenomena. That will save many lives.

In addition, I allow myself today to propose a pact, a commitment to cooperation and international action for immediate attention to the impact of meteorological phenomena such as El Niño; a pact based on solidarity, resilience and interdependence. Today it is Peru that has to face El Niño; tomorrow nature may be cruel to another destiny, but in unity, as we always say in my country, we can move forward. Let us make this pact a pact for the world, a pact for life!

Developing countries have made progress in reducing carbon emissions, but we continue to be the most affected by climate disasters. Last month, the eight Amazonian countries held a presidential summit, at which we agreed on measures for the conservation and sustainable use of the Amazon, the fight against deforestation and urgent action to avoid the point of no return. There, Peru presented its vision of the Amazon with a human face — “with a human face” because the Amazon, which constitutes 61 per cent of Peru’s surface, is not a sanctuary occupied solely by nature. It is home to almost 5 million Peruvians.

It is still possible to limit the increase in global temperature to within 1.5°C, as we proposed in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, but strong actions will be necessary. That will require developed countries not only to adopt more ambitious emissions reduction goals, but also to honour their commitments in technology transfer and climate financing. Today more than ever, it is urgent to mobilize the \$100 billion annually that have been committed to climate action

in developing countries, as well as to establish the loss and damage fund agreed upon at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Here at United Nations Headquarters, I wish to report that the Peruvian presidency has already delivered a draft agreement aimed at protecting the marine environment against plastic pollution.

In my country, 48 indigenous languages are spoken, and more than 6 million citizens identify themselves as members of one of the indigenous or native peoples of Peru, and more than 800,000 as Afro-Peruvians. Promoting the full exercise of their rights is a challenge that we share with many countries, and our essential task is to continue seeking their inclusion and well-being, providing them with quality services and promoting respect for their rights, their cultures and their languages.

On the verge of commemorating the bicentennial of our consolidation as an independent Republic, Peru renews its commitment to continuing to contribute to peace, international development and care for the environment. We have done so during our presidency of the Andean Community, we are doing so in the Pacific Alliance, and we will continue to do so next year as President of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum. We remain firm in our process of accession to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and in our participation in the Americas Partnership for Economic Prosperity, and we have begun our approach to the Association of Southeast Asian Nations with a view to being partners in development.

I therefore reiterate my invitation to all countries and their economies to continue investing and trusting in Peru. Peru is a country of hope. In my country, we await partners with clear and transparent rules of the game, with stability and legal security, with low inflation, with solid international reserves and with the sole objective of working for the sustained growth of all, but especially of the most vulnerable.

The Government of Peru, faithful to its commitment to the United Nations linked to its republican tradition, joins with determination and firmness the global purpose to consolidate the global fight against climate change and to defend peace, democracy, unrestricted respect for human rights, international law, sustainable development and the prosperity to which our peoples aspire, as it is based on justice.

Kuska llancasum, huk sonccollay, huk umalla, huk munaylla, which means, “Let us work together, with one heart, one thought and one desire”.

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

Ms. Dina Ercilia Boluarte Zegarra, President of the Republic of Peru, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique

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

Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Nyusi (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I begin my remarks by extending, on behalf of the people of Mozambique, our heartfelt condolences to the peoples of Morocco and Libya for the tragedies that have stricken those two sister African countries.

I take this opportunity to reiterate the gratitude of the Mozambican people and Government for the unanimous vote in favour of the election of Mozambique as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. Our participation in the Security Council has enabled us to share our experience in peacebuilding and national reconciliation, thereby contributing to fostering international peace and security.

In September 2015, in this very Hall, we adopted the Sustainable Development Goals, which embody the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As leaders, we committed on behalf of our peoples to reducing poverty in 17 key areas and establishing a new world for all, leaving no one behind. The progress report that we considered yesterday at the high-level political forum shows clearly that the world continues to face various interconnected crises that undermine the delivery

of Agenda 2030. Indeed, the coronavirus disease pandemic crisis, natural disasters arising from climate change and armed conflicts, including terrorism and violent extremism, are compelling millions of people to continue living in poverty without adequate food or access to education and health services.

While it is true that the adversities I have referred to are a cause for regression in the progress that we had been making in the implementation of Agenda 2030 since 2015, the main reason for the agenda's lack of success remains the absence of trust and solidarity among those who have a great deal and those who have little or almost nothing at all. Even those who have much, rather than build trust and solidarity, spend their resources by investing in a competition fuelled by mistrust.

Therefore, I commend His Excellency Mr. Dennis Francis, President of the General Assembly at this session, for the theme he has suggested to us, "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity". It is critical to realizing Agenda 2030 on sustainable development for peace, progress and prosperity for the sustainability of humankind.

In my statement, I will try to focus attention on peace and security, counter-terrorism, climate change, energy transition, the blue economy and environmental conservation, in tandem with the theme of this session.

On the issue of peace and security, a number of regions of the world, particularly in Africa, are grappling with a vicious circle of armed conflicts and instability. Thousands of precious lives have been lost. The number of refugees and internally displaced persons has increased by more than 50 per cent in the past year alone. Despite multilateral efforts and several peace initiatives undertaken by the Security Council and regional organizations, war is prevailing in Ukraine and other regions and endangering peace, security and the global economy.

My own country, Mozambique, experienced cycles of armed conflict, sometimes triggered by forces alien to national interests, but a settlement has been possible only on the basis of constructive dialogue founded on trust and mutual respect. That is how we adopted the new Provincial Decentralization Law now under implementation. In August 2019, we signed the Maputo Accord for Peace and National Reconciliation. In June, we closed the last camp of the Resistência Nacional Moçambicana, a formerly armed opposition party, marking the conclusion of the disarmament and

demobilization phase. The crucial phase to follow is the reintegration of former combatants into society, including the payment of pensions, although that is not provided for by law. I would like to express our gratitude, as this process relies on the support of the United Nations and other multilateral and bilateral partners.

While we seek to close one chapter of the peace and national reconciliation process, Mozambique is confronted by the nefarious phenomenon of terrorism, specifically in Cabo Delgado province, in the north of the country. In March, during Mozambique's rotational presidency of the Security Council, we had the opportunity to share at length our experience of counter-terrorism. Our strategy focuses on strengthening combat operations by the Mozambican defence and security forces, with the initial support of the Rwandan contingent and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Mission in Mozambique. We have been achieving tangible success on the ground, although terrorists continue to sow terror and fear in a sporadic way in isolated villages.

With the improvement of safety and tranquillity, populations have been returning in large numbers to their home areas and resuming their normal life. This is a pioneer experience of combining bilateral and multilateral interventions. It is also an example of African problems being solved, first and foremost, by Africans themselves. However, the issue arising is the need for substantial support to those countries that are directly intervening in countering terrorism with us in Mozambique in order to render the ongoing operations sustainable.

At this juncture, the challenge is the reconstruction of infrastructure and the consolidation of social cohesion. The relevant activities are being undertaken in the context of the Northern Region Resilience and Integrated Development Programme, which relies on the support of partners. We have also launched an appeal for the solidarity of United Nations Members, another component of our strategy to counter terrorism and address fragilities.

Climate change constitutes the main crisis of humankind in this century. That is not a new discovery, which is why so many speeches around this subject essentially repeat themselves. For decades, scientific evidence has shown that our planet is on the verge of climate catastrophe. However, despite the evidence and commitments assumed yearly at various conferences on climate change, the situation has deteriorated.

As with many conflicts, the main cause of climate crisis is a lack of trust and solidarity, coupled with the selfishness of some countries. The countries that pollute most continue producing emissions that cause global warming and climate change. The enrichment of those countries comes at the cost of misery for others that contribute less to pollution and are, coincidentally, among the very poorest. As a consequence, heat waves, cyclones, floods, droughts, earthquakes, sea level rise, uncontrolled fire and other extreme phenomena have become increasingly frequent throughout the world.

In the case of Mozambique, due to its geographic vulnerability, the country cyclically suffers the devastating impact of natural disasters. The latest, largest cyclones Idai, Kenneth and Freddy claimed hundreds of lives and caused very costly damage and losses to the tune of billions of dollars. So far, we have been able to recover just one-third of the damages recorded. However, support from our partners has been well below the pledges made and our needs. In many cases, when this assistance does arrive, partners prefer to manage the funds outside mechanisms agreed with the Government, causing overlaps in areas or programmes that have little impact on communities. As a consequence, a substantial proportion of funds is spent on capacity-building conferences and bureaucratic issues rather than being allocated to affected people, which once again demonstrates a lack of trust and solidarity.

As a way of mitigating the suffering of the people, we have been promoting domestic solutions towards consolidating a disaster management system with the involvement of public and private stakeholders, civil society and local communities, focusing on prevention and adaptation. In this way, we have managed to reduce the impact of natural disasters, a fact that has earned Mozambique recognition from SADC, African Union and United Nations agencies.

Energy transition is a global imperative aimed at building more resilient and sustainable societies. However, we advocate that energy transition be fair and work as a launching pad to enable poor countries to find a window of opportunity in the diversification of the energy mix in order to consolidate their economic base. Energy transition requires large investments in power-generation projects from clean sources. Once again, most industrialized countries are invited to show greater solidarity by increasing their climate funds.

Mozambique is a regional exemplar for the diversity of its energy matrix, which includes hydropower dams, particularly Cahora Bassa, solar power stations and wind power stations, while the construction of the Mphanda Nkuwa dam is now under way. Last year, Mozambique joined the group of liquefied natural gas producing and exporting countries, an important step towards accelerating energy transition.

Currently, the energy sector is dominated by hydropower, with a capacity of 2,172 megawatts; solar, with 95 megawatts; gas, with 441 megawatts; and diesel, with 120 megawatts. The Temane thermal power station has the potential to produce 450 megawatts in the last quarter of 2024, and with a longer maturity cycle, the new Mphanda Nkuwa hydropower station will have the capacity to produce 1,500 megawatts beginning in 2030. Mozambique is also counting on the development of the blue economy to optimize resources from its extensive exclusive economic zone along a coastline of 2,700 kilometres.

We are also a country with robust environmental legislation that incorporates major international conventions, including the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and the Convention on the Protection of Endangered Species, among others. In the framework of nationally determined commitments, in 2021 Mozambique became the first African country to receive payments from the World Bank trust fund to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.

Last year, we launched a regional initiative on the sustainable management of the Miombo forest that culminated with the adoption of the Maputo Declaration, which was endorsed by eleven SADC member States. The Miombo woodland is the largest tropical forest ecosystem in the world, where three species are predominant and which covers more than 2,574 kilometres along the great Zambezi basin across eight countries of Africa. With regard to that initiative to protect nature, we count on the support of bilateral and multilateral partners in the conservation of the Miombo forest, which can contribute significantly to capturing carbon on the planet.

The challenges currently faced by humankind are huge. However, solutions are within our reach. We, the leaders present here, have the historic responsibility to save the planet for the benefit of future generations. The priority areas requiring urgent action are clearly identified, with a matrix of pre-defined solutions, of which we highlight three.

First, we need to renew our political will and redouble our efforts to accelerate the achievement of targets of the Agenda 2030. We do not need to come up with analytical speeches; the most important thing is that we all act together with vigour and using available resources.

Secondly, we have to intensify integrated policies with concrete actions to eradicate poverty, reduce inequalities and preserve nature by empowering women, youth and other vulnerable groups.

Thirdly, we must strengthen international partnership and multilateralism, taking the United Nations system as a basis. However, 78 years after its creation, the world has experienced profound transformations that require deep reforms.

I conclude by appealing for the establishment of a more inclusive international financial system, guided by transparent rules and mutually beneficial, in which Africa participates as a partner that has also lot to offer to the world and not only as a warehouse that supplies cheap commodities to countries or international multinational corporations that dominate the international market. To that end, we need to revive trust and mutual respect among States, which are the sacred principles of the Charter of the United Nations. It is only with trust and mutual respect that we can build a better world, a world of peace, safe and sustainable, that delivers welfare for all.

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

Mr. Filipe Jacinto Nyusi, President of the Republic of Mozambique, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

**Address by Mr. Laurentino Cortizo Cohen,
President of the Republic of Panama**

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

Mr. Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, President of the Republic of Panama, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Laurentino Cortizo Cohen,

President of the Republic of Panama, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Cortizo Cohen (*spoke in Spanish*): I am pleased to be here in this Assembly, which brings us together for the purpose of finding more effective ways to address the pressing problems of global society. The Republic of Panama, as a founding Member of the organization, reiterates its firm commitment to the search for solutions based on dialogue and mutual respect, which contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security, which are essential for the development and well-being of humankind.

Panama is the bridge of the world, a crossroads at the centre of the Americas where all routes converge, thanks to our exceptional air and maritime connectivity, the best in Latin America and the Caribbean. Furthermore, the Republic of Panama is committed to fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, whose guidelines are included in the Government plan of my administration. In 50 months of administration, our Government has focused on the development of public policies that allow us to face the enormous challenge ahead, laying the foundations to reduce poverty and inequality and to provide less-favoured populations the opportunity to achieve social conditions and economic conditions that make it possible for them to live with dignity.

Advancing towards the fulfilment of the Sustainable Development Goals is an unavoidable responsibility that compels us to pay attention to the interaction of cause and effect between them. We must ask ourselves: How does the climate crisis impact the first three Sustainable Development Goals? Can we really achieve the end of poverty, zero hunger and health and well-being in the midst of the serious drought that is plaguing the planet, the floods, the devastating fires that devastate immense surfaces and the rise in ocean levels? Let us reflect on the conclusions of the report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which warns us of an unprecedented escalation of changes in the climate system that is leading us into extreme situations that seriously threaten the maintenance of life on the planet. The climate crisis is a ticking time bomb and time is running out for all of us.

We have demonstrated Panama's commitment to human existence in a concrete way with the decisions we make and the consequent actions we take. We are a country of great water wealth; our coasts are washed

by two large oceans, which makes us especially aware of the importance of water to our population and to life on Earth. Panama has made an extraordinary effort to preserve our seas, reaching the goal of 30 per cent as a protected area nine years before 2030, and we have even increased our contribution to 54 per cent this year. Panama, without rhetoric but with facts, is a blue leader. I also highlight that Panama is one of the seven countries in the world to have been declared carbon negative.

In Panama we have established a carbon footprint reduction programme with a national strategy for green hydrogen and derivatives. Also, during our administration, in Panama we have imposed an ambitious energy transition agenda with the purpose of identifying and developing accessible, non-polluting energy to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions by at least 24 per cent by 2050. Panama is among the 15 countries in the world most exposed to climatic and natural risks. In fact, we have already registered the first case of climate displacement in our territory, when the population of Cartí Sugtupu island had to relocate due to the rise in sea level.

I want to reaffirm, on behalf of the Republic of Panama, that Panamanians successfully assumed the operation of the Panama Canal in 1999 and expanded its capacity in 2016. I assure the nations of the world that Panama is committed to maintaining the operation of the canal in a safe, efficient, reliable and competitive manner, as we have done until now.

Here before the General Assembly, Panama, as a country that contributes effectively to the protection of the environment, asks the most polluting countries to honour the commitments they have made to reduce greenhouse-gas emissions. We have also seen repeatedly, in the meetings of the General Assembly and the Conferences of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, how countries commit to making changes that are later not fulfilled.

In the context of human development, it is of the highest priority to provide populations with opportunities for a more dignified life within their own countries. In that way, they would not be forced to leave their countries, emigrating irregularly, exposing themselves to the violation of their human rights and, on many occasions, losing their lives. In that regard, the problem of irregular migration must be addressed

at the multilateral level, emphasizing respect for human rights and under the principles of solidarity and shared responsibility, with the purpose of safeguarding the integrity of human life, safely and in an orderly manner. Panama works actively, in cooperation with several countries of the region, in the execution of programmes to improve the care and protection of irregular migrants who enter our country through the border with Colombia, crossing the dangerous Darién jungle, the largest natural park in all of Central America.

Our country is making a titanic effort to offer solidarity to those irregular migrants, whose number increases every year, forcing Panama to allocate significant resources to humanitarian relief. This is an unsustainable, unwanted and inhumane situation; a humanitarian tragedy of pain suffering and death for hundreds of thousands of migrants who undertake that risky journey. I repeat, this is an unsustainable situation — a situation in which we are victims and not responsible. I call on the international community to address, in all its magnitude, the problem of irregular migration, which today is not concentrated exclusively in the Mediterranean, but is global in nature and directly impacting Panamanians at this very moment.

Mr. Makayat-Safouesse (Congo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Today we reiterate the call for dialogue, peace and multilateralism, with respect for international law and the principles that support it, devoid of interests other than the well-being of peoples. In many aspects, we are in a race against time for human survival, which is the *raison d'être* of the world body that brings us together and on whose actions the steps we take towards the future, as a world community, largely depend.

Today, as head of the Panamanian State, I affirm that Panama wants for the entire world the same thing it wants for its own people: peace, well-being, justice and development.

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

Mr. Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, President of the Republic of Panama, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Mr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Tinubu: On behalf of the people of Nigeria, I congratulate Mr. Dennis Francis on his well-deserved election as President of the General Assembly at this session. We commend his predecessor, Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, for his able stewardship of the Assembly.

We also commend Secretary-General António Guterres for his work seeking to forge solutions to humankind's common challenges.

This is my first address before the General Assembly. Permit me to say a few words on behalf of Nigeria, my country, and on behalf of Africa, my continent, regarding this year's theme. Many proclamations have been made, yet our troubles remain close at hand. Failures in good governance have hindered Africa, but broken promises, unfair treatment and outright exploitation from abroad have also exacted a heavy toll on our ability to progress. Given that long history, if this year's theme is to mean anything at all, it must mean something special and particular to Africa.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, nations gathered in an attempt to rebuild their war-torn societies. A new global system was born and this great body, the United Nations, was established as a symbol and protector of the aspirations and finest ideals of humankind. Nations saw that it was in their own interests to help others exit the rubble and wasteland of war. Reliable and significant assistance allowed countries emaciated by war to grow into strong and productive societies. The period was a high-water

mark for trust in global institutions and the belief that humankind had learned the necessary lessons to move forward in global solidarity and harmony.

Today and for several decades, Africa has been asking for the same level of political commitment and devotion of resource that described the Marshall Plan. We realize that the underlying conditions and causes of the economic challenges facing today's Africa are significantly different from those of post-war Europe. We are not asking for identical programmes and actions. What we seek is an equally firm commitment to partnership. We seek enhanced international cooperation with African nations to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals. There are five important points I want to highlight.

First, if this year's theme is to have any impact at all, global institutions, other nations and their private-sector actors must see African development as a priority, not just for Africa but in their own interests as well. Due to long-standing internal and external factors, Nigeria's and Africa's economic structures have been skewed to impede development, industrial expansion, job creation and the equitable distribution of wealth.

If Nigeria is to fulfil its duty to its people and the rest of Africa, we must create jobs and inspire the belief in a better future for our people. We are pushing for that. We must also lead by example, and we are doing so. To foster economic growth and investor confidence in Nigeria, I removed the costly and corrupt fuel subsidy, while also discarding a noxious exchange rate system in my first few days in office. Other growth and job-oriented reforms are in the wings.

I am mindful of the transient hardship that reform can cause. However, it is necessary to go through that phase in order to establish a foundation for durable growth and investment to build the economy our people deserve. We welcome partnerships with those who do not mind seeing Nigeria and Africa assume larger roles in the global community. The question is not whether Nigeria is open for business. The question is how much of the world is truly open to doing business with Nigeria and Africa in an equal, mutually beneficial manner. Direct investment in critical industries, opening their ports to a wider range and larger quantity of African exports, and meaningful debt relief are important aspects of the cooperation we seek.

Secondly, we must affirm democratic governance as the best guarantor of the sovereign will and well-being of the people. Military coups are wrong, as is any tilted civilian political arrangement that perpetuates injustice. The wave crossing parts of Africa does not demonstrate favour towards coups. It is a demand for solutions to perennial problems. Let us dig deeper into the problem.

Regarding the Niger, we are negotiating with the military leaders. As Chairman of the Economic Community of West African State, I seek to help re-establish democratic governance in a manner that addresses the political and economic challenges confronting that nation, including the violent extremists who seek to foment instability in our region. I extend a hand of friendship to all who genuinely support the mission to achieve democratic governance in that nation.

That brings me to my third crucial point. Our entire region is locked in protracted battle against violent extremists. In the turmoil, a dark channel of inhumane commerce has formed. Along the route, everything is for sale. Men, woman and children are seen as chattel. Yet, thousands risk the Sahara's hot sand and the Mediterranean's cold depths in search of a better life. At the same time, mercenaries and extremists, with their lethal weapons and vile ideologies, invade our region from the north. That harmful traffic undermines the peace and stability of an entire region. African nations will improve our economies so that our people do not risk their lives to sweep the floors and streets of other nations. We shall also devote ourselves to disbanding extremist groups on our turf. Yet, to fully corral that threat, the international community must strengthen its commitment to arresting the flow of arms and violent people into West Africa.

The fourth important aspect of global trust and solidarity is to secure the continent's mineral rich areas from pilfering and conflict. Many such areas have become catacombs of misery and exploitation. The Democratic Republic of the Congo has suffered this for decades, despite the strong United Nations presence there. What happened? The world economy owes the Democratic Republic of the Congo much but gives it very little. The mayhem visited on resource-rich areas does not respect national boundaries. The Sudan, Mali, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic — the list grows on and on and on.

The problems is also knocking at Nigeria's door. Foreign entities, abetted by local criminals who aspire to be petty warlords, have drafted thousands of people into servitude to illegally mine gold and other resources. Billions of dollars meant to improve the nation now fuel violent enterprises. If left unchecked, they will threaten peace and place national security in grave danger. Given the extent of that injustice and the high stakes involved, many Africans are asking whether the phenomenon is by accident or by design. Member nations must reply by working with us to deter their firms and nationals from that twenty-first century pillage of the continent's riches.

Fifthly, climate change severely impacts Nigeria and Africa. Northern Nigeria is plagued by desert encroachment on once arable land. Our south is pounded by the rising tide of coastal flooding and erosion. In the middle, the rainy season brings floods that kill and displace multitudes. As I lament deaths at home, I also lament the grave loss of life in Morocco and Libya. The Nigerian people are with them.

African nations will fight climate change but must do so on fair and just terms. To achieve the needed popular consensus, the campaign must accord with overall economic efforts. In Nigeria, we shall build political consensus by highlighting remedial actions that also promote economic good. Projects such as a green wall to stop desert encroachment, halting the destruction of our forests by mass production and the distribution of gas-burning stoves, and providing employment in local water management and irrigation projects are examples of efforts that advance both economic and climate change objectives equally. Continental efforts regarding climate change would register important victories if established economies were more forthcoming with public and private sector investment for Africa's preferred initiatives. Again, that would go far towards demonstrating that global solidarity is real and working.

As I close, let me emphasize that Nigeria's objectives accord with the guiding principles of this world body: peace, security, human rights and development. In fundamental ways, nature has been kind to Africa, giving it abundant land, resources and creative and industrious people. Yet, man has too often been unkind to his fellow man and that sad tendency has brought sustained hardship to Africa's doorstep. To keep faith with the tenets of the world body and the theme of this year's session of the Assembly, the poverty of nations

must end. The pillage of one nation's resources by the overreach of firms and people of stronger nations must end. The will of the people must be respected. This beauty, generous and forgiving planet must be protected.

As for Africa, we seek to be neither appendage nor patron. We do not wish to replace old shackles with new ones. Instead, we hope to walk the rich African soil and live under the magnificent African sky free of the wrongs of the past and clear of their associated encumbrances. We desire a prosperous, vibrant democratic living space for our people. We will achieve it. To the rest of the world, I say, "Walk with us as true friends and partners. Africa is not a problem to be avoided nor is it to be pitied. Africa is nothing less than the key to the world's future."

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Bola Ahmed Tinubu, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Luis Lacalle Pou, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay.

Mr. Luis Lacalle Pou, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Luis Lacalle Pou, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Lacalle Pou (*spoke in Spanish*): I greet the President of the General Assembly, as well as the Secretary-General, the Heads of State and Government, the official delegations and the Organization, which has worked hard to convene this meeting today.

Today once again, I come to speak on behalf of my country. I come to speak on behalf of my compatriots. We come here to this forum where representatives from

more than 190 countries come to share their messages. We have different cultures and Governments with different ideologies and different social, economic, climatic and geographical situations. But if we are all here, that means that in some way we agreed, a long time ago, to be guided and protected by the same rights, obligations and principles under international law, with scant coercive power and where the same yardstick is often not applied to the great Powers than to smaller countries.

We come once again to the Assembly with a positive and optimistic vision of humankind, but we must not be naive. Objectively, we live in a better world, although of course our current reality has its challenges and threats. We are convinced that globalization, information technology, artificial intelligence and real-time communication are tools that help the integration and development of our peoples — of course, if they are used well. In that respect, there is a growing sense of responsibility among world leaders. I heard the Secretary-General emphasize that issue earlier today. We are in a world where speeches are actions; where, standing here, a world leader can generate consequences — be it an international conflict, a bank run or something else — just with his words.

Uruguay comes to the Assembly enjoying a full and stable democracy and in full respect for its institutions and the law, which is a historical tradition in our country. Despite the pandemic, despite the Russian invasion, despite different climatic factors, our country has restored its economy to what it was before the pandemic. Employment has improved and unemployment has decreased. We have made a historic public investment in infrastructure. We have received significant foreign direct investment and a large part of those revenues have been reinvested in our country, which signals an important sense of confidence. Public finances are in order. Inflation is at its lowest in the past 18 years. We have been able to lower taxes and, at the same time, we have carried out reforms that have long been urgent, such as educational and social security reform. Uruguayans practice a very precious and responsible freedom.

Earlier today, when I was writing part of my speech, I remembered what I said here in September 2021. Towards the end of my speech, I said that "[i]f there is a lesson to be drawn from the pandemic, it is that we are all one" (A/76/PV.6, p.20). For the very reason that we are truly all one, today I wish to refer

to responsible international freedom. It is clear that our well-being as independent countries is inextricably linked to the common good. Everyone must know that, accept it and, of course, act accordingly.

Many Heads of State have long raised the issue of the environment in this forum. I belong to a country that began calling itself “natural Uruguay” many years ago. Among other things, renewable energy in our country exceeds 90 per cent today. We have engaged in significant reforestation. We have sustainable production processes, and I could go on adding to a long list that affirms the concept of natural Uruguay. After many years of declarations and commitments, the international community has truly come to understand that the economy and the environment are closely associated. A few months ago, Uruguay issued a sustainable bond based on rewards and punishments that depend on compliance with parameters established in the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. I want to draw attention here today to the fact that we are convinced that this very system of rewards and punishments should apply to international loans, market access, quotas and tariffs, with the aim not only of punishing non-compliance, but also of rewarding those who have processes that are environmentally friendly and sustainable. In that way, as happens to us when we are children, the stimuli to improve will surely push nations to make a greater effort that will pay off in domestic economies and, obviously, at the global level.

In that regard, I want to share a situation that our country is going through and that, I am sure, some of the nations represented here are also experiencing. We could call it the sin of doing things well. What do I mean by the sin of doing things well? Our country has achieved important human and economic development, and because we have obtained those standards we are often denied access to certain cooperation and preference systems and certain very important instruments of international commercial relations. Obviously, I do not want to stop sharing in the spirit with which those mechanisms were created, but I believe that we must redesign them, because in some way they do not stimulate countries to grow and sustain themselves if they lose access to those conditions. I want to make it clear that Uruguay is not here to beg or make exaggerated claims, but simply, as I said earlier, in appealing for international responsible freedom, we want to act with justice. If we do things well, the international cooperation should act accordingly. That means nothing less and nothing more than improving access to opportunity.

I shall close here, because members have had a long day. I want once again here, as I have done in other forums, to firmly condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine and stand in solidarity with the Ukrainian people. I also concur with the Secretary-General in raising my voice against authoritarian populism that impoverishes its people and violates human rights, and thus condemns current and future generations.

Once again, perhaps in this area we will have to say a mea culpa, because the absence of a forceful and effective reaction from the international community has often exacerbated or failed to prevent such situations.

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

Mr. Luis Lacalle Pou, President of the Eastern Republic of Uruguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Czech Republic.

Mr. Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Pavel: It is a pleasure and a humbling experience to address this audience for the first time. This forum carries great responsibility for the shape of humankind's future. First and foremost, I see my address as an opportunity to present a vision of how we can coexist and cooperate as nations and global citizens.

Czechia aims to play a proactive and responsible role within the global community. No one can cope with current global challenges alone. That is why we strongly support the reforms proposed by the Secretary-General in his report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982). We want to work together on a more effective and inclusive multilateral system that is able to address the needs we

face. That is why Czechia has announced its candidacy for non-permanent membership of the Security Council for the term 2032-2033.

Last year, a permanent member of the Security Council, one of the founding nations of the Organization, blatantly violated the fundamental principles the United Nations stands upon. The full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine continues to constitute a manifest violation of the Charter of the United Nations and the international law we all subscribed to.

My country has its own experience with wars and interventions, including a decades-long military occupation imposed by Moscow. It taught us what it means when might makes right. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has come at an even higher cost. I personally visited Ukraine in April. My wife had the opportunity to visit the war-torn country only two weeks ago. I saw the infamous crime scenes at Bucha and Borodyanka. I found myself in the Dnipro region, only a few miles from the front line in an area ravaged by fighting.

The account of Russia's atrocities, human rights violations and ferocious attacks against the innocent civilian population is overwhelming. Children have been forcibly separated from their families, deported for re-education in order to make them forget their culture and who they are; entire towns and villages wiped out for no reason; mass graves and torture chambers in which people just disappear. Sadly, the evidence tells the story better than any statement. And the list of stories full of horror is endless, yet we cannot just passively observe it.

This must end. Russia must unconditionally withdraw all troops from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. Russia's leaders must be held accountable for the crime of aggression against its neighbour. That is why we have extended our support for the establishment of a special tribunal to prosecute the crime of aggression against Ukraine. It is our duty to ensure that those responsible for war crimes and crimes against humanity are held accountable.

Apart from the violence, injustice and suffering of civilians, every war also brings destruction. The reconstruction of Ukraine may be the largest rebuilding effort in modern history. We support establishing a register of damage caused by Russian military and we call on all States to join those efforts.

Czechia will support Ukraine in its just defence as long as necessary. From day one, we have stood by Ukraine's side and provided the defenders with weapons and ammunition. With the outbreak of Russian aggression against Ukraine, Czechia has also stepped up its support for Russian and Belorussian pro-democratic voices, and Prague has become an important hub for journalists and human rights defenders in need. For over 18 months, Czechia has been providing humanitarian assistance to the war-affected Ukrainian population. Per capita, my country has received more Ukrainian refugees — mostly women and children — than anybody else.

What the Ukrainian people truly deserve is peace — not just an end of hostilities but a just and durable peace. If it is to be sustainable, that peace cannot be based on an unjust compromise or conditions imposed by the conqueror, nor should it leave hopes for Russia to fulfil its imperial ambitions. It must be peace on the terms of the defender, not the aggressor, as President Zelenskyy of Ukraine stated earlier today.

Let us not forget that the damaging impacts of Russia's aggression are being felt across the world. Russia's blockade of Ukrainian ports and destruction of infrastructure and grain continue to weaponize global food security in the most reckless and cynical way. Let me be very clear. Ukraine's security is our own security — from Africa, to Europe, to Latin America, to Asia. I call on the leaders of the free world to maintain their unity and support for Ukraine.

The threats we face are global and interconnected. Because of Russia and a handful of other countries, our world is more dangerous and rougher. Instead of cultivating cooperative security, we have to build up our militaries. Instead of boosting social cohesion programmes and overcoming economic insecurity, we have to boost our defence budgets. Those who contest the international rules are steering the wheel of global security back towards confrontation, and sooner or later at the expense of all of us. Russia's reckless threats to use nuclear weapons, its policy of coercion and intimidation represent a threat to the balance and integrity of the whole system of non-proliferation. The announced stationing of nuclear weapons in Belarus is a further irresponsible escalation that Czechia condemns in the strongest terms. Unfortunately, Russia's fingerprints can be found in several other current crises.

The security, humanitarian and political crises unfolding in the Sahel region are more than worrisome. The international community must try to find a way to end the series of military coups and ensure a return to constitutional order. That is the only way countries can effectively protect themselves against terrorism. It is the only way the much-needed economic and social development called for by the Africans can take place.

The region remains vulnerable to numerous political, economic and climate risks. Its long-term stability, security and prosperity are crucial. We must offer genuine pragmatic partnerships. Some countries pretend to be willing to help. In reality, they create economic and political dependencies. Those undermine long-term stability and manipulate the free will of people by spreading lies and disinformation.

In Asia and Pacific, Czechia is an active and reliable ally and partner. The word “cooperation” must remain key to our joint efforts in the region. We deplore China’s military actions, which are raising tensions in the Taiwan Strait, and its unfriendly actions against partners in the South China Sea. Any dispute or contagious issue must be resolved peacefully. Any potential armed conflict in the region would have negative consequences for the whole world.

In North Korea and Iran, reckless escalation of nuclear or intercontinental ballistic missile activities, combined with a lack of transparency, threaten international and regional security. The same applies to any material support to Russia’s military aggression in Ukraine. It is clear that such supplies only aggravate the suffering of the Ukrainian civilian population.

The Middle East remains among the world’s most volatile regions, troubled by the spread of conflicts, terrorism and sectarian violence. Efforts to normalize relations between Israel and its Arab neighbours are positive steps towards stability and peace in the region.

Our efforts to maintain peace and security are closely linked with our ability to promote human well-being and the sustainable development of our societies. One may ask how a country of more than 10 million people can contribute to global ambitions. Given our own national experience with oppression, fundamental rights and freedoms are deeply embedded in our values system and foreign policy. Czechia strives to pursue an active human rights and democracy policy. We are a staunch supporter of international human rights mechanisms. Currently, we are proud to serve as the

presidency of the Human Rights Council. More than ever, we have to support media freedom to enable access to independent and factual information. Without it, disinformation and propaganda can win.

The Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Summit yesterday sent a strong message of urgency and determination. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a promise to current and future generations, which we have to keep. There is an urgent need to highlight the link between peace, security, climate and development, on the one hand, and human rights, justice and strong institutions on the other. In the latest SDG index, Czechia is ranked as the eighth most advanced country in the implementation of Agenda 2030 and its SDGs, yet we, too, face many challenges and we need to step up our efforts.

Climate change remains the single most destructive threat to the current and future existence and well-being of all humankind. It threatens our lives, livelihoods, food security, prosperity and, ultimately, peace and security worldwide. Czechs devote a great deal of attention to this issue. It is no coincidence that it was under the Czech presidency of the Council of the European Union last year that we finalized crucial legislation that is showing the path towards the green transition of our industry.

Thirty years after the end of the Cold War, we are witnessing the efforts of authoritarian regimes to redefine core principles of the multilateral order. Malign actors use cyberspace, disinformation, economic, political and other tools to disrupt democratic processes, to undermine our institutions and to weaken our security. The challenges we face today are significant and it is apparent that only collective action can ensure a safe and prosperous future for all. In that respect, Czechia recognizes its global responsibility and remains committed to ensuring that no one is left behind. I personally commit to working with the international community to complete the urgent tasks that must be done.

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

Mr. Petr Pavel, President of the Czech Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Palau.

Mr. Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Whipps: I congratulate President Francis on his election. As a fellow islander, he is well acquainted with the challenges common to all small island developing States (SIDS), from economic resilience and climate change to financing and security. We all look forward to working with him over the next year to meet those challenges.

We thank Secretary-General Guterres again for his tireless efforts and advocacy for a more secure, prosperous and sustainable world, which is our ultimate goal and what brings us together today.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a universal call to action. As a small island developing State, Palau faces economic challenges related to our small population. We are vulnerable to climate change. We struggle with the high cost of imported foods and goods, face infrastructure challenges due to our remote location. Those shared issues highlight the unique challenges faced by SIDS in our pursuit of sustainable development and a better life for our people.

Like other SIDS, Palau is working to build a diverse and resilient economy. We are looking to the digital world, which relies not on land mass but on our determination to succeed. That new perspective is borne out of a harsh lesson learned when the punches started coming about seven years ago. In 2016, Palau's economy, heavily reliant on tourism, had a significant downturn. In one year, we lost 13 per cent of our tourism. By 2019, the numbers had dropped a further 47 per cent. In fact, when the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) hit in 2021, that number fell to a mere 3,400 visitors, representing a 98 per cent decrease from the 2015 numbers.

I share those figures to underscore our susceptibility to external influences and the profound impact they have on our national economy. Already suffering from the drop in tourism, Palau was hit hard by the worldwide delay of goods caused by the pandemic. Factories shut down and logistical challenges led to delays in the delivery of equipment and supplies. Prices soared. Russia's invasion of Ukraine further aggravated the situation, causing gas prices to skyrocket.

The economic downturn experienced by Palau underscores the interconnectedness of our global community. If tourism challenges and COVID-19 were the one-two punch, the inflated cost of goods could have very well knocked us out. Luckily for us, we had the help and support of partners. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia, although geographically distant, had a ripple effect that led to the inflation of prices in Palau. That situation raises the importance of security and how destabilizing conflict can be to world order.

There are Palauans today who survived a war that was not of their own making, only to suffer the ripple effects of another. Current events serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need for peace and stability worldwide. We unequivocally condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine and call for an immediate cessation of hostilities. Similarly, we urge the United Nations and all parties involved in the Taiwan Straits to exercise restraint and seek a peaceful resolution to reduce tensions. The well-being and prosperity of nations and their economies are intrinsically linked to global peace and stability.

For the past two years, we have been striving to build a resilient economy amidst external pressures. A significant challenge has been outmigration. Since 1994, when we gained our independence, nearly half our population has left to seek new opportunities beyond our shores. That brain drain has not only reduced local capacity but also hindered growth. We are grateful to partner nations, including the United States, Japan, Taiwan, Australia and others, that provide assistance and training to assist with capacity and upskill the local population as well. We are also encouraged by discussions to promote economic investments that can potentially create job opportunities that can help discourage outmigration and promote economic growth.

Climate change is the most significant challenge to our progress towards achieving sustainable development. The impacts are evident in our coastal

areas, agricultural lands, marine resources, cultural heritage and, most important, our livelihoods. Assistance in mitigating and adapting to those impacts is crucial to our continued progress and survival. In my youth, I would spearfish on the reef with my father, helping to provide for our family. There was one remote island in Palau's southern waters where we would go. It was alive with birds, turtles, fish, and clams. Recently, I revisited that island with my children, witnessing turtles laying eggs. The island had diminished in size by two-thirds due to sea-level rise. Sadly, half of the turtle eggs laid that night were in the tidal zone and unlikely to survive. That heart-wrenching reality mirrors the fate of our homes and cultures if we fail to take decisive action.

We urgently call on the Group of 20 (G-20) nations, responsible for 80 per cent of global carbon emissions, to uphold their commitments to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and to limit warming to 1.5°C. That is crucial to mitigating such climate change impacts like disappearing islands and unhatched turtle eggs. As major emitters, G-20 nations have a crucial role to play in emission reduction and leading the path towards sustainable development. We urge the United Nations to simplify access to multilateral funds for SIDS and other vulnerable communities, promoting a faster transition. We call on the international community to work with SIDS to increase access to climate finance. We believe that it is time that we change the metrics we use to determine how we access those funds by using a better, multi-vulnerability index.

However, we must ensure that commitments pledged here are acted upon and not forgotten. We have a saying in Palau: *Ng ko er a teribsel a daob* —“Let us not be like the foam riding on the waves of the ocean, drifting without settling.” That Palauan saying refers to meetings where much is said but afterwards no action is taken.

Despite those challenges, we acknowledge the progress that has been made. The twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow and the twenty-seventh Conference in Sharm-al-Sheik were successful, leading to green domestic policies in some of the world's largest economies. We appreciate the support of nations opposing and placing a moratorium on deep-sea mining. Proponents argue that seabed minerals aid renewable transition, but the reality is we lack knowledge about potential impacts on underwater

ecosystems that devastating activity could have. We know that disturbing the ocean bed could release stored carbon dioxide, directly setting back our efforts to combat climate change. We advocate for a global deep-sea mining moratorium, adhering to the precautionary principle of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea.

On a positive note, tomorrow Palau will sign the 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 areas of national jurisdiction. Universal participation is crucial, especially on the part of developed countries that can provide implementation means and engage in areas beyond national jurisdiction activities. This moment signifies global unity in protecting high seas biodiversity.

Palau also takes this opportunity to second United States President Joseph Biden's call for Security Council reform. We believe that such reform would introduce fresh perspectives and allow nations like Japan a permanent seat in the Council, which has seen little change since its establishment in 1945. We also propose considering the abolishment of veto powers, which can obstruct effective United Nations action. The upcoming Summit of the Future in 2024 and the eightieth anniversary of the United Nations in 2025 present fitting opportunities to demonstrate progress in the Security Council.

We also advocate for change regarding the Republic of China on Taiwan, which has been unjustly excluded from United Nations processes despite its remarkable leadership and innovative solutions. Taiwan has collaborated with Palau on vital issues such as tourism, agriculture, ocean conservation, climate, gender equality, education and innovation. We urge the United Nations to allow Taiwan's meaningful participation in crucial specialized agencies and processes like the World Health Organization, the International Civil Aviation Organization and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Taiwan's 23 million people have much to offer the world. The Charter of the United Nations affirms the equal rights of all peoples and nations. We urge the United Nations to uphold that vision by allowing Taiwan to participate and contribute.

Our world is under siege from war and climate change, threats that undermine sustainable development and have driven many into poverty. The Ukraine crisis

exemplifies this, with lives lost, property destroyed and essential supplies disrupted. Those crises are not distant threats but harsh realities affecting millions, including those in the Pacific islands. We must act now to improve life across our shared ocean and world.

The Palauan story of Tebang teaches us the power of unity. Tebang and his friends went to the forest to fell a large tree, to be carved into a canoe. Unfortunately, the log ended up in a taro swamp. Unable to move it, Tebang went home to consult his father, who gave him a chant. He returned with all his friends, and together they chanted “*Ikamuu!*” or “It can move!” They began pulling in unison, which allowed the log to be pulled from the swamp to the shoreline to be carved into a canoe. Just as Tebang and his friends moved the log, we too can move mountains if we speak and act together. Our task may be daunting, but remember: “*Ikamuu!*” We can move towards a sustainable future where our grandchildren can breathe clean air, swim in pristine seas, live in peace and prosper.

So let us raise our voices together and chant our own “*Ikamuu!*” Let us move this world towards a better tomorrow. Together, we are unstoppable. Together, we can ensure a thriving planet for generations to come. Let us seize this moment with unity and determination. Let us unite for a better tomorrow, because together, we can move. We are truly stronger together.

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

Mr. Surangel S. Whipps Jr., President of the Republic of Palau, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Republic of Senegal.

Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Sall (*spoke in French*): On behalf of Senegal, I wish President Dennis Francis every success in presiding over the work of the General Assembly. I thank his predecessor and renew our support for the Secretary-General in the exercise of his duties in the service of the Organization.

Since our last session, the state of the world has not improved. For millions of people, daily life remains marked by fear, violence, poverty and inequality. Many countries continue to suffer the economic and social impact of the coronavirus disease pandemic. Global warming has reached unprecedented levels. The tragedy of irregular migration reminds us of the need to implement the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, and to relentlessly pursue the fight against the criminal networks that organize the illicit traffic in human beings. High-intensity warfare puts humankind at risk of major catastrophe. In Africa, the resurgence of coups d'état remains a matter of serious concern. Senegal reiterates its strong condemnation of any form of unconstitutional change of Government.

The emergency of the hour is also terrorism, which continues to gain ground in Africa, without an appropriate reaction from the Security Council. On numerous occasions, in particular during its mandate on the Council in 2016 and 2017, Senegal has warned of the ineffectiveness of peacekeeping operations in Africa, whose mandates and equipment are barely able to respond to the nature of the situations. There is no peace to maintain where instead it must be restored by fighting armed groups who pillage and slaughter innocent populations on a daily basis, occupy entire territories and threaten States in their very existence. The tumultuous experiences of two current peace missions in Africa are edifying in that respect. Consequently, Senegal once again invites the Security Council to fully assume its responsibilities in the fight against terrorism in Africa by virtue of the collective security mechanism provided for by the Charter of the United Nations.

In the same spirit, we call for a de-escalation and peaceful settlement of the war in Ukraine.

We reiterate our support for the right of the Palestinian people to a viable State, coexisting peacefully with the State of Israel, each within secure and internationally recognized borders.

The theme of this session reminds us that the ideal underlying multilateralism is to create and promote trusting, supportive and inclusive relations among

countries. Senegal recognizes the valuable services that the United Nations and Bretton Woods systems have provided to member countries for almost 80 years, but we all know that the multilateral system, a legacy of a bygone past, has become obsolete.

However, as Secretary-General António Guterres has rightly warned, a system that continues to ignore the realities of its time and the needs of more than three-quarters of its member countries accentuates inequalities, generates conditions that challenge it and causes the risk of its fragmentation. If we want to avoid that dissolution, wisdom dictates that we reform global political, economic and financial governance to make it more representative of diversity and thereby reinforce its legitimacy. We can get there if we put in the necessary political will.

The Group of 20 (G-20) demonstrated that by admitting the African Union as a full member. I warmly thank the members of the G-20 for their unanimous support for that initiative, which Senegal put forward during its current presidency of the African Union. We hope that the example of inclusion thus given by the G-20 will be followed by the Security Council and the Bretton Woods institutions, for a multilateralism more representative of the interests of all its members.

Likewise, Senegal remains committed to the vision of peaceful international relations based on the equal dignity of peoples, cultures and civilizations. On 31 October 1961, one year after our country gained its independence, President Léopold Sédar Senghor expressed that vision here in these words:

“[N]o one particular civilization ... could be imposed without the bulk of mankind rising up against it” (A/PV.1045, *para.* 17).

Sixty-two years later, our position remains the same. Among free peoples, whose history and sociocultural realities are diverse, there can be no legitimacy for some to define and impose on everyone else a single way of living, as a kind of civilizational ready-to-wear. What works for some may not necessarily work for others. Together, we can practice our shared values, but together we must respect our differences. That, for Senegal, is what must establish a revitalized universalism, more open and more effective in addressing the challenges of our time.

Among those challenges is the climate emergency. While extreme phenomena are increasing, Senegal remains committed to the implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. Thus, thanks to our

proactive energy mix policy, renewable energies now represent 31 per cent of our established electrical capacity. With the signing last June of our Just Energy Transition Partnership agreement, we aim to increase that rate to 40 per cent by 2030. I thank the Group of Seven partner countries that are supporting us in mobilizing €2.5 billion over a period of three to five years, starting in 2023, to finance our projects under the Partnership.

At the same time, we are continuing to build low-carbon and climate-resilient infrastructure, including two projects for mass transport systems: a regional express train and a rapid transit bus line, both electric. With the execution of national and continental projects, such as the Great Green Wall, our countries are clearly committed to climate action, within their means. The fact remains that, for the most part, green projects in Africa are financed by recourse to commercial debt, whereas they should be supported by the mobilization of the \$100 billion per year agreed at the fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2009 to finance the climate action.

Climate justice would require that a continent that contributes less than 4 per cent of emissions yet suffers the most should not be condemned to fall into debt to repair and prevent damage for which it is not responsible. Senegal is in favour of a just and equitable energy transition, taking into account the specific needs of our countries, including universal access to electricity, of which more than 600 million Africans remain deprived. Thus, if we want the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to be the venue for promises kept, let us ensure that the funding announced is available and accessible according to simplified and transparent procedures and terms.

On 25 February 2024, Senegal will hold its presidential election. Like the previous ones, it will be democratic, free and transparent, and on 2 April, I will hand over power to my successor after 12 years at the head of our country. I would like to thank the States Members of our Organization for their friendship and cooperation. Embodying the voice of Senegal, establishing and maintaining friendships in this concert of nations where our common efforts are harmonized towards our common ends has been a great honour for me.

On behalf of the Senegalese people, I would like to express my gratitude to all my colleagues and to ask them to welcome my successor with the same friendship and consideration. I will maintain the same feelings of cordial friendship and esteem for everyone. I am confident that in the Senegalese tradition of openness and dialogue,

my successor will be faithful to the relations of trusting friendship that unite our country and all the Members of the United Nations.

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

Mr. Macky Sall, President of the Republic of Senegal, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 8 (continued)

General debate

Address by Mr. Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr. Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Scholz (Germany) (*spoke in German; English text provided by the delegation*): Fifty years ago, almost to the day, two German States joined the United Nations: the then German Democratic Republic, as the 133rd Member, and the Federal Republic of Germany, as the 134th Member. That step is of great importance to us Germans to this very day, for membership of the United Nations enabled my country — the instigator of terrible and horrific crimes — to return to the family of peace-loving nations. We are profoundly grateful for that chance.

That return was not free of requirements. The accession of the two German States was preceded by a visionary policy of détente. The aim, as my predecessor — Federal Chancellor and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Willy Brandt — said here in New York 50 years ago, was to “fill in the rifts left behind by the cold war” (A/PV.2128, *para.* 9). Three things were essential for that.

The first was the clear commitment of both German States to resolve conflicts without force. That was laid down in the Basic Treaty between Bonn and East Berlin, as well as in the treaties that the Federal Republic of Germany concluded with its eastern neighbours.

The second prerequisite was the renunciation of any form of revisionism by recognizing Germany’s new

borders, drawn after the Second World War, as inviolable. At the time, many people in West Germany were opposed to that. In retrospect, however, it proved to be the right decision.

Finally, the third prerequisite was a foreign policy that did not ignore the realities of the Cold War and that, at the same time, always remained focused on overcoming the status quo — that is to say, the confrontation between the blocs and thus also the unnatural division of Germany.

When I look back here today at the beginnings of our membership of the United Nations, I do so not only out of historical interest, but because the prohibition of the use of force remains the unfulfilled core pledge of our United Nations. That is because the inviolability of borders and the sovereign equality of States also have to be defended in our multipolar world by us all, and because we today — especially today — need the courage, creative energy and will to fill in the rifts, which are deeper than ever.

Germany is strongly committed to those three ideals: the renunciation of the use of force as a political instrument, the rejection of any kind of revisionism and the determination to engage in cooperation beyond any dividing factors. It is to those ideals that we Germans owe the great fortune of living in a unified country today, in peace with our neighbours, friends and partners around the world.

At the same time, what Willy Brandt stated here 50 years is all the more true today:

“In a world in which we are all increasingly dependent on each other, a policy for peace must not stop on our own doorstep” (*ibid.*, *para.* 33).

German policy cannot and never will be limited to pursuing our interests with no consideration for others, because we know that our freedom, our democracy and our prosperity are deeply rooted in the well-being of Europe and the world.

That is why the order of the day is not less cooperation, sometimes packaged today as decoupling or as cooperation only among the like-minded. Instead, we need more cooperation. Existing alliances must be strengthened and partners sought, for that is the only way to reduce the risks of excessively one-sided dependencies. That is all the more true in a world which, in contrast to 50 years ago, no longer has only two centres of power. Rather, it has many.

Multipolarity is not a new order. Anyone who assumes that smaller countries are the backyards of larger ones is mistaken. Multipolarity is not a normative category but a description of today's reality. Anyone seeking order in a multipolar world has to start here at the United Nations. That is why Germany supports the United Nations system and, as the second-largest contributor after the United States, pays its regular budget assessments with full conviction. Only the United Nations — on the basis of the values enshrined in its Charter — can fully realize the aspirations of universal representation and sovereign equality for all. That cannot be said of the Group of Seven, the Group of 20 (G-20) — as important as they are for achieving international consensus — the BRICS group of Brazil, Russian Federation, India, China and South Africa, or of other groups.

I know that some will counter by asking: Is the United Nations not all too often unable to take action, paralysed by the antagonisms of its heterogeneous membership? My response to them is that the obstruction of a few, no matter how influential they, should not lead us to forget that we, the overwhelming majority of States, agree on many things. All of us — almost all of us — want force as a political instrument to remain banned. All of us have an interest in ensuring that the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of our countries are respected. And all of us should know what that requires — namely, that we also grant those rights to others. Those golden rules are universal, even if many of us were not yet sitting around the table when the Charter of the United Nations was adopted in 1945.

Yet only 10 years later, in Bandung, Indonesia, it was the African and Asian States liberated from colonialism that raised their voices to call for self-determination, territorial integrity, the sovereign equality of all States and a world without colonialism and imperialism. That seems more relevant today than ever before. It is by those principles that we, whether large or small, will all be judged. Those principles must also form the basis when it comes to reshaping our multipolar world. Only then can the global challenges of our time be mastered.

The greatest challenge of all is anthropogenic climate change. Of course, the traditional industrialized countries have a very special responsibility in the fight against the climate crisis. However, many other countries are among the biggest emitters today. Instead of waiting for others, we all have to do more together to achieve the Paris climate goals. Each and every one of us must have the opportunity to gain the same level of prosperity as people in Europe, North America or countries such as Japan or Australia.

However, our planet will not survive if that economic development is attained with the technologies and production processes of the nineteenth or twentieth centuries — with combustion engines and coal-fired power plants. That leads us to one conclusion — we have to decouple economic development from carbon dioxide emissions. That is already happening in many countries, for we have the solutions and technologies.

As a key nation in the field of technology, we are offering to cooperate here for the common good. If producers of renewable energies and their industrial users come together across continents, we will create new prosperity together in many places around the world. I am pleased to announce today that Germany is honouring its pledges on international climate financing. From €2 billion in 2014 and more than €4 billion in 2020, we tripled our contribution last year to €6 billion. We have therefore kept our word, as will the industrialized countries as a whole, which will hit their target of €100 billion for international climate financing for the first time this year. That is an important and overdue signal before we take stock in Dubai this December and negotiate new climate action plans for the period after 2030.

I believe that it is important that we be as concrete and as binding as possible. That is why I advocate that we set clear targets in Dubai for the expansion of renewable energies and for greater energy efficiency. We will be equally ambitious when it comes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Climate action or development — that trade-off will not work. Our Summit yesterday brought home to me how urgent it is that we make up for lost time when it comes to the SDGs, too. We therefore want to use next year's Summit of the Future, which we are currently preparing with our friends from Namibia, to pick up the pace and push ahead with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It is important to me in that context that we ensure more private investment in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

Let me offer just one example. The entire world is currently talking about the diversification of supply chains and raw materials security. Would it not be a start if at least the first production step were to take place on-site, where the raw material deposits are to be found? Certainly, Germany and German businesses are open to entering into partnerships of that very nature.

Of course, in the coming years we will all face the challenge of leading our economies, our energy supplies and our infrastructure to a resource-efficient, climate-neutral

future. That will require major investment. To create the right conditions to bring about that investment, we have to address the debt crisis in many countries and modernize the international financial architecture. I said at the start that Germany is not clinging to the status quo, including on this issue either. We want something to change.

I have been calling — most recently at the G-20 Summit in Delhi — for the multilateral development banks to reform so that they can contribute more to financing the protection of global public goods such as the climate and biodiversity or the prevention of pandemics. That is what the G-20 decided in Delhi. Germany is also providing financial support for this reform. We will be the first country to invest hybrid capital, to the tune of €305 million, in the World Bank. It is estimated that this capital will enable the World Bank to provide more than €2 billion in additional loans.

Secretary-General António Guterres has pointed to the rapidly increasing demand and humanitarian needs arising from the many crises worldwide. Germany is the second-largest donor of humanitarian assistance around the globe and will continue to stand by the people who need it most.

The United Nations itself must not cling to the status quo, and by that I mean two things. First, the United Nations must tackle the challenges of the future, just as Secretary-General Guterres has proposed. One of the major issues, in my view, is how we can ensure that innovation and technological advances are used by humankind as a whole. Artificial intelligence, for example, offers tremendous opportunities. At the same time, it can cement the division of the world if only a few benefit from it, if algorithms only take part of reality into account, or if access is limited to richer countries. That is why Germany is actively fostering exchange on the Global Digital Compact. We should also talk about common rules for the possible use of generative artificial intelligence as a weapon.

Another question that will define our future is how the United Nations itself represents the reality of a multipolar world. To date, it has not done so sufficiently. That is most evident in the composition of the Security Council. I am therefore delighted that a growing number of partners — including three permanent members — have stated that they want to see progress on reform.

However, one thing is clear. Africa deserves greater representation, as do Asia and Latin America. Under that premise, we can negotiate a text with various options. No country should obstruct those open-ended negotiations

with excessively high demands. Germany will not do so either. Ultimately, it is up to the General Assembly to decide on a reform of the Security Council. Until then, Germany would like to shoulder responsibility as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, and I ask members to support our candidacy for 2027-2028.

When I speak of peace these days before the Assembly, my thoughts are with those for whom peace is a distant dream. My thoughts are with the Sudanese, who have become victims of a brutal power struggle between two warlords, and with the men and women in Eastern Congo and, as we speak, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, where resumed military activities will lead only to a dead end and must come to a halt. Of course, my thoughts are with the Ukrainians, who are fighting for their lives and their freedom, for independence and their country's territorial integrity in order to safeguard those very principles to which we have all committed ourselves in the United Nations Charter.

But Russia's war of aggression has caused immense suffering not only in Ukraine. People around the world are suffering as a result of inflation, growing debts, the scarcity of fertilizer, hunger and increasing poverty. Precisely because the war is having unbearable consequences around the world, it is right and proper that the world be involved in the quest for peace. At the same time, we should beware of phoney solutions that represent peace in name only, for peace without freedom is called oppression. Peace without justice is called dictatorship.

Moscow, too, must finally understand that, for let us not forget that Russia is responsible for this war, and it is Russia's President who can end it at any time with one single order. But if he is to do so, he has to understand that we, the States of the United Nations, are serious about our principles and that in the multipolar world of the twenty-first century, we do not see a place for revisionism and imperialism. No one here in New York has expressed that as aptly as our colleague, the Ambassador of Kenya. After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, he said this in the Security Council:

(spoke in English)

“Rather than form nations that looked ever backwards into history with a dangerous nostalgia, we chose to look forward to a greatness that none of our many nations and peoples had ever known.” (S/PV.8970, p. 8)

Germany's history holds many lessons about the dangers of such nostalgia. That is why we chose a different path when we joined the United Nations 50 years

ago — the path of peace and reconciliation, the path of recognizing existing borders, the path of cooperation with all in the pursuit of a better and more equitable world. It started with a solemn promise that we made 50 years ago, a promise every one of us made upon joining the United Nations — to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security. Let us all do our best to live up to that promise.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Olaf Scholz, Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Japan.

Mr. Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Kishida (Japan) (*spoke in Japanese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): We have gathered in New York once again. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are at their midpoint, facing mounting obstacles. To our dismay, the aggression against Ukraine has yet to cease.

This year, as the world stands at a historical inflection point, Japan is serving as a non-permanent member of the Security Council and the presidency of the Group of Seven (G-7). In those capacities, I have heard the desperate calls for peace and the pleas of vulnerable people seeking help. We should respond to these voices and work towards a world filled with cooperation, not division and confrontation. That is my message to all the leaders of the Member States. In his report *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), Secretary-General Guterres called for international solidarity. Let us renew our commitment to a strong and effective multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core.

The world is facing complex and interrelated issues, ranging from climate change and infectious diseases to challenges to the rule of law. Now, at a time when international cooperation is needed more than ever, we

cannot overcome those difficulties if the international community remains divided over ideologies or values. That is why I believe we should go back to the very basic foundation of treating human life and dignity with paramount importance. We should aim for a world caring for human dignity, where vulnerable people can live safely and securely.

At a time when the international community is facing multiple crises and increasingly being divided, we need a common language that resonates with all of us. By shedding new light on human dignity, I believe that the international community can overcome differences in regimes or values and steadily advance human-centred international cooperation. Japan has led human-centred international cooperation based on the concept of human security. With that approach, we need to accelerate efforts among the international community to achieve the SDGs. The dignity of the individual must not be neglected as States and the international community tackle global challenges. To overcome inequalities and achieve the SDGs, quality growth and sustainable growth are essential. The key is to invest in people, which is my political credo.

The gender perspective is also important for quality growth. Japan aims to reduce inequalities and overcome social divisions by promoting women's participation. Japan will promote transparent and fair development finance in accordance with international rules to achieve sustainable growth in developing countries. Private finance will also be tapped to fill the gap of development finance. Japan will work with other countries to find ways to manage economies that protect human dignity while attracting investment dynamism.

In order to address unprecedented crises and challenges and to protect and strengthen human dignity, let us start step by step where we can. The first step is cooperation towards the realization of a peaceful and stable international community where human dignity is respected. Hailing from Hiroshima, which was devastated by atomic bombing, I have made nuclear disarmament my lifelong mission. With a view to achieving a world without nuclear weapons, we will continue to bolster realistic and practical efforts, while upholding and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by implementing measures under the Hiroshima Action Plan. I call on the political leaders of nuclear-weapon States and other countries around the globe to step up their engagement on nuclear disarmament so that people from all walks of life are exposed to its importance and take concrete action, not despite of but because of the challenging security environment. With a view to working towards

a world without nuclear weapons, which we have been striving for together with the hibakusha — the surviving victims of atomic bombings — we must crystalize the nuclear disarmament trend, which has been successfully mainstreamed thanks to the efforts of our predecessors.

As we speak, we are faced with the threat of the reversal of the downward trend of the global number of nuclear weapons. The significance of a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other explosive devices (FMCT), which was avowed here in the General Assembly 30 years ago, has not diminished by any measure. That is why I recently co-hosted a high-level event on FMCT, with the Philippines and Australia, to refocus political attention towards the FMCT on the thirtieth year of its initial proposal. Having nuclear-weapon States engage in concrete nuclear disarmament measures is key. Japan, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council, will work with the United Nations and relevant States to promote dialogue between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States.

To set in stone the trend of mainstreaming nuclear disarmament, it is paramount to transcend purely governmental efforts and to engage in multilayered efforts. To overcome the divisive debate among academia and Government over whether we should be choosing deterrence or disarmament, Japan will contribute ¥3 billion to establish a Japan chair for a world without nuclear weapons at overseas research institutes and think tanks. We will also continue to build a global network of young people for nuclear abolition, making use of the Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons, which I established last year in cooperation with the United Nations. It is also essential to ensure nuclear safety and the security of nuclear materials and facilities, including in situations of conflict.

We also need to defend the dignity of people threatened by armed conflicts. Russia's aggression against Ukraine continues. A food crisis must not be perpetuated. Supporting vulnerable people in Africa, the Middle East and elsewhere is essential.

We need to protect the safety of women and children, who are the most vulnerable in conflict situations, strengthen border controls and measures against trafficking in persons, and provide international support to retrieve abducted children. The women and peace and security agenda identifies women as crucial and active players in relevant policies for peace and security, and Japan will continue to promote that agenda.

The second issue is how to strike a balance between the progress of digitalization and human dignity. Digitalization is bringing benefits to all; however, there are risks of privacy and human rights violations. We need a digital ecosystem and international rules that are compatible with human dignity. That is why, at the G-7 Hiroshima Summit, we launched the Hiroshima Artificial Intelligence (AI) Process on generative AI, towards attaining trustworthy AI. Japan will also strengthen its support for digitalization in developing countries while ensuring cybersecurity.

Thirdly, Japan will work to mitigate the potential impact on people that may arise before net zero is achieved. Asian countries are the key to globally achieving net zero. Under the Asia Zero Emission Community initiative, Japan will promote effective cooperation, taking into account various needs.

Japan will further support disaster risk reduction for countries vulnerable to climate change, including island States, aiding efforts towards resilient economies and societies against sea level rise and natural disasters associated with extreme weather events. The ocean is a new frontier with abundant potential, and it is essential to take comprehensive measures, including making use of blue carbon to tackle climate change.

The perspective of international law is also important. Japan supports the preservation of existing baselines under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, even after the future regression of coastlines due to sea level rise. As the G-7 presidency, we have set a framework for cooperation on biodiversity conservation and a target of reducing additional plastic pollution to zero by 2040. Japan will continue to contribute in the field of environmental protection.

Fourthly, we must prepare for the next infectious disease outbreak. We must be ready for the next infectious disease, learning from the lessons learned in our fight against the coronavirus disease. At the G-7, both the public and private sectors have pledged more than \$48 billion to achieve universal health coverage and to strengthen prevention, preparedness and response to health crises. Japan will contribute \$7.5 billion for the period 2022-2025. Together with the mobilization of domestic financial resources, Japan supports mobilizing financial resources in the private sector through the promotion of impact investments. Japan will continue to work with developing countries, including emerging economies, to ensure equitable access to medical countermeasures for health emergencies, based on the Group of 20 outcomes.

At a time when the world is at an historical inflection point, we must reflect on how we started here. Inscribed in the Charter of the United Nations is the firm determination of our predecessors, following the experience of two world wars, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war and to protect human dignity. The principles of the United Nations Charter, such as sovereign equality, respect for territorial integrity and the prohibition of the use of force, are fundamental principles of international law allowing people to live in peace and provide the basis of the rule of law.

International law exists for the benefit of weaker States. Together, under the rule of law, Japan would like to protect the right of vulnerable nations and peoples to live in peace in order to safeguard and strengthen human dignity. However, to this day, Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, is infringing upon international law and the rule of law. Unilateral changes to the status quo by force or coercion are unacceptable anywhere in the world. The situation, which the General Assembly has repeatedly condemned as a violation of the United Nations Charter and human rights, must be rectified as soon as possible and the nuclear threat must be ended.

In March, I announced a new plan for a free and open Indo-Pacific. Based on the principles of freedom, the rule of law, inclusiveness, openness and diversity, Japan will work with countries that share a vision of a world where diverse nations coexist and prosper together. Japan will further extend our support for peacekeepers. Japan will strengthen the scope and quality of the United Nations Triangular Partnership Programme, with an additional contribution of approximately \$9 million to support the capacity-building of personnel deployed in African Union peace support operations.

Japan's policy on North Korea remains unchanged. Japan seeks to normalize its relationship with North Korea, in accordance with the Japan-Democratic People's Republic of Korea Pyongyang Declaration, by comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, and the settlement of our unfortunate past. From the perspective of opening up a new era together, I would like to convey my determination to meet with President Kim Jong Un face to face, at any time and without any conditions, and to hold high-level talks under my direct supervision to realize a summit meeting at an early date.

The United Nations should be a place of listening to the voices of people facing difficulties, empowering them and overcoming such difficulties through cooperation. It

should not be a place of confrontation and division. This year, we have agreed on concrete measures to strengthen the structures that support the President of the General Assembly. That is a firm step towards a United Nations for cooperation. We commend the Secretary-General's leadership with his vision for multilateralism.

Initiatives to limit the use of the veto, which exacerbates divisions and confrontation in the United Nations, will strengthen and restore confidence in the Security Council. Japan will also pursue its efforts to increase the transparency of discussions in the Security Council, including by improving access to deliberations in the Security Council for Member States other than the permanent members. To that end, Japan will contribute to the clarification of the rules of the Security Council.

The world is changing dramatically. We need a Security Council that reflects the world today. Japan supports increased representation of Africa and the need to expand both the permanent and the non-permanent membership of the Council. Looking ahead to next year's Summit of the Future and the subsequent eightieth anniversary of the United Nations, now is the opportunity to move to concrete action.

International cooperation that protects and strengthens human dignity will be the driving force that brings the world back towards the same goal. I am looking forward to deepening this discussion at next year's Summit of the Future with future generations in mind. As we envision the post-2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development world, I believe that human dignity should be the core principle that illuminates the future of the international community. Let us join our forces to strengthen human dignity and create a United Nations for cooperation.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of Japan for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Kishida Fumio, Prime Minister of Japan, was escorted from the rostrum.

The meeting rose at 9.50 p.m.