



General Assembly

Seventieth session

22nd plenary meeting
Thursday, 1 October 2015, 9 a.m.
New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Lykketoft (Denmark)

The meeting was called to order at 9.05 a.m.

Address by Mr. Dragan Čović, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Mr. Dragan Čović, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Dragan Čović, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Čović (*spoke in Bosnian; English text provided by the delegation*): Six days ago, world leaders, who gathered in this very Hall, brought to life a new vision of a just and sustainable world, free from poverty, fear and oppression. We agreed that our achievements, as well as our mistakes and failures, of the past decades formed a sufficiently solid foundation to transform the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) into a reality, rather than a utopia.

The determination and unity that we have demonstrated in creating and adopting the new Agenda have a special symbolism this year as we mark the seventieth anniversary of the Organization that continues to bring us all together, big and small

countries alike, and has never ceased to be a beacon of hope in times of despair.

The anniversary that we are celebrating also offers us an opportunity to analyse and evaluate the degree of progress that we have made individually and collaboratively in achieving the objectives set out in the Charter of the United Nations. We do that in the context of today's highly dynamic global environment, which continues to bring in new challenges.

Those challenges are many, and it is increasingly difficult to predict the consequences of our failure to address them effectively. The crisis in Syria was, until only recently, merely a crisis in one country in one region of the Middle East. Not long ago, the refugee and the migrant crisis of the Syrian people materialized on our country's own borders and reminded us that events in other places and regions and events at our own borders are closely intertwined and inseparable in today's global environment.

The number of refugees and displaced persons fleeing destruction and death, leaving their homes and seeking a safe haven, is increasing literally each hour. For the majority of countries, the waves of refugees that arrive confront them with a heavier burden than they are able to manage. In addition, the tragedies involving innocent victims — especially and unforgivably children — place a great sense of responsibility not only on individual States, but also on the entire international community. They also test the limits of human solidarity and empathy. At the same time, it is

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (<http://documents.un.org>).

15-29658 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



a warning to us that we must find urgent and effective solutions.

We are therefore very concerned at the deterioration in the devastating conflict in Syria, which continues to destabilize the region and presents an extremely serious threat to international peace and security. Bosnia and Herzegovina strongly condemns the unspeakable suffering and torture that the Syrian people are being subjected to. In that regard, we support the efforts of the Secretary-General, the United Nations and the broader international community to find a political and peaceful solution to the crisis in Syria. We believe that it is essential that the political transition in Syria be conducted in accordance with the Geneva communiqué of 2012 (S/2012/522, annex).

We are also carefully monitoring the situation in Yemen. We are very concerned about the political destabilization of that country and the deterioration in the security and humanitarian situation there, which have, to date, taken on intolerable proportions in that country. We call on all sides to come to a peaceful settlement of all the outstanding issues in order to establish a lasting peace and to allow, without delay, the distribution of humanitarian aid to the civilian population. In that context, the safety of the humanitarian-aid staff and the United Nations staff must be ensured.

As for the situation in Ukraine, we hope that the parties to that conflict will adhere to the peace agreement reached in Minsk as the basis for a lasting solution.

Terrorism and violent extremism are, without any doubt, the most serious of all the challenges we face today. The ideology of such groups, which is characterized by an absolute disregard for human life, is seriously undermining the fundamental values and achievements of civilization.

Bosnia and Herzegovina supports the full implementation of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and the work of the Counter-Terrorism Committee, the activities of which have already shown results in strengthening intergovernmental cooperation and improving the capacity of individual Member States in that area. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a member of the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, established in 2014 and led by the United States, and it is one of the countries providing material assistance to the Government of Iraq as part of that effort.

As the Chair of the Council of Europe, our country leads the Council's actions in the fight against terrorism, particularly through strengthening the legal framework, pursuant to the provisions of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014). The adoption of the Additional Protocol to the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, adopted by the Committee of Ministers in May 2015, is a significant step in the fight against terrorism. I would like to take this opportunity to emphasize the importance of article 7 of the Additional Protocol, which provides for the parties to exchange information among the designated points of contact available on a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week basis.

A limited military response, when used as the only instrument in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, has accomplished only short-lived results. Along with decisive, thorough, dedicated and well-coordinated military action, there must be a comprehensive strategy and holistic approach to combating violent extremism and terrorism, which should be aimed at addressing the root causes of the phenomenon. Among other measures, reducing poverty and inequality, improving education and providing opportunities to young generations are extremely important, even crucial. Furthermore, eliminating the effects of prejudice and xenophobia in our societies and communities also remains essential, if we wish to counter the spread of the ideology of violent extremism.

Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes the extremely important agreement on the Iranian nuclear programme, reached in Vienna in July 2015. We believe that that historic agreement is evidence of the true superiority of diplomatic efforts and the parties' determination to find a peaceful solution. The agreement can serve as a guideline for the resolution of other crisis situations.

Undoubtedly, the United Nations offers a guarantee of collective responsibility and security, notably through the greater use of preventive diplomacy and mediation, solid and carefully planned mandates for peacekeeping operations, and instruments for building lasting peace. Bosnia and Herzegovina has endeavoured to share its vast experience in peacebuilding and democratic transition, particularly through our membership since January 2014 in the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission. We support all activities and peace initiatives aimed at conflict prevention, and we actively contribute to collective security on a global scale. By participating in the United Nations peacekeeping missions in South Sudan, Cyprus,

Somalia, Afghanistan, the Congo and Mali, we contribute in the most direct way to maintaining and building world peace.

Following the suggestions of the United Nations, Bosnia and Herzegovina has had a significant participation of female police officers among our peacekeeping mission personnel; they now account for more than 20 per cent of the total number of our mission personnel. While our contribution to peacekeeping operations, in terms of numbers, is not as large as some participating countries with far larger military and police forces, we are very proud of the bravery of our Bosnia and Herzegovina police officers in peacekeeping missions around the world.

The degree of equality of women and girls compared to men with regard to certain rights has remained at a high level for decades in my country. We have always considered women to be the pillars of the family and communities and the bearers of our society's development. Today, in the light of the events that my country has endured, we are convinced that women can be a major factor in reconciliation as well. We will therefore invest still greater efforts into advancing women's interests, primarily as the best way to heal our society, mend what was broken, strengthen the family and enable women's further development on the basis of full equality. As a member of the Executive Board of UN-Women, Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to invest efforts in promoting human rights at the international level, particularly through the strengthening of the status of women in accordance with the Beijing Platform for Action and the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Exactly 20 years ago, Bosnia and Herzegovina achieved a long-desired peace. Today, we are intensively working on implementing a reform agenda aimed at improving socioeconomic conditions and the rule of law in our country. At the same time, we are implementing the obligations that we have accepted under the Stabilization and Association Agreement of the European Union, the first of its kind for my country with the European Union, which came into force four months ago. The next step for my country is to submit its membership application and achieve the status of a candidate country.

At the same time, we are working to build a society that is fair and equitable and that offers parity. I can assure the Assembly of Bosnia and Herzegovina's strong belief that our past experiences and the lessons

learned can contribute to solving numerous challenges at both the regional and the international levels. Our candidacy for membership in the Economic and Social Council for the period 2017-2019 should be viewed in that light. We are taking part in the general efforts to achieve a better and more unified world through those and similar activities.

Our commitment to full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the strengthening of democracy and multicultural dialogue and our respect for ethnic, cultural and religious diversity are unquestionable. In that regard, Bosnia and Herzegovina will spare no efforts to combat all forms of discrimination and intolerance against members of any part of society, as enshrined in our Constitution. Bosnia and Herzegovina is a complex, multi-ethnic State. In the light of the benefits and advantages that our diversity creates, acknowledged even in harsh times, we know precisely how important it is to protect all individual and collective rights and to bring them into mutual harmony in line with the relevant international human rights standards. We attach great importance to regional cooperation, and we are fully committed to building good relations with our neighbours on the basis of the principles of friendship and openness. We are aware that that is the only path to stability in the region of South-East Europe, which has often been turbulent in the past. Solely on that foundation can all countries in the region attain a full European perspective.

Although not at the top of today's list of priorities for Bosnia and Herzegovina, climate change is among the most important globally. Climate change determines not only our future but also that of our children and their descendants. We have felt the consequences of global climate change in Bosnia and Herzegovina, notably in the past year during the devastating floods, when many of our citizens were forced to leave their homes. Unlike many other parts of our planet, Bosnia and Herzegovina is rich in large quantities of clean, potable water, which is becoming increasingly invaluable and rare in the world we live in. However, that fact is something that we can no longer take for granted, especially when we realize how helpless and weak we are before the forces of nature and the countless abuses that we have subjected our environment to. Therefore, along with the other Member States, we place our hopes on the upcoming twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris in December. We also call upon the parties to the Convention to redouble their

efforts in order to reach a legally binding universal climate change agreement.

Finally, we realize that the United Nations will need to undergo change in order to continue to be able to respond to our increasingly complex requests and expectations. The seventieth anniversary is an occasion for celebration, as well as for critical consideration and reaffirmation of the values enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Bosnia and Herzegovina remains fully committed to the paramount ideals of freedom, dignity and economic development for all nations and for the world, ideals that should be enjoyed by every living being on the planet.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Dragan Čović, Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly, President of the Republic of Haiti

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

Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly, President of the Republic of Haiti, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Martelly (*spoke in French*): Mr. President, I would like to express my warmest congratulations to you on your election as President of our prestigious Assembly at its seventieth session. Your proven experience in international affairs, combined with your esteemed personal qualities, bode well for the success of this session of the General Assembly.

In this pivotal year, when the Organization is celebrating its seventieth anniversary, I would like to commend the efforts of the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and associate myself with the unanimous tributes paid to him for his commitment to promoting peace and sustainable development and to the fight against climate change. The people and the

Government of Haiti are particularly grateful for the spirit of solidarity that he has always shown with regard to our country in its ongoing struggle to strengthen our democracy.

In a world where, in the words of His Holiness Pope Francis, speaking at the World Meeting of Popular Movements, “global interdependence calls for global answers to local problems”, the challenge to the United Nations today is to reinvent itself, to reform itself and, above all, to be the bearer of a new vision of our shared future, a vision capable of reviving the original flame and of reuniting Member States around a grand collective plan focused on the bedrock of core values on which the Organization is built.

In that respect, we welcome a number of recent diplomatic breakthroughs that bring glimmers of hope in international relations. The restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba is undoubtedly a historic breakthrough. It allows us to anticipate greater serenity in hemispheric relations. The Republic of Haiti can only rejoice at that development. We pay tribute to the vision, pragmatism and leadership shown by the American and Cuban Heads of State, who opened a new chapter in the relations between the two countries.

Similarly, we welcome the signing of the agreement between the Islamic Republic of Iran and the group of six countries on the Iranian nuclear issue and the détente that has resulted from it. I also welcome the atmosphere of cordiality and fraternal dialogue that now governs the relations between the People’s Republic of China and Taiwan. We have no doubt that the new momentum in their relations will significantly contribute to a much-hoped-for thaw among all the countries of South-East Asia, moving beyond their differences and divergences. The Republic of Haiti encourages the spirit of dialogue prevailing in the relations between nations, which seeks to reach peaceful solutions to their conflicts.

The Syrian crisis is a real affront to the conscience of humankind. Non-State entities are expanding their grip every day, particularly in Iraq and Syria, engaging in intolerable atrocities against civilian populations and in the destruction of world cultural-heritage sites. Such threats, which are of an exceptional scale and gravity, pose a challenge to the international community. We have a clear obligation to adopt all collective measures necessary so as to ensure international security and respect for human rights. We must redouble our efforts to oppose with determination the barbarism of terrorist

entities and their criminal acts that endanger our shared values. There can be no real peace or security if the international community shows weakness towards those who violate international public order.

It goes without saying that we cannot hope for effective responses to the global challenges of our time without narrowing the North-South divide, without an intensification of the fight against poverty, and without a proactive response to environmental crises that afflict, above all, the poorest countries. Strengthening the credibility of the United Nations means strengthening its ability to act quickly and intervene effectively in maintaining peace and security, especially when it comes to preventing major crisis situations, calming recurring sources of tension or resolving conflicts that have gone on for too long.

I would like to discuss the situation of my country, the Republic of Haiti. On 9 August, an important stage in the consolidation of democracy in Haiti was reached. An independent electoral council, chosen by civil society, launched the electoral process that will lead to presidential, legislative, municipal and territorial elections before the end of this year.

A year ago, in his report to the Security Council on the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), the Secretary-General noted that holding inclusive elections was

“essential for ... the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law and to promote socioeconomic development, which is necessary to improve the living conditions of the population and achieve enduring stability” (*S/2014/617, para. 62*).

I am pleased to confirm to the General Assembly that my country is on track. The Haitian people has demonstrated political maturity and the ability to take control of its destiny. I wish to express my deep gratitude to all of Haiti's cooperation partners and to the United Nations for the scale of the support provided in the preparation and holding of the electoral contests. The success of the elections will be an important milestone on the country's road to stability and in the political transition in 2016. That will be a key indicator of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti's sound performance and success over the past 11 years.

Significant progress has been made in Haiti, especially during the past four years. I can say that, under my Administration, democracy was

consolidated, institutions guaranteeing the rule of law were strengthened, the situation in terms of the security environment has improved significantly, and human rights have been promoted and respected. Never has the number of international conventions ratified by the country — on the protection of human rights, the rights of children, women and vulnerable people — been more substantial. At the same time, extreme poverty has declined, foreign direct investment has shown a net expansion, and, after decades of stagnation, the economy has returned to growth.

In terms of the Millennium Development Goals, much progress has been reported. Haiti has reached the target for the reduction in the prevalence of underweight children under 5 years of age, three years ahead of schedule. Thanks to the universal education enrolment programme, which is compulsory and free and was set up by my Administration, more than 1 million children have been able to attend school. We have also seen progress in access to safe drinking water, lower infant-mortality rates, the alleviation of extreme poverty and the fight against social exclusion. In the field of public health, we have achieved undeniable success in the fight against HIV/AIDS and malaria.

The progress made in recent years was made possible thanks, in part, to the support of MINUSTAH. Those achievements represent an outstanding contribution to the country's stability, without which there can be no serious possibility of economic modernization and sustainable development. MINUSTAH is in the process of adapting to a new environment, different from that prevailing when it was established. The Haitian Government prefers a reconfiguration plan that takes into account the evolving situation on the ground. I reiterate our desire to see the gradual, orderly withdrawal of the Mission's troops. The withdrawal of troops and the transfer of responsibilities to the Haitian authorities in matters of the military, police and development must be made according to an agreed calendar, thereby avoiding any undermining of the country's internal or external security.

Defence and security issues are of primary importance for my Administration. I have strengthened the National Police and have developed a new defence policy, with support from the Inter-American Defence Board, through the adoption of a white paper calling for the creation of a defence force in the country. The new force will participate actively in Haiti's development, with a focus on environmental protection, rescue efforts

in cases of natural disaster, securing our borders and strengthening the protection of investments.

As the end of my term approaches, I am pleased and proud to have worked and will continue to work towards my country's stability and strengthened democracy, thereby honouring my solemn commitments to the Haitian people, as well as to the international community. I am especially grateful to the various United Nations bodies that have stood by us throughout.

Haiti reaffirms its faith in the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the Organization's efforts to promote peacebuilding and strengthen international solidarity. The elimination of extreme poverty is not beyond our reach; it is everyone's business. In that regard, the Republic of Haiti fully supports the new Sustainable Development Goals, established pursuant to the new post-2015 development agenda in the form of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and looks forward to their swift and effective implementation, together with the appropriate resources.

At the time of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, the spirit that presided over its creation is more than ever alive. Faced with unprecedented global challenges, including the growing threat of global warming, Member States must ensure that the Organization works to build the impetus needed to strengthen it as a space for collaboration. A new dynamic is necessary in matters of peace and development, under which every State agrees that the use of force must be subject to law, where dialogue and the peaceful resolution of disputes emerge as the cornerstone of inter-State relations and where the

“recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”,

as stated in resolution 217 A (III), of 10 December 1948, by which the General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

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

Mr. Michel Joseph Martelly, President of the Republic of Haiti, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina Rakotoarimanana, President of the Republic of Madagascar

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

Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina Rakotoarimanana, President of the Republic of Madagascar, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina Rakotoarimanana, President of the Republic of Madagascar, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Rajaonarimampianina Rakotoarimanana (*spoke in French*): My first words are directed to the new President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, to whom I extend sincere congratulations on his election to that post during this session.

I also thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his leadership and tenacity in ensuring that our Organization remains the most appropriate and legitimate forum for solving the problems of the world.

For our part, we can attest to the active support of the United Nations during the election process in Madagascar. Moreover, since January, the United Nations has continued to support Madagascar through the Peacebuilding Fund.

The seventieth anniversary of the United Nations is a historic one, as it coincides with the adoption of the new post-2015 development agenda in the form of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), thereby auguring an ambitious and promising future for our peoples. From the perspective of its 70 years, the United Nations remains a forum to whose long journey the world can bear witness. It has overcome numerous challenges, has both strengths and weaknesses, yet it has always remained clear-sighted and committed to peace and security, and, above all, to the service of humankind.

Let us take objectively assess its work over the past 70 years. To be fair, we should assess them objectively. During the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), poverty has been our main enemy. Yet today it is clear that poverty remains and inequality persists. Our goal of eradicating extreme poverty has not been fully met,

although there has been significant progress. The MDGs have largely contributed to growth in many countries and have encouraged each country to redouble its efforts to adopt practical strategies to help avert difficulties. Today, the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aspire to that same vision. The Assembly has thereby shown a new commitment in line with the requirements of our ever-changing world, to which we must constantly adapt our strategies.

The new post-2015 development Agenda will fuel our future actions aimed at creating noticeable and lasting impacts for the benefit of humankind. We do not have the right to fail to meet the expectations of our peoples. We must ensure the well-being and the daily lives of our peoples, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations because today, extreme poverty still prevails in many countries of the world, and threats to global security also deserve our urgent attention. Terrorism, climate change and the recurring problems associated with poverty are factors pushing populations to flee in the hope of a better future or simply a life of dignity. By adopting the new post-2015 development Agenda, we are offering Governments a solution for development that enables them to act effectively. Since its independence, Madagascar has consistently promoted the same values as those of the United Nations and has taken the same path as the Organization in adopting policies and universal strategies.

In adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals, the world has just set the foundation for a new framework for its development. Commitments have been made to leave future generations a better world, given our current natural resources and the fact that they are not unlimited. With that common aim, Madagascar would like to renew its commitment to implementing the new post-2015 development Agenda, which will serve as a frame of reference and aid in the realization of our national development plan.

The global threat of climate change deserves our unwavering attention. We all have an obligation to achieve results, faced with that global scourge. The coming twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris in December, will provide the ideal framework for showing our solidarity in that fight. While developing countries are not the main parties responsible for the causes of climate change, they pay a heavy price for it, especially because they lack the resources needed to confront those challenges. Madagascar routinely suffers

from the consequences of climate change, which have led to agricultural losses and the destruction of basic social infrastructures and have often set back efforts to achieve socioeconomic development.

On 24 September, we submitted our national proposal with a commitment to reducing greenhouse-gas emissions by 14 per cent and to increasing absorption capacity to 32 per cent by 2030. With a view to protecting biodiversity — and Madagascar holds a significant portion of that world heritage — we recently supported resolution 69/314, entitled “Tackling illicit trafficking in wildlife”. In addition, with regard to disaster-risk reduction, we have been fully involved in the implementation of resolution 69/283, on the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, adopted in June 2015, which was designed to reduce disaster risks. The Malagasy Government focuses particular attention on its population, especially the most vulnerable. Its visionary social protection policy will enable it to significantly reduce the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2030, in line with the new post-2015 development agenda.

The country is also involved in the implementation of the Secretary-General’s plan on the reduction of maternal mortality. We have launched a campaign to speed up the reduction of maternal mortality and another against early marriage. In regard to food security, I would like to share our promising regional prospect to make Madagascar the breadbasket of the Indian Ocean. Such fundamental transformations must be based on support for the civil sector. Our men, women, youth and children must have access to education, basic health care, security and justice. We have a young population, which commits us to meeting the challenge of education as well as training and job creation. It is our joint responsibility to offer our young people decent work.

A new era is opening before us. New hope is being built with the advent of the new Sustainable Development Goals. By meeting in this Hall today, each nation is providing proof of its commitment to make progress on those Goals. The SDGs must not simply be a reference point and ready guide in the fight against poverty. All our actions must be capitalized on, brought together for sustainable human development, because there is no world apart from that of humankind. All our efforts should be focused on capitalizing on sustainable development, because human beings are our richest resource. Human capital is both the stakeholder for and beneficiary of the SDGs. The development of human capital must be at the heart of all of our actions. Our peoples’ security, in all its

forms, must be ensured so that we can move away from extreme poverty and vulnerability, which are becoming chronic.

We are convinced that wars, crises, conflicts and insecurity are the root causes of systematic violations of human rights. In that light, peace and security remain the Achilles heel of all development strategies. It is through that shared vision that Madagascar is pursuing its path towards democracy and stability. We all agree that there is no real development without lasting peace and security.

Cybercrime, transnational organized crime and terrorism have become more pressing issues. We are fighting faceless enemies, and we must constantly adapt our strategies against those new threats. The security of our peoples must therefore be ensured in order to remove them from poverty and vulnerability. We are engaged in many forms of combat against urban and rural insecurity and are fighting against all kinds of trafficking and looting, which impacts our natural resources on land and at sea. On that issue, our country will be the location for the Maritime Information Fusion Centre, serving the Indian Ocean and East and Southern Africa with a view to assisting in combating maritime piracy, all types of illicit trafficking and terrorism.

With regard to the democratic process of carrying out elections, Madagascar is in a good position to provide a favourable environment for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Without institutional and political stability, the progress we envisage and to which the population aspires will not be lasting and shared.

In the area of collective security, I would like to pay tribute to the commitment of peacekeeping mission personnel. Madagascar actively participates by sending peacekeeping officers. From this podium, we declare our intention to deploy, for the first time, an infantry battalion to peacekeeping operations by 2017.

On the topic of the fight against human trafficking, Madagascar has ratified the main relevant international legal instruments on human rights, and it recently ratified the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (resolution 45/158). As some in this Hall know, Madagascar has also sought to meet its international commitments by regularly submitting its reports on human rights to the various human rights treaty bodies and to the Human Rights Council in the framework of the Universal Periodic Review, whose recommendations are implemented through a national operational plan.

This year, Madagascar deposited its instrument of ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. During a meeting in New York earlier in 2015, in keeping with its international commitments, Madagascar reaffirmed its commitment to promote women's rights and renewed its previous commitment made in Beijing. We are joining our efforts with those of others in seeking to make the representation of countries on the Security Council more equitable. It is only fair that that opportunity be offered to under-represented regions such as Africa.

The General Assembly remains the body most suited to the task of overcoming the major challenges associated with the eradication of poverty and the disruptive effects of climate change. The issues of migration, peace and security are no less important. The resolution of those complex problems constitutes a top priority among the SDGs and Africa's Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want.

Mr. González Franco (Paraguay), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Given the momentum created by the newly adopted 2030 Agenda, Madagascar foresees that the next 15 years will be rich in collective action and solidarity. In accordance with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, our country is committed to mobilizing its own resources and urges our international partners to do the same. Accordingly, we call upon the United Nations to propose the appropriate financing mechanisms and structures to support economic and social development policies and to combat poverty in developing countries.

Official development assistance is necessary and important to support growth. The Northern countries' solidarity with those of the South must be effective. We must support one another complementarily, because it is together that we will succeed and be able to act and react in real time to the major challenges that are facing us. Our will and determination will guide us in quickening our stride to meet those challenges. I therefore unhesitatingly reiterate my call for the enhancement of the North-South dialogue and the strengthening of global partnerships. In order to truly support development, the terms of funding must not in any way penalize those countries and peoples that are already vulnerable.

Can we have confidence in the future? Can our young people have confidence in the future? On this solemn occasion, I urge my peers not to lose sight of the commitment that we made 70 years ago, which

has been reflected in the solid decisions that we have taken throughout the years and not delay in taking action. The SDGs enable us to facilitate prevention and the maintenance of peace, security and stability. The new Agenda outlines new strategic directions that will guide us in forging the destiny of our peoples.

Madagascar maintains its hope and faith in the United Nations for the next 70 years. A good portion of the path has already been trodden, but the road remains long. We must not be concerned about counting steps. The challenges are immense, but never, since time immemorial, have so many countries and leaders demonstrated their will and commitment to move ahead so as to overcome and solve the problems of today's world. We must demonstrate that we are moving closer to a millennium of solidarity that transcends borders. That requires the commitment and responsibility of each country and each leader.

This month we began laying down the foundations of a new edifice. Its completion depends only on us. Rest assured that Madagascar will contribute to that endeavour.

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

Mr. Hery Martial Rajaonarimampianina Rakotoarimanana, President of the Republic of Madagascar, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Peter M. Christian, President and Head of Government of the Federated States of Micronesia

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President and Head of Government of the Federated States of Micronesia.

Mr. Peter M. Christian, President and Head of Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, 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. Peter M. Christian, President and Head of Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Christian: From this rostrum, many great leaders of nations have spoken with great eloquence and conviction on matters of great import to their own nation in particular and also to other nations in general. And in this Hall, we speak with the confident hope that what we say here will not only be heard, but that it will give relevance to our efforts and make a positive difference.

Today, I stand before the Assembly as the President of a small Pacific island country to reinforce our commitment to save the difference that we represent, while participating in the noble attempt to bring nations together and speak on subjects of mutual concern and benefit to all. Some who saw my remarks for this morning tell me that they are generic and expound no particular issue of controversy that might generate murmurs in the Hall. They may be right. But that is only because most of them do not live by the sea, at sea level and surrounded by the great Pacific Ocean, where we listen to the sound of the waves relentlessly pounding on our islands, getting dangerously closer with every successive wave.

I will speak first on the much-debated issue of climate change and its causes and effects on many small island States including my own, Micronesia, but I will not go into details, because that is where the Devil is said to be king. I speak as an islander who has walked the shores of many atoll islands in the Pacific. Where there once were sandy beaches and coconut trees, now there are none. I am told that that will continue. As islanders, we wonder why that is happening. Parents today show their children where their island used to extend in relation to the reefs offshore.

While we wait in fear for the predicted and inevitable sea-level rise, other effects of global warming, like stronger ocean currents and more frequent typhoons, continue to wash away shorelines and topple trees, not waiting for the sea to rise and drown the island. People who live on these islands hear that some of the causes of sea-level rise have been identified, that much debate has gone into validating these causes, and that there is now a general understanding and agreement on its causes. They have also heard that there is a way to slow down and eventually save what is left of their islands. That is good news to them and, with the simplicity of islanders, they think — we think — this will be done sooner rather than later. This is their hope. Our hope is in the hands of Member States. I want to believe that many of us are here today to give this hope a chance.

I am encouraged that our ongoing discussions on climate change, and the ones that will take place later, will usher in a more serious tone and be conducted more speedily, and that the matter has captured the interest of Member States. We are thankful for that. It gives us hope, as we look forward to the meeting in Paris. We have set our hopes on Paris as the venue for the final stretch of dialogue on how we close the gap of disagreement over the level of emissions allowed by our friends, the industrialized States Members of the United Nations. We must become more cohesive in our actions to reach a useful agreement that would help mitigate the threat of sinking islands and prevent the potential genocide of oceanic peoples and their cultures.

The next topic I would like to address is that of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs). What do the Federated States of Micronesia, the Montreal Protocol and HFCs have in common? In 1995, the Congress of the Federated States of Micronesia passed a bill that approved the country's accession to the Montreal Protocol. In 2009, the Federated States of Micronesia made the first proposal for an amendment to the Montreal Protocol to phase down HFCs, which are powerful greenhouse gases, as everyone knows. The Federated States of Micronesia took the lead among developing countries to promote the phase-down as a complementary climate change action. Thanks to island countries, the solidarity of our African nation friends and the endorsement of the European Union, over 100 countries have called for these products, HFCs, to be phased down. Now the parties to the Protocol are finally converging towards an agreement on a mandate to negotiate an HFC phase-down. The Federated States of Micronesia will continue to work with other supporters and with all parties until an amendment to phase down HFCs is adopted. I ask the Assembly to join me in this effort.

I note, with great joy, that President Obama is putting his weight behind this move. This is like manna from heaven. Just last week, President Obama and President Xi agreed on "stepping up their work to phase down super-polluting" HFCs. With President Obama's help, we now see that China, India and Brazil have indicated their support for the HFC amendment. Nonetheless, their indication of support alone is not enough. They must do something about that indication. May President Obama be blessed many times for his leadership in this particular area. How true that the journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. The benevolence of good leaders raises the hope of islanders that people still care. This is important to the

Pacific peoples. They take great comfort in the thought that they are no longer alone in their crusade in this area. I recall that Pope Francis did not forget to remind us of the golden rule — do unto others as you would they do unto you.

Our second strategy on climate change is quite simple. We are going to Paris, and we are going to support the issues that are raised in order to gain ground on the topic of climate-change mitigation. In Micronesia, we have a challenge called the Micronesian Challenge. Micronesia is a sprinkling of islands that span an ocean area that is larger than the continent of the United States and larger than the European Union. It is made up of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of Palau, the territory of Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas and my own Federated States of Micronesia. These entities have established what is now the Micronesian Challenge. It is a bold undertaking by small island countries to save our planet. We are agreeing to set aside 30 per cent of near-shore marine areas and 20 per cent of terrestrial areas as our dedicated contribution to the efforts of the people of this Earth to save the planet. We invite those who care and can to join us in this effort to contribute to the well-being of our planet.

When in the General Assembly Hall, I cannot help but feel a greater sense of security and of empowerment. In that regard, I would like to touch on the subject of peace and freedom — peace as an aftermath of hostilities, not just of armed conflict, but hostilities of silence, tolerance and apathy. When we speak of peace, you and I will always remember the absence of it. For the people of Micronesia, the first four decades of the past century will always be remembered as a period of armed conflict — a conflict in which Micronesians had no interest and no part. Those of us from Micronesia and our neighbouring Pacific islands who suffered similarly have our deep subscription to peace engraved in our hearts and inscribed in our governing constitutions. We believe that peace should be universal and embraced by all of us who have decided to be Members of the United Nations.

While we accept that universal peace may be a distant goal, it must be sought vigorously and with determined haste. When I speak of the precious issue of peace, I am often reminded of a statement by a man whose nation had just come out of war and which expressed his dream for lasting peace. President Wilson said of the League of Nations that

“a general association of nations must be formed under specific covenants for the purpose of affording mutual guarantees of political independence and territorial integrity to great and small states alike ... An evident principle runs through the whole program I have outlined. It is the principle of justice to all people and nationalities, and their right to live on equal terms of liberty and safety with one another, whether they be strong or weak”.

Today, we celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. Some nations celebrate the anniversary of an end to war. While those of us who call the Pacific our home rejoice in the silence of guns, we are not happy that, elsewhere, innocent people continue to fear for their lives and lose precious property, and are forced to confront the ugly face of apathy. Today, many nations have risen from the debris of war to become dominant economic Powers in the world. Many have been generous and supportive to those who have been plundered.

While many postwar territories and possessions have since attained a negotiated political freedom and independence, they still see the shadow of foreign flags fluttering over their lands and their affairs. Some are still labouring to improve their status as nations, while others still await the awakening of the United Nations in hopes that it will heed their plea for political autonomy and the honour of flying a flag of independence. As for our friends who fought against each other in armed conflicts, we ask them to stand together with us today and let us resolve to remember war as a painful conflict of the past. Some things are hard to forget, and the pains of war may be one of them.

For the sake of a peaceful tomorrow, however, let us forgive. Together let us promote friendship, partnership, and cooperation as our collective strength for the future. We have enough common enemies today, enemies that have no respect for culture, boundaries, religion or social status. They are climate change, sea-level rise, poverty, hunger and famine, illiteracy, incurable diseases, domestic violence, genocide and human trafficking, economic imbalance and apathy. Those are our challenges today. We must bind together our efforts to address them. I ask that we divert the energy of our anger over things past to dealing with these challenges in order to achieve a better tomorrow. Let us resolve to work together, more effectively, to overcome these issues, which have been produced by

man’s own doing. Let us take strength and wisdom from our past and apply it for the good of humankind. Let us forgive, for that is the strength we have as the United Nations. Let us create a spirit of unity to enable us to find the necessary strength for our united nations to work well together. Let us celebrate that unity today.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the President and Head of Government of the Federated States of Micronesia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Peter M. Christian, President and Head of Government of the Federated States of Micronesia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Filip Vujanović, President of Montenegro

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

Mr. Filip Vujanović, President of Montenegro, 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. Filip Vujanović, President of Montenegro, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Vujanović (*spoke in Montenegrin; English text provided by the delegation*): This year we proudly mark a noteworthy anniversary — 70 years since the founding of the United Nations, and seven decades dedicated to freedom and peace, fundamental human rights, equality between great and small nations and social progress. That dedication has unquestionably demonstrated the value of the United Nations, and future generations must share in that same mission, aimed at achieving a better humankind.

At the outset, I would like to stress that Montenegro is strongly committed to preserving all the values the United Nations was founded on. Freedom and peace, fundamental human rights and social progress are values that all States Members of the United Nations should be committed to for the sake of their societies and the Organization. We therefore believe firmly in working to ensure the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

As a member of the Human Rights Council, and through its cooperation both within the Council's mechanisms and special procedures and with States and other stakeholders, Montenegro has made a strong contribution to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the Human Rights Council and its mechanism, the Universal Periodic Review, while respecting the principles of universality, impartiality, non-selectivity and constructive international dialogue and cooperation. In our actions at both the national and international levels we have paid particular attention to, among other things, the issues of preventing discrimination and violence, protecting the rights of children, persons with disabilities and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons, empowering women and girls and protecting freedom of opinion and expression. The fact that this year is the twentieth since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action should push us to intensify our efforts to implement those important documents in the area of enabling and empowering women and girls to exercise all their human rights.

Montenegro strongly supported the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and is committed to its comprehensive implementation in order to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development in all its dimensions. Financing is crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals that the Agenda sets out. For that, our main guidelines are outlined in the final document (resolution 69/313, annex) of the Addis Ababa Third International Conference on Financing for Development. Mobilizing all the available resources and including the Agenda in national development plans are prerequisites for its successful implementation at the global level.

We believe firmly that national sustainable development strategies, backed by integrated national financial frameworks, must be supported by an enabling international economic environment. It is crucial to ensure that all national stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, participate in their adoption and in monitoring their implementation. Bearing in mind that implementing the development Agenda is an obligation we have to future generations, I am pleased to be able to point out that in addition to institutional capacity-building, Montenegro has begun the process of drafting a new national post-2015 strategy for sustainable development, whereby the Sustainable Development Goals established at the global level

will be adapted to our national context with a view to achieving sustainable development within Montenegro.

Action designed to deal with climate change should be an integral part of all development policies and programmes. We believe the recent successful high-level meetings in Addis Ababa and New York will encourage countries to intensify their efforts to achieve a universal and legally binding agreement on climate change in Paris at the end of the year.

We must work together to end conflicts and rebuild peace. To that end, it is vital that the international community, acting in accordance with the norms of international law, work to put an end to the violence in Ukraine, Syria, Iraq, Libya and other areas in crisis. The serious human rights violations and intensifying violence and crimes committed by terrorist and extremist groups, such as the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Boko Haram, are clear evidence of the seriousness of the threat that terrorism poses to international peace and security. Global engagement is therefore the only way to guarantee protection against it.

We support global efforts to achieve disarmament and non-proliferation. We are pleased about the entry into force of the Arms Trade Treaty and we urge that its provisions be effectively implemented. We welcome the positive outcome of the negotiations on the Iranian nuclear programme and the ongoing dialogue between members of the Security Council and Iran with a view to ensuring that it meets its international obligations and that a comprehensive and durable solution to the issue is achieved.

The current challenges and threats to global peace and security require a preventive approach to violations of international law. We support the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations on the future activities of peacekeeping missions (A/70/95), as well as the report of the Advisory Group of Experts on the review of the peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations (A/69/968). We believe that their recommendations will help to improve the existing architecture and its effectiveness. The inclusion of a gender perspective in all areas of the peace and security agenda, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), is of special importance, in particular in the context of the upcoming review of the resolution's implementation 15 years after its adoption.

Montenegro is firmly committed to actively contributing to and supporting collective efforts to maintain international peace and security. The deployment of Montenegrin soldiers and police officers in international missions testifies to our readiness to fulfil our international obligations and to develop relations based on partnership.

Montenegro remains strongly committed to the concept of the responsibility to protect, with particular emphasis on the importance of preventing mass atrocities at the national and regional levels, including through the early-warning mechanism and an early and balanced response in cases where the risk of crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide exists. We will continue to demand accountability and punishment for all perpetrators.

In conflict resolution, the use of preventive diplomacy, in particular mediation, is necessary. In this regard, strengthening the capacity of the United Nations so that it will be able to respond to the growing needs in this field is imperative. Given that our region is one of fragile stability, we have learnt from experience that dialogue and cooperation are the best ways of defusing tensions, overcoming differences and achieving durable solutions. Therefore, Montenegro will, in 2016, organize a meeting under the Mediation in the Mediterranean initiative, as a sign of our commitment to the further promotion of mediation as an effective means for the prevention and management of conflicts and peacebuilding.

Ensuring the protection of civilians in conflict areas and meeting their basic humanitarian needs are essential. We are committed to supporting the strengthening of the United Nations humanitarian assistance architecture, which plays a decisive role in coordinating international humanitarian assistance. To that end, the organization of the upcoming World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in May 2016, is important, as it will be an opportunity to consider the challenges that the humanitarian sector is facing today.

In addressing the current migrant crisis, we must be guided by the shared United Nations values of humanity and solidarity, and we must take into account migrants' need for assistance. This implies eliminating the causes of migration and considering the real abilities of each State to receive migrants and offer related assistance. As a country where refugees recently accounted for one fifth of the population, Montenegro understands the

need for solidarity with people in great trouble and the heaviness of the burden of a receiving country.

The interrelated challenges the world faces illustrate the need to reform the Organization in order to properly position it in the system of global governance. Guided by this, Montenegro will continue to support efforts to strengthen the United Nations and improve the efficiency, transparency, accountability and representativeness of the Organization and its agencies. We also confirm our commitment to build an effective multilateral system in which the United Nations plays a central role. We support the agenda of a coordinated approach — delivering as one — and are undertaking activities aimed at adopting the second integrated programme of cooperation between the United Nations system in Montenegro and the Government of Montenegro for the period 2017-2021.

Finally, I would like to reiterate that Montenegro has been fully committed to the implementation of United Nations values and programmes. As a country in the last stage of the NATO integration process and in the successful negotiation process for European Union membership, Montenegro has been a good neighbour and reliable partner in the West Balkan region, where the values of cooperation and stability have been increasingly affirmed. We are confident that in these ways, inter alia, we are also contributing to the achievement of United Nations goals.

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

Mr. Filip Vujanović, President of Montenegro, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

General debate

Address by Mr. Manuel Domingos Vicente, Vice-President of the Republic of Angola

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Vice-President of the Republic of Angola.

Mr. Manuel Domingos Vicente, Vice-President of the Republic of Angola, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Manuel Domingos Vicente, Vice-President of the Republic of Angola, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Vicente (Angola) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): At the outset, on behalf of the President of Angola, Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, I would like to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly. I also congratulate His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, the outgoing President, on the capable manner in which he led the work of the Assembly at the sixty-ninth session. In addition, I commend the Secretary-General for his continued commitment to finding solutions to the complex issues that trouble the international community.

The objective of the San Francisco Conference was to build a world based on international law and to seek peaceful solutions to international disputes. Over the course of 70 years, we have seen progress and setbacks. Remarkable progress has been made in the area of decolonization, which is reflected in the number of countries that now constitute the United Nations family. However, there has been no success with regard to collective security, an issue that led to the creation of the United Nations and that remains at the heart of its concerns. We must reflect together on the role and future of the United Nations. We need an Organization capable of promoting peace and international security, of acting quickly and effectively in conflict situations, and of addressing current and emerging challenges.

By adopting the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), States Members of the United Nations reaffirmed as absolute priorities the eradication of poverty and hunger, the promotion of social and economic development, the protection of the rights of all, gender equality, women's empowerment, the environment, access to quality services and special attention to vulnerable groups.

The 2030 Agenda reasserts the principle of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development that it is possible to promote global and sustainable development and establishes universal Goals that highlight the need for cooperation among peoples and a common path for humankind. It calls for a global partnership and for commitments from all parties to mitigating the adverse consequences of climate change, eradicating poverty and extreme poverty, and creating opportunities for all. I reiterate

Angola's commitment to taking appropriate measures to strengthen the Organization's development agenda.

In the near future, the United Nations will also be involved in the review of three very important processes: women and peace and security, peacekeeping operations and the peacebuilding architecture.

As I stated before, the ideal that guided the creation of the United Nations 70 years ago — to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war — has not yet been achieved. People around the world expect the leaders of the 193 nations represented here to join in a collective effort to find appropriate solutions to the serious and multiple challenges that the people of the world face. As we commemorate this anniversary, we bear in mind the role and responsibilities of the United Nations as the pre-eminent forum for finding solutions to international problems, preserving peace, strengthening collective security and renouncing the use of force in international relations, respecting the sovereignty of States, defending and promoting human rights and reaffirming the rule of law as a fundamental principle of the international system.

This occasion should provide an additional incentive to accelerate reforms aimed at revitalizing the United Nations system, in particular the Security Council, by extending the number of its permanent and non-permanent members, thereby making this body more representative and better equipped to address the challenges and opportunities that the world faces. Angola reaffirms the right of the African continent to be represented among the permanent members of the Security Council.

The forced displacement of thousands of human beings presents a heartbreaking picture of human degradation that offends human dignity. It requires an immediate and comprehensive response by the international community.

In the coming month of November, Angola will celebrate the fortieth anniversary of its national independence in an environment of peace, tolerance and reconciliation — a direct result of the will of the Angolan people to work together to achieve higher levels of economic growth and greater social inclusion, progress and well-being for all in a more democratic, prosperous and modern country.

Despite the adverse global environment, the Government of Angola remains committed to sustained growth. To that end, it is implementing its national

development plan, which aims to rehabilitate and modernize economic and social infrastructure, promote public and private investment, and improve vocational and skills training and human resources management.

The rise in terrorist activities perpetrated by extremist groups in Africa and elsewhere in the world is a serious security problem and one that calls for a global coalition to combat this scourge. The creation of the Multinational Joint Task Force, involving the countries of the Lake Chad Basin and Benin, is an example of the sort of collective response that deserves the support of the international community in order to purge the African continent of the terrorism that has caused such enormous suffering to its people.

The situation in the Central African Republic remains a challenge from the point of view of political and socioeconomic stability and domestic security. Angola supports the efforts of the transitional Government to restore public order and restructure State institutions and encourages all the parties to respect the commitments made in the Bangui Forum as a fundamental prerequisite for attaining an inclusive, peaceful and transparent electoral process.

We welcome the recent compromise reached between the Government of South Sudan and the armed opposition, mediated by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and other international partners, to resolve the crisis plaguing the country. We encourage the parties to the Agreement to honour their commitments and the international community to maintain its support for the peace process.

In Guinea-Bissau, with the institutional crisis now overcome, recent political developments augur well for economic growth and political and social stabilization. We appeal to all Guinean political and social actors to display the utmost sense of responsibility, and we urge the international community to continue to fulfil the promises made at the donors' conference in Brussels.

The question of Western Sahara continues to concern us, in view of the need for the Saharan people to exercise their right to self-determination. We call on the parties to continue negotiations and to find a mutually acceptable solution within the framework of the Charter of the United Nations and the relevant Security Council resolutions.

We are concerned about the business-as-usual mindset that prevails in the process of finding a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. We advocate a

resumption of negotiations leading to a lasting solution, based on two States living side by side in peace and security.

The conflicts in Libya, Syria and Iraq require fast responses, given the serious humanitarian consequences resulting from them. The causes of these conflicts lie in the serious violations of the basic rights of the people of these countries and in external interference, with attempted coups or changes of regime and the artificial imposition of democracy from outside having tragic and disastrous consequences.

Angola warmly welcomes the agreement concluded by the six Powers and the European Union with the Islamic Republic of Iran on the Iranian nuclear programme. That outcome is evidence that any dispute, however difficult and complex, may have a political solution and is particularly notable in the case of a region where diplomacy has, in recent decades, been systematically passed over.

Angola is closely following the normalization of the diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba, which is a welcome development. However, Angola emphasizes the need to put an end to the economic, financial and commercial embargo against Cuba, which limits the right of the Cuban people to development and is contrary to the principles and rules of international law.

The Republic of Angola currently holds the presidency of the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and has been engaged in seeking solutions to the problems affecting the region, both bilaterally and multilaterally, as well as in the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council. In this context, we reiterate our determination to continue to support and promote dialogue, peace, security and stability in Central Africa and throughout the Great Lakes region.

Aware of its responsibilities in an international context that is becoming increasingly fluid and complex, and aware of the security challenges that the States bordering the Gulf of Guinea face, the Angolan Government, with the support of the United States of America and Italy, will host an international conference on maritime and energy security in the coming days in Luanda in order to contribute to a response to threats of terrorism and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea.

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing humankind. For this reason, adopting a protocol

to govern the global action to protect the climate system at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is of the highest importance. This agreement should include a commitment to limiting the increase in average global temperatures to 1.5°C by the end of the century. Likewise, the new agreement must include models of sharing enabling tools to protect the right to development and strengthen resilience in developing countries.

Finally, I wish to reaffirm the importance that my country places on the role of multilateralism in solving global problems by finding realistic and bold solutions through concertation, in accordance with a logic of shared responsibilities and benefits and in fulfilment of the legitimate interests of all. We call on all Member States to renew their confidence in the ability of the United Nations to strengthen international dialogue as a key element of the culture of peace, respect for differences between peoples and conflict prevention, which are the very foundations of the progress and development to which all the peoples of the world are entitled.

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

Mr. Manuel Domingos Vicente, Vice-President of the Republic of Angola, was escorted from the rostrum.

**Address by Mr. José Maria Pereira Neves,
Prime Minister and Minister of Reform of the
Republic of Cabo Verde**

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister of Reform of the Republic of Cabo Verde.

Mr. José Maria Pereira Neves, Prime Minister and Minister of Reform of the Republic of Cabo Verde, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. José Maria Pereira Neves, Prime Minister and Minister of Reform of the Republic of Cabo Verde, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Pereira Neves (Cabo Verde) (*spoke in Portuguese; English text provided by the delegation*): I would ask the indulgence of the Assembly that I may greet, on behalf of all Cabo Verdeans, all delegations to this seventieth session of the General Assembly and add our voice to all statements made here that call for the building of a better world. This session provides us with the opportunity, as we celebrate the anniversary of the United Nations with pride and joy, to engage in a critical and concrete reflection on the future of humankind and the challenges faced by the Organization. The theme chosen for this session could not be more timely and pressing: “The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights”.

Seven decades after the signing of the San Francisco Charter, it is incumbent on us to examine the road travelled so far as we identify new actions that will allow our Organization to grow in strength, unity and capacity in order to overcome challenges to international peace and security and make more concrete contributions to a bringing about a more just, equitable, sustainable and solidary world. Cabo Verde, which is celebrating the fortieth anniversary of its national independence this year, is among the countries that believe in the fundamental principles and goals of the United Nations and defend its purposes and principles, which continue to be fundamental and current for the Organization’s actions and serve as vital tools with which to build a common future.

We underline the crucial importance of reforming the United Nations in preparation for the road ahead. We urge all Member States to negotiate constructively with a view to agreeing on the revitalization of the powers of the General Assembly and reaching an understanding on the enlargement of the Security Council, which in our view should reflect the changes that have occurred in the world, with a more equitable and appropriate representation.

It was with great satisfaction that we participated in the Sustainable Development Summit 2015, which began this past 25 September. We take this opportunity to again declare Cabo Verde’s adherence to the principles contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) and our full agreement with respect to the Sustainable Development Goals. The poorest and most vulnerable nations legitimately aspire to development, and we must all commit to achieving the goals that have been established for 2030.

Specifically with respect to the small island developing States, of which Cabo Verde is an example, some essential elements will have to be considered, namely, the threat to their survival posed by climate change, their particular vulnerability to natural disasters, the risk of losing their biodiversity, the reduced size of their markets, the high cost of transportation and energy infrastructure, and their difficulties in accessing financing. For all these reasons, they deserve special attention from the United Nations system in the context of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is a source of hope for the billions of human beings who aspire to a more just, equitable and inclusive world. The will to place people at the centre of development means that we must find appropriate instruments and consistent practices in a sustainable environmental framework.

In the light of the unequivocal correlation between sustainable development and climate change, Cabo Verde, like other small and vulnerable countries, hopes that the declarations and expressions of intent will translate into tangible commitments that lead to the reduction of greenhouse-gas emissions but also provide a balanced approach to the issues of adaptation and mitigation. Meanwhile, the new agreement that is expected to be signed in Paris must not fail to give due weight to the issues of loss and compensation, development, technology transfer and capacity-building, and indicate clearly some reliable sources of financial support for the most vulnerable nations. We are firmly committed to assuming our responsibilities and making our contributions in that respect. In Cabo Verde, we have already established the goal of 100 per cent renewable energy and are on our way to achieving it, with international cooperation and United Nations monitoring. At this time, we have approximately 30 per cent renewable energy on the grid and believe that we will exceed 50 per cent by 2020.

Much to our consternation, serious cases of human rights violations are occurring in various parts of the world. It is unfortunate that, although almost seventy years have elapsed since the Universal Declaration of Human Rights saw the light of day, the promises made when that basic text was adopted have yet to be fulfilled. Cabo Verde is proud to serve as a benchmark in terms of freedoms, democracy, the rule of law, respect for and defence of human rights, and the promotion of human dignity.

Peace and security, together with political stability, are essential foundations for the development and the well-being of our peoples. We are therefore growing increasingly concerned about the spread of ongoing conflicts and tensions in Africa and the Middle East, which have caused thousands of people to flee, driven by total desperation. In seeking better living conditions, some find death instead. Those ongoing events have exposed the profound economic, social, political, environmental and humanitarian causes and ramifications of the crisis. The global refugee problem is a great challenge for humankind and requires the engagement of all. The scourge and stigma of war not only affect the well-being of peoples in their own countries, but also create broader instability, disrupting the development of entire regions. Cabo Verde joins those who call for the rapid settlement of the conflicts, based on a combination of collective efforts and respect for international law and, in particular, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol.

The situation in the Middle East continues to deteriorate, with no end in sight to the various conflicts that are sweeping the region. The violations of human rights by the actors in the Syrian conflict, as well as the atrocities that are being perpetrated in the territories under the control of terrorist factions and religious fundamentalists, are a major cause for concern. The United Nations must redouble its efforts to reach negotiated solutions to that and other conflicts that offend our common sense of humanity. Resolving the problem of terrorism requires the international community to step up its actions in combating terrorism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations. We firmly condemn all expressions of terrorism and, in particular, the barbaric actions of extremist groups in the Middle East, Asia and Africa.

Because Cabo Verde is an archipelago nation, the sea plays a crucial role in the history, identity and subsistence of the people, providing vital natural resources and connecting the ten islands that form the archipelago. As a small island developing State, Cabo Verde relies on its partnership with the international community in confronting such maritime security challenges as those posed by trafficking and related crimes and in preserving and managing our seas.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to an exemplary action of regional cooperation in September 2014, when seven West African States, including

Cabo Verde, notified the Secretary-General in a joint communication that we wished to extend the outer limits of the continental shelf beyond the distance of 200 nautical miles, pursuant to article 76 of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. Last August, we had the opportunity to make a technical presentation to the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf and expect to receive a favourable response soon.

Cabo Verde welcomes the fact that a working group is studying issues relating to the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction with a view to the development of a legally binding international convention (resolution 66/288, para. 162).

The world has great and renewed expectations for the Organization's role not only in maintaining international peace and security, but also in promoting development and creating a more prosperous and unified international society by reducing injustice and inequities, eradicating poverty, promoting human rights and combating the effects of climate change. We do indeed believe that the United Nations is essential. A more sustainable world living in peace and security is possible.

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

Mr. José Maria Pereira Neves, Prime Minister and Minister of Reform of the Republic of Cabo Verde, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho

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

Mr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in Spanish*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Mosisili (Lesotho): At the outset, let me congratulate the President on his well-deserved

election to preside over the deliberations of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. His impeccable credentials and experience ensure that we will have success in our deliberations. I also wish to assure him of my delegation's full support and cooperation during his tenure of office.

While turning 70 is an auspicious event in the life of an individual, it has added significance and importance for an Organization that has presided over many of humankind's trials, failures and successes. We recall with pride that many countries in Africa joyfully attained their independence through the united efforts of the Organization. That is why we make an impassioned plea for the United Nations to now address the unfinished business in North Africa and the Middle East.

Allow me to take this opportunity to commend the previous President, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, for his outstanding leadership during the Assembly's sixty-ninth session. My delegation truly appreciates his tireless devotion to the onerous responsibilities entrusted to him during the past year. I also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for the lucid report submitted at this session (A/70/1), which provides valuable insights into the state of our Organization and highlights a road map that will steer us into the future. We further recognize and appreciate the tedious work that our Secretary-General performs throughout the year, dousing flames of discord wherever they occur, and applaud him for sharing the joy of our Organization's successes.

The United Nations was founded on the conviction that the nations of the world can and should cooperate to resolve conflicts peacefully and to change people's lives for the better. It established conditions for justice, respect for international law and the promotion of socioeconomic development in the world. As the United Nations turns 70, our forebears' abiding conviction must be steadfastly reaffirmed and their sense of purpose reasserted. In that context, we hail the theme chosen for the seventieth session, "The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights", as most appropriate.

As the world's only truly universal global Organization, the United Nations has, over the years, become the most important and relevant forum for addressing issues that transcend national boundaries. For the past 70 years, the Organization has worked tirelessly to buttress the foundations of global security

and the safety and well-being of the world's citizenry. As a result of the work of the United Nations, in many countries corrupt dictatorships have given way to new democracies, and millions around the world today breathe the fresh air of freedom. Other notable moments of distinction in the track record of the Organization include its successful conflict-resolution and peacekeeping initiatives, helping over 17 million refugees since 1949 and ensuring that Governments meet their responsibilities to the fugitives in accordance with United Nations conventions. That notable achievement notwithstanding, we firmly believe that the world should not continue to churn out more refugees. An environment must be created to ensure a culture of religious and political tolerance so as to stop the flow of refugees.

Another milestone in the work of the United Nations is the adoption of an ambitious sustainable development agenda for the post-2015 period that epitomizes the Organization's visionary endeavour to eradicate poverty, address climate change and ensure that prosperity is equitably shared. After frank and constructive negotiations, a few days ago we adopted the consensus outcome document (resolution 70/1). It might not be perfect, but it represents the best hope for future prosperity and stability in the world.

Looking at the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we draw courage and confidence from the fact that the majority resonate so well with the objectives of the new Coalition Government that I lead. The Coalition Government leadership has made a very ambitious commitment to ensure that Lesotho emerges from the group of least developed countries by 2025.

The practical road map under Goal 1 complements programmes already in place in Lesotho. We are humbled by the faith in our country shown by the African Union in nominating His Majesty King Letsie III as the Nutrition Champion, a move that will intensify efforts already under way in my country in the area of nutrition. On the important issue of energy, Lesotho recently launched an innovative energy policy that will ensure a substantial increase in renewable energy production, leading to an increase in the provision of affordable energy to 50 per cent by the end of this Parliament's term. Those are just a few examples of the development programmes Lesotho is committed to implementing in the next 10 years that are in line with the SDGs just adopted.

Of greater significance is the reform process that we have emphasized in the Coalition Agreement signed after the February 2015 elections. Lesotho has passed through many political challenges since its return to democratic rule in 1993, which placed us on the agenda of the South African Development Community (SADC) for far too long. Most of those challenges have tested the resilience and relevance of our Constitution to the limit. We are now in agreement, together with our SADC partners, that constitutional reform needs to be urgently addressed as a first step on the road to political stability. The Commonwealth has also thrown its weight behind the need for such reforms. We appeal to this world body to remain seized of that process and offer the necessary guidance wherever and whenever the need arises so that Lesotho's dignity can be restored and peace and stability can reign.

Despite the laudable achievements made by the United Nations in shaping the form and content of global dialogue and negotiations, the world is still an unequal place, with large areas beset by intolerable poverty and hunger. Thousands still die from malnutrition, while many people still live below the poverty line. Small arms and light weapons continue to be illegally traded. Those weapons are often used in violent terrorist attacks. The lack of political will to rid the world of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction is obvious to all. The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is not yet universal, while the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons regime is at a crossroads, with some nuclear-capable States refusing to sign on.

With the ongoing violence in Syria, Iraq, Yemen and some parts of Africa, from the Sahel to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the capacity of the United Nations to find lasting solutions to these challenges is tested to the limit. Sadly, the human origin of many of these problems cannot be doubted.

Among the most pressing issues for the international community today is the problem of refugees and mass migration. As a result of war and the carnage that has exposed the depths of man's cruelty to man, millions of people in the Middle East and elsewhere are fleeing across international borders on a scale reminiscent of the Second World War. The numbers crossing the Mediterranean and the Aegean Sea to reach Europe, despite the attendant risks, are staggering. The refugee problem Europe is facing today will test the limits of the continent's resolve and generosity.

Parallel to the migration crisis is the phenomenon of terrorism. Terrorism has increased worldwide, and it has become more brazen and lethal than ever before. Terrorist networks are expanding across Africa, the Middle East and Asia. Even as we remain vigilant against the threat of terrorism, we must move beyond a mindset that this menace can be defeated by force of arms alone. We may strike blows against terrorist networks, but if we ignore the fact that political instability and religious and other forms of intolerance fuel extremism, our efforts to root out that menace will be futile.

Climate change is a major challenge facing the world today, and unless it is addressed effectively it will continue to rewrite the global equation for development, peace and prosperity. We should not let the window of opportunity represented by the Paris Climate Change Conference close without collectively committing to action-oriented solutions that can significantly contribute to reducing emissions. The Paris negotiations should be guided by a spirit of frankness, mutual understanding and the willingness to compromise.

The Doha Development Agenda is important to developing countries such as mine and deserves emphasis at every available opportunity. We strongly believe that a well-functioning, rules-based multilateral trading system is in our interest. The bilateral arrangements that we are negotiating should follow the preferences and flexibilities accorded to World Trade Organization member States within the multilateral trading system. We therefore make a strong call for the Doha Development Agenda to be concluded quickly, according to its mandate and for it to fully deliver its development objectives.

Equally important is the need to acknowledge that we will never achieve real development if some sectors of society continue to be marginalized. The role of children and women and other disadvantaged groups in our communities in advancing the global development agenda must be further enhanced. As this year we celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth, through which the United Nations strengthened its commitment to improving the lives of young people, let us resolve to adequately address the development needs and aspirations of young people with more vigour.

Mr. Abdrakhmanov (Kazakhstan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The seventieth anniversary of the United Nations offers a unique opportunity to appeal to the Security Council not to use the International Criminal Court to pursue the interests of its powerful members. We must acknowledge that in its present form and configuration, the Council will have an uphill battle to take our concerns on board. The call for the Council to be more transparent, inclusive and democratic needs to be echoed with even more vigour and clarity. A reformed Security Council that is in line with twenty-first-century geopolitical realities will be reconstructed in accordance with the Ezulwini Consensus and Sirte Declaration. A Security Council that has the voice of Africa and other marginalized regions in the permanent category will increasingly acquire legitimacy and unconditional acceptance of its decisions.

We must continue to pursue a joint and consensual approach in tackling our challenges, taking decisions collectively and sharing responsibilities. The General Assembly, in whose name the United Nations was created, is most suited to fulfil that task. It has continued to serve as the principal policy-making, deliberative and most representative organ of the United Nations. It is the only platform on which all countries, big and small, can engage in face-to-face negotiations as sovereign equals to seek solutions to the problems facing humankind. The process of revitalizing the General Assembly must be hastened. The resolutions of this principal organ of the United Nations should no longer be regarded as mere recommendations that can be casually ignored. The need for the manifestation of a universal commitment to the principles upon which the United Nations is based cannot be overemphasized.

However, the United Nations is much more than a peacekeeper and a forum for conflict resolution. The United Nations and its family of agencies are engaged in a vast array of activities that seek to address challenges hindering progress in the improvement of people's lives around the world. As indicated earlier, today's challenges include, among others, climate change, food shortages, HIV/AIDS, financial crises, extreme poverty, population growth, urbanization, conflicts, terrorism and mass migration. The common purpose and most complex task within the United Nations family is finding practical and lasting solutions to all these problems.

For our part, Lesotho has initiated an innovative, indigenous consultative process that seeks to galvanize the collective wisdom and energy of leadership at all

levels of society, from His Majesty all the way down to local leaders, with the sole purpose of intensifying the fight against HIV/AIDS. That consultative process will ensure the leadership's ownership and accountability in all our health-service delivery processes. We see great wisdom in redefining the rollout of primary health care, utilizing existing community-based leadership structures so as to realize the goal of health for all by 2030. That comprehensive rollout agenda has all the ingredients so well articulated in Goal 3 of the SDGs. His Majesty is expected to launch the initiative this month.

As we continue to ponder the most pressing issues and challenges facing the international community today, we should not forget the plight of the Saharan and Palestinian peoples. Both the General Assembly and the Security Council have recognized the Saharan people's inalienable right to self-determination and independence. We support the call for a resumption of direct negotiations between the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic and the Kingdom of Morocco on an equal footing and without any preconditions. Lesotho also continues to fully support the Palestinian people in their decades-long struggle against Israeli occupation and oppression. Peace between Israel and Palestine is an essential cornerstone of the architecture of a comprehensive Middle East peace, a peace that can unlock the creative genius and entrepreneurship of the region. By the same token, we applaud the current initiatives aimed at normalizing relations between Cuba and the United States of America and urge that the unilateral sanctions on Cuba be removed sooner rather than later.

However much the world may have changed since 1945, the United Nations remains the only universal intergovernmental institution that unites us in a global community of sovereign States. Yes, the Organization may have its shortcomings, but it remains a bastion of hope for humankind. Indeed, the President of the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session was correct in making the following observation:

“Yet for all its imperfections, which are, after all, inherent in any institution shaped by the human mind ... the Organization remains critical to addressing the growing needs of humankind. One simply cannot imagine a world in which peace and the dignity of all could flourish without the United Nations.” (see A/67/PV.1, p. 2)

I could not agree more. The responsibility for making the United Nations function optimally rests squarely with all of us. Our shared vision and objectives require much more than the reaffirmation of our commitment to the Organization's founding principles. Greater political will is an ingredient essential to achieving the ideals that underpin the Charter of the United Nations. We look forward to a rebirth and an injection of fresh energy into the United Nations system, so that its next 70 years can be a period of even greater achievement and success. We must continue to carry out the obligation that its founding Members handed down to us with a solemn sense of responsibility on the part of all.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Irakli Garibashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Georgia.

Mr. Irakli Garibashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Irakli Garibashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Garibashvili (Georgia): It is a great honour to once again address the General Assembly as we mark the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations. The occasion provides us with an opportunity to reflect on our accomplishments and to recognize the challenges that remain in achieving peace, security and human rights at home and abroad.

Georgia is a small country with a big heart and even bigger dreams. It is on the move and headed in the right direction. Our vision is clear and our future is bright. In a major announcement this week, the World Bank released its comprehensive new report on governance, and I am very proud to say that Georgia was at the top of the charts in overall progress in all six indicators. According to the rankings, since 2012 Georgia has jumped 13 places in regulatory quality, 16 in voice and accountability, 19 in the rule of law, 22 in political

stability and in Government effectiveness, and 23 in controlling corruption. That dramatic progress underscores my Government's determination to strengthen the rule of law and media freedom, build a modern economy and move our nation forward with confidence.

By contrast, just two decades ago Georgia was an isolated country torn by civil war, with few functioning institutions of modern statehood. Today we are writing a new chapter in the history of our great nation. Georgia is a modern, dynamic and democratic State. Next year, we will celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of Georgia's regaining its independence. Freedom, fairness and justice, as we say, run through the veins of our people. The Georgian people are committed to the rule of law, to the protection of human rights and to democratic values. We will stay the course on reform, which is the only road to peace and prosperity for our country.

We are moving our country forward in the same spirit that our ancestors embodied for thousands of years. Georgia has absorbed the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, principles that have guided our democratic development. We learned quickly and embraced passionately the spirit of international cooperation. So on behalf of all freedom-loving Georgians, I thank the United Nations and all free people around the world for their steadfast support of my country.

Today, Georgia is firmly connected to the world and the family of nations. We have dedicated ourselves to democracy, human rights, sustainable development and the promise of peace. We are building a mature democracy and a job-creating economy even in the face of significant regional security threats. The steady arc of our Euro-Atlantic path reflects Georgia's strong European identity and values. European integration has proved to be a powerful incentive for calm cooperation among European States and their neighbours. We reached a milestone in June 2014, when I signed the Association Agreement with the European Union. As part of Europe, Georgia will become part of that fabric of peace and stability, which can only benefit our own neighbours, and I think it will make us more secure.

In the past few years, my Government and our country has made progress in every policy area. We have established a social compact that rewards work and enterprise while providing a social safety net for those in need. Despite challenging economic

headwinds, we have introduced a national health-care programme and doubled welfare services. In just one important initiative, we will save over 200,000 lives through a new and creative campaign to combat hepatitis C. We are solidifying Georgia's democracy. Our people demand and deserve a strong democracy and a responsive Government. We have created a system of governance that is more open, more transparent and more accountable to the people than ever before. But we will not rest. More must be done.

The 2013 presidential election and the 2014 local elections were praised by international observers as free and fair. I am also proud of the fact that last year we adopted Georgia's first comprehensive long-term human rights strategy and enacted a new anti-discrimination law. My Government strives to ensure human rights for all of our people. A free and open democracy goes hand in hand with a free and open marketplace.

Economic freedom remains the central pillar of our development plan. Our plan is designed to grow our economy, strengthen our institutions of governance and deliver more jobs and more opportunities for the Georgian people. We are driving growth by making Georgia a great place to do business and an attractive location for foreign investment. Since 2014, we have added 90,000 new jobs in Georgia, covering all sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, tourism and energy. Doing business in Georgia continues to be easy. Foreign and domestic businesses freely operate in a competitive environment with strong guarantees of private-property rights. The World Bank also ranks Georgia as the fifteenth easiest place to do business in the world. In 2014, Georgia achieved an 87 per cent surge in foreign direct investment (FDI), which is the largest growth in and highest amount of FDI since 2007.

Georgia has also become a major tourist destination and venue for international sporting events. The world is catching on to the fact that Georgia has it all — beautiful beaches and stunning mountain resorts, a gourmet tradition, exceptional wines, unique historical sites and world-class hospitality. In August, Tbilisi hosted two major sporting events, the European Youth Olympic Festival and the 2015 Union of European Football Associations Super Cup, which provided a unique opportunity to celebrate cooperation over conflict. Speaking of sports, I must take this opportunity to wish the Georgian national rugby team success as they face New Zealand tomorrow at the Rugby World Cup. Our nation is proud of them.

Another area of our national development is education. I personally know the value of a good education and studying abroad. I want Georgian youths to have that same opportunity. To that end, we launched a new programme where the Georgian Government will provide financial support for our students to study abroad. In return, they must come back home and put their skills to use in service to our country. For those hard-working Georgians who cannot travel abroad, we are bringing world-class education right to Georgia. I am proud to say we recently inaugurated a new programme in cooperation with the Millennium Challenge Corporation of the United States. Georgian students can now obtain a United States engineering degree from San Diego State University without leaving Georgia.

Even with all those achievements, we still face challenges to our security at home. I regret that since my last address to the United Nations (see A/69/PV.14), the Russian Federation signed the so-called integration treaties with Sukhumi and Tskhinvali. Russia continues to illegally extend its control over Georgian sovereign territory. I condemn that creeping annexation and Russia's disregard for international law. A tragic result is that the local population in the occupied territories of Georgia are robbed of the fundamental rights of a free people. De facto authorities recently undertook additional measures to suppress still further the Georgians' right to be educated in their mother tongue. The freedom of movement and the basic rights of a free nation are crushed, along with the hopes and dreams of hundreds of thousands of victims of ethnic cleansing who only wish to return to their places of origin.

I must once again underline the importance of resolution 69/286, on the status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia, and similar resolutions annually adopted by the General Assembly. The pain of the conflict is real. The dislocation is profound. Just since 2012, our Government has provided homes to approximately 10,000 internally displaced families from the occupied territories.

Against the backdrop of continued Russian occupation, my Government has nevertheless been clear on the need to forge responsible and pragmatic relations with the Russian Federation. To that end, we have taken a number of constructive, concrete steps to advance trade, transport, communication, humanitarian

contacts and tourism when and where possible with Russia.

Let me be clear. Relations with Russia cannot be settled at the expense of our sovereignty and territorial integrity. I hope that the Russian Federation will finally fulfil its international obligations, including the 12 August 2008 ceasefire agreement, and act as a responsible member of the international community. At the same time, I want to once again reaffirm our strong commitment to the peaceful resolution of the conflict, based on the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Let me now address the Abkhazian and Ossetian peoples, my brothers and sisters. I firmly believe that no one will rewrite history and erase our common past. All attempts to cut off ties and divide our peoples will fail. We will benefit from a growing Georgian economy soon and from our Association Agreement with the European Union, including increasing trade and visa liberalization. We know that the arc of history favours more cooperation, more integration and more prosperity. When we work together, we all succeed and benefit. I look forward to the day when we will share in our mutual prosperity.

Despite those challenges, my country seeks to contribute to international peace, security, sustainable development and economic prosperity. Last year I had the honour of announcing Georgia's intention to establish a Silk Road forum. Today, I am proud that the idea has materialized, and in a few weeks we will host the first-of-its-kind high-level forum in Tbilisi. My country's location is at a key crossroads linking East with West. That was underscored this year when Georgia hosted both the annual meeting of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the first meeting of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The revitalization of the Silk Road is an important opportunity to ensure deeper economic and cultural ties between Asia and Europe. We are developing a strong economic and trade relationship with China, and I think the Silk Road region will open up new opportunities. That region accounts for two thirds of the world's population and 60 per cent of its gross domestic product. I am convinced the Tbilisi Silk Road forum offers great potential to promote cooperation and regional integration.

I also want to comment on the recent P5+1 agreement reached with Iran. My country is hopeful

that the process will develop in a positive direction and contribute to greater security and economic development in the wider region.

Georgia has repeatedly demonstrated its readiness to pay more than its fair share to promote a secure international environment. My country contributed the second-largest number of troops, after the United States, to the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan. Our soldiers are among the world's best. They are the pride of my nation, and we honour them. I would like to take a moment to remember all the brave Georgian troops who serve their nation and have given their lives in the pursuit of peace and freedom. My country's contributions to our common security do not end there. Georgia also supports the European Union's peacekeeping efforts, including providing the second-largest troop contribution to the European Union Military Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic.

A core element of Georgia's security and its Euro-Atlantic integration is its ever-deepening relationship with NATO. Following last year's NATO Summit, NATO agreed to provide Georgia a substantial package of practical support to strengthen Georgia's armed forces and make us a more integrated ally. Most recently, we inaugurated a new joint training and evaluation centre in Georgia, where Georgian forces will receive NATO training. We are also increasing the number of training exercises carried out between Georgia and the United States and between Georgia and its NATO allies.

The Charter of the United Nations, adopted 70 years ago, was designed to put an end to chaos and to build a better world. Today, the world is still facing unprecedented challenges that require strong political resolve. Where necessary, we must reform international organizations to meet current demands. In that context, we commend the ongoing inter-State negotiations on Security Council reform, which aim at raising the effectiveness of the United Nations in crisis situations, as defined by the Charter. Increasing the role of small States in the Security Council, avoiding misuse of the veto rights, as well as improving the working methods, should be the cornerstone of the reform process. Thus I express hope that the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations will serve as a reminder to all of us to stand firmly for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and for the goal of peace and stability throughout the world.

In conclusion, let me end where I began. Our vision is clear and our future is bright. Let me share my dream for Georgia. I see a country where every young Georgian boy or girl has access to a quality education in order to give them the opportunity to develop their God-given talents. I see a country where people are free from the fear of not having the health care and resources they need to protect their family, livelihood and future. I see a strong, prosperous Georgia that leverages its geographic location as a vital crossroads connecting East and West, North and South. I see a strong and proud nation dedicated to facilitating peace among neighbours, as well as commerce between continents. I see a country that is a force for good and stability in its own neighbourhood, a country that lives up to its responsibilities as a global citizen.

Let us walk together in creating a brighter future for the next generations.

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

Mr. Irakli Garibashvili, Prime Minister of Georgia, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic.

Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Tsipras (Greece): Seventy years have passed since the United Nations was founded, after the most disastrous war in history. In the wake of that war, the noble declarations of the United Nations raised hopes for a common peaceful future, based on universal values, social justice and respect for human rights. Much has been achieved since. But, regrettably, the vision of the founders of the Organization is far from being fulfilled.

Today we are witnessing a vast humanitarian crisis, unprecedented movements of displaced people and an increase in poverty, violence, extremism and human

rights abuses. Nevertheless, the big question for us is not to identify the challenges we face. The peoples of this world know very well what they face every day. This great Organization was established to answer the big question: how do we deal with those challenges on the basis of our shared values of the Charter of the United Nations?

Unfortunately, as the years go by, we seem to be returning not only to the same problems, but to the same old failed recipes that fostered those problems in the first place. That is why the biggest challenge we face today is an existential one: whether to continue with the same old recipes of social exclusion, political fragmentation and economic aggression, or to try to reclaim our future step by step, with confidence but also with the ability to learn from our mistakes. Allow me to refer to the efforts of my own country in confronting three specific crises in the past few years.

Like many other countries, Greece was hit hard by the 2008 economic crisis, due to the structural weaknesses of its economy and its high debt and budgetary deficits. Yet the neoliberal recipe we and other European countries were called to implement came at a devastating social cost and contributed to deepening the economic and fiscal crisis rather than curing it. We lost 25 per cent of our gross domestic product (GDP), our debt to GDP ratio grew to 180 per cent, unemployment reached 27 per cent and the migration of graduates to European countries accelerated.

We faced a firm commitment on the part of some to the idea that Greece must exit the eurozone, or that the institutional and structural reforms we need must be combined with tough austerity measures and welfare and wage cuts. After many months of negotiation, Greece agreed to a new stabilization programme that includes reforms in our public administration and in the pension and tax systems and gives us the opportunity to stabilize our economy by creating the foundation for a necessary reprofiling of our debt.

Unfortunately, at the same time, it imposes measures further burdening both society and the economy. Those measures should have been avoided. We needed and still need to struggle step by step to claim a growth agenda rather than an austerity agenda, to protect the most vulnerable members of society and distribute tax burdens justly; and to link the development of the economy and the restoration of confidence to the need to restructure our debt.

How familiar does that sound to others in the Assembly? How many times since the 1970s have countries in the developed and, more recently, in the developing world struggled when facing exactly those problems — problems that concern not just their weaknesses, but the recipes they are given to deal with them? We have to realize that we need a global financial and economic system oriented to fostering national growth strategies and our post-2015 development agenda. We have to discuss the issue of debt restructuring in all competent forums, including this one, in connection with developing growth strategies, not austerity strategies.

Another regional European crisis where Greece is at the forefront is the recent unprecedented migration flows. Since the beginning of the year, more than 300,000 people, mostly from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan, have entered the country with the goal of transiting to Western European countries. Greece, like all other European countries, was taken aback by that development. Nevertheless, the people of Greece showed their solidarity by providing food and shelter to the refugees. In cooperation with the European Union and other international organizations, we are doing everything we can to manage those flows in an effective and humane way, by improving reception facilities and identification procedures, as well as by setting up hotspots to facilitate relocation.

Nevertheless, for some, the only way to deal with that challenge is to build walls higher, to repel migrants by force, or to ensure that they remain someone else's responsibility, as far away as possible. We do not believe that the future of Europe or the future of our world can be built with ever-higher walls, or children dying at our doorstep. Neither can we forget that many of our ancestors were refugees and migrants. We cannot allow racism and xenophobia to destroy our common principles.

In the United Nations framework, we have to build the necessary mechanism for resettling people from countries neighbouring Syria, while also supporting those countries directly in hosting refugees and dismantling trafficking networks. That resettlement mechanism, together with the existing relocation mechanism in Europe, will give hope to those people, discouraging them from trusting traffickers. Furthermore, we have to increase support for frontline European States, such as Greece, in their effort to manage those flows.

Greece is also at the centre of a third security crisis, one that causes this refugee crisis. We are at the heart of a triangle of destabilization, with Ukraine to the north and the conflicts in Libya and in the Middle East to the south-west and south-east. Located in that unstable environment, Greece has been striving to bolster regional security. It supports all efforts promoting peace and stability. Nevertheless, again we hear some who insist that we should embark on unilateral initiatives without considering their prospects and consequences, or leave the conflicts to be settled by themselves, without contributing to stabilization or reconstruction.

Yet those are exactly the mistakes that brought us here in the first place. We do not have the luxury to make foreign policy choices without examining in advance what their consequences will be. In Syria we must act decisively in favour of reconciliation and a political solution that will lay the ground for the Syrian-led democratic transition, foreseen in the Geneva Communiqué. In that regard, we support initiatives aimed at engagement with all relevant international and regional actors. In Libya, we fully support the United Nations efforts, and we welcome the successful completion of negotiations and political dialogue last week. Furthermore, we believe that the Middle East peace process is of key importance for the region. A new momentum for a solution must be promoted, with a view to the creation of a State of Palestine on the basis of the pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, that coexists peacefully with Israel.

Concerning Ukraine, we support its territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders. We appreciate the efforts of the Normandy Contact Group and the conciliatory role of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in avoiding a vicious circle of militarization in the region. And we call on the signatories of the Minsk agreements to implement the agreements in full.

We are also deeply concerned about the rise of jihadism, which must be dealt with decisively and comprehensively.

Beyond the crises I mentioned, Greece attaches particular importance to engagement with its immediate neighbourhood. There also it is important to foster new initiatives rather than remain trapped in the dead-ends of the past. I spoke of the need to avoid constructing walls. And truly it is shameful that for the last 41 years — the same number as my age — Cyprus

has remained divided. Today more than ever, and in light of the instability in our region, it is important that the momentum be grasped for a mutually acceptable, just, viable and comprehensive solution to the Cyprus issue, based on the relevant United Nations resolutions and on Cyprus's membership in the European Union, to the benefit of all the people of Cyprus — Greek and Turkish Cypriots — as well as all other communities.

In that context, I would like to underline Greece's full support for the intercommunal talks, held under the leadership of President Anastasiades and the head of the Turkish Cypriot community, Mr. Akıncı. I firmly believe that any real and lasting solution will have to eventually deal with the international issue of security, the cancellation of the anachronistic treaties of alliance and of guarantee and the withdrawal of all foreign troops, including the troops occupying the northern part of this island.

As a regional player keen on promoting security in the region, Greece has been making steady efforts to improve cooperation with Turkey. We have done so through a wide range of initiatives, including the promotion of our dialogue on confidence-building measures. Full respect for good-neighbourly relations and international law by Turkey, as well as a just and viable solution to the Cyprus issue, remain preconditions for the full normalization of Greek-Turkish relations.

In the Western Balkans, we promote robust bilateral relations and a commitment to the region's European perspective. Greece has stepped up efforts towards the settlement of all differences in the region, among them the issue of the name of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We have proposed a pragmatic settlement framework aimed at reaching an agreement and an agreed set of confidence-building measures that provide us with an opportunity to further enhance bilateral cooperation and trust.

People all around the globe are striving to achieve a better future for themselves and their children. People in my country are struggling every day, with pride and dignity, to overcome crises and regain hope. Even in their most difficult moments, they are assisting those more in need, those fleeing conflict zones. Even in their most difficult moments, they are asserting their democratic right to choose their own fate. That is a daily example of people insisting, even under the most difficult conditions, on their basic humanity and democratic rights. That example should guide us in taking the necessary steps towards a safer, just and

prosperous world for ourselves and future generations to live in.

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

Mr. Alexis Tsipras, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Health, and Minister for Communication of the State of Israel of the State of Israel

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Health, and Minister for Communication of the State of Israel.

Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Health, and Minister for Communication of the State of Israel, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister for Health, and Minister for Communication of the State of Israel, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Netanyahu (Israel): I bring greetings from Jerusalem, the city in which the Jewish people's hopes and prayers for peace for all of humanity have echoed throughout the ages.

Thirty-one years ago, as Israel's Ambassador to the United Nations, I stood at this rostrum for the first time. I spoke that day against a draft resolution sponsored by Iran to expel Israel from the United Nations. Then, as now, the United Nations was obsessively hostile towards Israel, the one true democracy in the Middle East. Then, as now, some sought to deny the one and only Jewish State a place among nations. I ended that first speech by saying, "Gentlemen, check your fanaticism at the door" (*A/39/PV.32, para. 83*).

More than three decades later, as the Prime Minister of Israel, I am again privileged to speak from this rostrum. And for me, that privilege has always come with a moral responsibility to speak the truth. So after three days of listening to world leaders praise the nuclear deal with Iran, I begin my speech today by saying, "Ladies and gentlemen, check your enthusiasm at the door". The deal does not make peace more likely.

By fuelling Iran's aggressions with billions of dollars in sanctions relief, it makes war more likely.

Just look at what Iran has done in the past six months alone, since the framework agreement was announced in Lausanne. Iran boosted its supply of devastating weapons to Syria. Iran sent more soldiers of its Revolutionary Guard into Syria. Iran sent thousands of Afghani and Pakistani Shiite fighters to Syria. Iran did all that to prop up Al-Assad's brutal regime. Iran also shipped tons of weapons and ammunition to the Houthi rebels in Yemen, including another shipment just two days ago. Iran threatened to topple Jordan. Iran's proxy, Hizbullah, smuggled into Lebanon SA-22 missiles to down our planes and Yakhont cruise missiles to sink our ships. Iran supplied Hizbullah with precision-guided surface-to-surface missiles and attack drones so it can accurately hit any target in Israel. Iran aided Hamas and Islamic Jihad in building armed drones in Gaza. Iran also made clear its plans to open two new terror fronts against Israel, promising to arm Palestinians in the West Bank and sending its Revolutionary Guard generals to the Golan Heights, from which its operatives recently fired rockets on northern Israel.

Israel will continue to respond forcefully to any attacks against it from Syria. Israel will continue to act to prevent the transfer of strategic weapons to Hizbullah from and through Syrian territory. Every few weeks, Iran and Hizbullah set up new terrorist cells in cities throughout the world. Three such cells were recently uncovered in Kuwait, Jordan and Cyprus. In May, security forces in Cyprus raided a Hizbullah agent's apartment in the city of Larnaca. There they found five tons of ammonium nitrate — roughly the same amount of ammonium nitrate used to blow up the Federal Building in Oklahoma City. And that was just in one apartment, in one city, in one country. But Iran is setting up dozens of terrorist cells like that around the world. They are setting up those terror cells in this hemisphere as well.

I repeat, Iran has been doing all of this — everything that I have just described — just within the past six months, when it was trying to convince the world to remove the sanctions. Just imagine what Iran will do after those sanctions are lifted. Unleashed and unmuzzled, Iran will go on the prowl, devouring more and more prey. In the wake of the nuclear deal, Iran is spending billions of dollars on weapons and satellites. Does anyone here think that Iran is doing that to

advance peace? Does anyone here think that hundreds of billions of dollars in sanctions relief and fat contracts will turn that rapacious tiger into a kitten? People who think so should think again.

In 2013, President Rouhani began his so-called charm offensive here at the United Nations. Two years later, Iran is executing more political prisoners, escalating its regional aggression and rapidly expanding its global terror net. They say that actions speak louder than words, but, in Iran's case, their words speak as loudly as their actions. Just listen to the Deputy Commander of Iran's Revolutionary Guard Qods Force. In February, he said that "the Islamic Revolution is not limited by geographic borders". He boasted that Afghanistan, Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine and Yemen are among the countries being "conquered by the Islamic Republic of Iran". He said "conquered".

For those here who believe that the deal in Vienna will bring about a change in Iran's policy, listen to what Iran's Supreme Leader, Ayatollah Khamenei, said five days after the nuclear deal was reached: "Our policies towards the arrogant Government of the United States will not change". The United States, he vowed, will continue to be Iran's enemy. While giving the mullahs more money is likely to fuel more repression inside Iran, it will definitely fuel more aggression outside Iran.

As the leader of a country defending itself every day against Iran's growing aggression, I wish that I could take comfort in the claim that this deal blocks Iran's path to nuclear weapons, but I cannot, because it does not. This deal does place several constraints on Iran's nuclear programme, and rightly so, because the international community recognizes that Iran is particularly dangerous. But, here is the catch. Under this deal, if Iran does not change its behaviour — in fact, even if it becomes more dangerous in the years to come — the most important constraints will still be automatically lifted by year 10 and by year 15. That would place a militant Islamic terror regime weeks away from having the fissile material for an entire arsenal of nuclear bombs. That just does not make any sense.

I have said that if Iran wants to be treated like a normal country, let it act like a normal country. This deal will treat Iran like a normal country even if it remains a dark theocracy that conquers its neighbours, sponsors terrorism worldwide and chants, "Death to Israel, death to America!" Does anyone seriously

believe that flooding a radical theocracy with weapons and cash will curb its appetite for aggression? Does anyone here really believe that a theocratic Iran with sharper claws and sharper fangs will be more likely to change its stripes? There is a general rule that I have learned — and that that those here must have learned it in their lifetime — which is that when bad behaviour is rewarded, it only gets worse.

I have long said that the greatest danger that the world faces is the coupling of militant Islam with nuclear weapons. I am gravely concerned that the nuclear deal with Iran will prove to be the marriage certificate of that unholy union. I know that some well-intentioned people sincerely believe that this deal is the best way to block Iran's path to the bomb. However, one of history's most important, yet least learned lessons, is that the best intentions do not prevent the worst outcomes. The vast majority of Israelis believe that this nuclear deal with Iran is a very bad deal. What makes matters even worse is that we see the world celebrating this bad deal, rushing to embrace and do business with a regime that is openly committed to our destruction.

Last week, Major General Salehi, the Commander of Iran's Army, proclaimed

"We will annihilate Israel, for sure. We are glad that we are in the forefront of executing the Supreme Leader's order to destroy Israel."

As for the Supreme Leader himself, a few days after the nuclear deal was announced, he released his latest book. It is a 400-page screed detailing his plan to destroy the State of Israel. Last month, Khamenei once again made his genocidal intentions clear. Before Iran's top clerical body, the Assembly of Experts, he spoke about Israel, which is home to over 6 million Jews. He pledged that "there will be no Israel in 25 years". Seventy years after the murder of 6 million Jews, Iran's rulers promise to destroy my country, murder my people, and the response from this body, the response from nearly every one of the Governments represented here, has been absolutely nothing — utter silence, deafening silence.

Perhaps members of the Assembly can now understand why Israel is not joining in the general celebration of the deal. If Iran's rulers were working to destroy other members' countries, perhaps they would be less enthusiastic about the deal. If Iran's terror proxies were firing thousands of rockets at other members' cities, perhaps they would be more measured in their praise. And if the deal were unleashing a nuclear

arms race in their neighbourhoods, perhaps they would be more reluctant to celebrate.

But no one should think that Iran is a danger only to Israel. Besides Iran's aggression in the Middle East and its terror campaign around the world, Iran is also building intercontinental ballistic missiles whose sole purpose is to carry nuclear warheads. Now this fact needs to be remembered: Iran already has missiles that can reach Israel. So those intercontinental ballistic missiles that Iran is building are not meant for us. They are meant for others — for Europe, for America, for raining down mass destruction anytime, anywhere.

It is not easy to oppose something that is embraced by the greatest Powers in the world. Believe me, it would be far easier to remain silent. But throughout our history, the Jewish people have learned the heavy price of silence. And as the Prime Minister of the Jewish State, as someone who knows that history, I refuse to be silent. I will say it again. The days when the Jewish people remained passive in the face of genocidal enemies — those days are over. Not being passive means speaking up about those dangers. We have spoken up, we are speaking up, and we will continue to do so. Not being passive also means defending ourselves against those dangers. We have. We are. And we will.

Israel will not allow Iran to break in, to sneak in or to walk into the nuclear-weapons club. I know that preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons remains the official policy of the international community. But no one should question Israel's determination to defend itself against those who seek our destruction. For in every generation, there have been those who sought to destroy our people. In antiquity, we faced destruction from the ancient empires of Babylon and Rome. In the Middle Ages, we faced inquisitions and expulsions. And in modern times, we faced pogroms and the Holocaust. Yet the Jewish people persevered.

And now another regime has arisen, swearing to destroy Israel. That regime would be wise to consider this fact: I stand here today representing Israel, a country that is 67 years young but is the nation State of a people nearly 4,000 years old. The empires of Babylon and Rome are not represented in this Hall of nations, nor is the 1,000-year Reich. Those seemingly invincible empires are long gone. But Israel lives. The people of Israel live.

The rebirth of Israel is a testament to the indomitable spirit of my people. For a hundred generations, the

Jewish people dreamed of returning to the land of Israel. Even in our darkest hours — and we had so many — even in our darkest hours, we never gave up hope of rebuilding our eternal capital, Jerusalem. The establishment of Israel made it possible to realize that dream. It has enabled us to live as a free people in our ancestral homeland. It has enabled us to embrace Jews who have come from the four corners of the Earth to find refuge from persecution. They have come from war-torn Europe, from Yemen, Iraq, and Morocco, from Ethiopia and the Soviet Union, from a hundred other lands. And today, as a rising tide of anti-Semitism once again sweeps across Europe and elsewhere, many Jews come to Israel to join us in building the Jewish future.

So here is my message to the rulers of Iran. Their plan to destroy Israel will fail. Israel will not permit any force on Earth to threaten its future. And here is my message to all the countries represented here. Whatever resolutions they may adopt in this building, whatever decisions they may take in their capitals, Israel will do whatever it must do to defend our State and to defend our people.

As the deal with Iran moves ahead, I hope it will be enforced — how can I put this? — with a little more rigour than was shown with the six Security Council resolutions that Iran has systematically violated and which now have been effectively discarded. I would call for ensuring that the inspectors actually inspect, that the snapback sanctions actually snap back, and that Iran's violations not be swept under the Persian rug. There is one thing I can assure the Assembly of today that Israel will be watching closely.

What the international community now needs to do is clear: first, it must make Iran comply with all its nuclear obligations, and hold Iran's feet to the fire. Secondly, Iran's regional aggression must be put in check by supporting and strengthening those fighting Iran's aggression, beginning with Israel. Thirdly, use sanctions and all the tools available to tear down Iran's global terror network.

Israel is working closely with our Arab peace partners to address our common security challenges from Iran and also the security challenges from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and from others. We are also working with other States in the Middle East, as well as with countries in Africa, in Asia and beyond. Many in our region know that both Iran and ISIL are our common enemies. And when

one's enemies fight each other, one does not strengthen either one. One weakens both.

Common dangers are clearly bringing Israel and its Arab neighbours closer. As we work together to thwart the dangers that I have mentioned, I hope that we will build lasting partnerships for security, for prosperity and for peace. But in Israel, we never forget one thing. We never forget that Israel's most important partner has always been, and will always be, the United States of America. The alliance between Israel and the United States is unshakeable.

President Obama and I agree on the need to keep arms out of the hands of Iran's terror proxies. We agree on the need to stop Iran from destabilizing countries throughout the Middle East. Israel deeply appreciates President Obama's willingness to bolster our security and to help Israel maintain its qualitative military edge in order to confront the enormous challenges we face. Israel is grateful that this sentiment is widely shared by the American people and its representatives in Congress — both by those who supported the deal and by those who opposed it.

President Obama and I have both said that our differences over the nuclear deal are a disagreement within the family. But we have no disagreement about the need to work together to secure our common future. And what a great future it could be. Israel is uniquely poised to take advantage of the promise of the twenty-first century. Israel is a world leader in science and technology, in cybertechnology, software, water, agriculture, medicine, biotechnology and so many other fields that are being revolutionized by Israeli ingenuity and Israeli innovation. Israel is the innovation nation. Israeli know-how is everywhere. It is in our computers' microprocessors and flash drives. It is in our smart phones, when we send instant messages and navigate our cars. It is on our farms, when we drip-irrigate our crops and keep our grains and produce fresh. It is in our universities, when we study Nobel Prize-winning discoveries in chemistry and economics. It is in our medicine cabinets, when we use drugs to treat Parkinson's disease and multiple sclerosis. It is even on our plates, when we eat delicious cherry tomatoes. They were also perfected in Israel, in case someone did not know.

We are so proud in Israel of the long strides that our country has been able to take in a short time. We are so proud that our small country is making such a huge contribution to the entire world. Yet the dreams of

our people, enshrined for eternity by the great prophets of the Bible, will be fully realized only when there is peace.

As the Middle East descends into chaos, Israel's peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan are two cornerstones of stability. Israel remains committed to achieving peace with the Palestinians as well. Israelis know the price of war. I know the price of war. I was nearly killed in battle. I lost many friends. I lost my beloved brother Yoni. Those who know the price of war can best appreciate what the blessings of peace would mean — for ourselves, our children and our grandchildren. I am prepared to immediately resume direct peace negotiations with the Palestinian Authority without any preconditions whatsoever. Unfortunately, President Abbas said yesterday that he is not prepared to do that. I hope he changes his mind, because I remain committed to a vision of two States for two peoples, in which a demilitarized Palestinian State recognizes the Jewish State.

As members know, the peace process began over two decades ago. Yet despite the best efforts of six Israeli prime ministers — Rabin, Peres, Barak, Sharon, Olmert and myself — the Palestinians have consistently refused to end the conflict and to make a final peace with Israel. Unfortunately, we heard that rejectionism again only yesterday from President Abbas. How can Israel make peace with a Palestinian partner who refuses to even sit at the negotiating table? Israel expects the Palestinian Authority to abide by its commitments. The Palestinians should not walk away from peace. I would like to tell President Abbas that I know it is not easy. I know it is hard. But we owe it to our peoples to try, to continue to try. If we actually sit down together, if we actually negotiate and stop negotiating about the negotiation, and if we actually sit down to try to resolve the conflict between us, recognizing each other and not using a Palestinian State as a stepping stone for yet another Islamist dictatorship in the Middle East but as something that will live at peace next to the Jewish State, we can do remarkable things for our peoples.

The United Nations can help advance peace by supporting direct, unconditional negotiations between the parties. The United Nations will certainly not help advance peace by trying to impose solutions or by encouraging Palestinian rejectionism. And the United Nations should do one more thing. The United Nations should finally rid itself of its obsessive bashing of Israel. Here is just one absurd example of

that obsession. In the four years of horrific violence in Syria, more than a quarter of a million people have lost their lives. That is more than 10 times the number of Israelis and Palestinians combined who have lost their lives in a century of conflict between us. Yet last year, the Assembly adopted 20 resolutions against Israel and only one resolution about the savage slaughter in Syria. Talk about injustice. Talk about disproportionality. Count them: 20. And one against Syria. Well, frankly I am not surprised. To borrow a line from Yogi Berra, the late, great baseball player and part-time philosopher, when it comes to the annual bashing of Israel at the United Nations, it is déjà vu all over again.

Enough is enough. Today, 31 years after I stood here for the first time, I am still asking when the United Nations will finally check its anti-Israel fanaticism at the door, when the United Nations will finally stop slandering Israel as a threat to peace and when it will actually start helping Israel advance peace. The same question should be posed to Palestinian leaders. When will they start working with Israel to advance peace and reconciliation, stop libelling Israel and stop inciting hatred and violence?

Here is a good place for President Abbas to begin. He should stop spreading lies about Israel's alleged intentions on the Temple Mount. Israel is fully committed to maintaining the status quo there. What President Abbas should be speaking out against are the actions of the militant Islamists who are smuggling explosives into the Al-Aqsa Mosque and who are trying to prevent Jews and Christians from visiting the holy sites. That is the real threat to those sacred sites.

A thousand years before the birth of Christianity, more than 1,500 years before the birth of Islam, King David made Jerusalem our capital, and King Solomon built the Temple on that Mount. Yet Israel will always respect the sacred shrines of all religions. In a region plagued by violence and by unimaginable intolerance, in which Islamic fanatics are destroying the ancient treasures of civilization, Israel stands out as a towering beacon of enlightenment and tolerance. Far from endangering the holy sites, Israel ensures their safety. Because, unlike the Powers that ruled Jerusalem in the past, Israel respects the holy sites and the freedom of worship of Jews, Muslims, Christians — everyone. And that will never change.

Because Israel will always stay true to its values. Those values are on display each and every day. They are on display when Israel's feisty parliament

vigorously debates every issue under the sun; when Israel's Chief Justice sits in her chair at our fiercely independent Supreme Court; when our Christian community continues to grow and thrive from year to year, whereas Christian communities elsewhere in the Middle East are decimated; when a brilliant young Israeli Muslim student gives her valedictorian address at one of our finest universities; and when Israeli doctors and nurses — doctors and nurses from the Israeli military — treat thousands of wounded from the killing fields of Syria and thousands more in the wake of natural disasters from Haiti to Nepal. That is the true face of Israel. Those are the values of Israel.

In the Middle East, those values are under savage assault by militant Islamists, who are forcing millions of terrified people to flee to distant shores. Just 10 miles from ISIS and a few hundred yards from Iran's murderous proxies, Israel stands in the breach, proudly and courageously defending freedom and progress. Israel is civilization's front line in the battle against barbarism. So here is a novel idea for the United Nations. Instead of continuing the shameful routine of bashing Israel, the international community should stand with Israel. The international community should stand with Israel as we work to check the fanaticism at its doors. It should stand with Israel as we prevent that fanaticism from even reaching its doors. The international community should stand with Israel because Israel is not just defending itself. More than ever, Israel is defending the world!

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister of the State of Israel for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of the State of Israel, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of Malaysia.

Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, and inviting him to address the Assembly.

Mr. Razak (Malaysia): I would like to congratulate Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. His experience and wisdom will be an invaluable guide to the Assembly. The theme of this session, “The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights”, is timely. We urgently need to find new approaches and to rise above the political divisions and put people first in an age when the old ways are proving inadequate to the challenges we face today.

We are a world of nation States, but the new conflicts and threats that imperil our peace and security do not recognize borders. Non-State actors, such as the so-called Islamic State, threaten to destroy sovereign States. They do not confine their acts of horrific cruelty within official boundaries. Experts in social media recruit followers in faraway countries, luring them with false promises and persuading many young people that their barbaric actions will bring them closer to God. That is sickening, and there can be no greater a slur on Islam, which is a religion of peace, moderation and justice.

But those extremists cannot be defeated by traditional military means alone. Five years ago, I stood before the Assembly and called for a global movement of moderates, a movement of all religions, of all countries, to marginalize extremists, to reclaim the centre and reshape the agenda in the direction of peace and pragmatism. We in Malaysia have followed up, both through practical action and by building intellectual capacity. Central to that effort is a reaffirmation of Islam’s true nature, because we must acknowledge that, at the moment, we are not winning the propaganda war against the so-called Islamic State. Its twisted narrative is not being countered in a way adequate to preventing many misguided people from joining or supporting it from afar. So it is more important than ever that we spread awareness about authentic Islam, most especially when conflicts persist and people lose hope. For it is there that extremism finds fertile soil. And those who fight for extremism, for a perversion of true Islam, are among the main drivers of the current migration crisis in the Middle East.

Islam unequivocally prohibits the killing of civilians during war. It explicitly protects minorities and respects those of other faiths. It urges the pursuit of knowledge and stresses both justice and compassion. As the Prophet Muhammad said, you will not enter paradise until you have faith, and you will

not complete your faith until you love one another as you love yourselves. That means that there should be no strife among Muslims, including between Shia and Sunni, who may take different paths but seek the same destination.

Islam condemns the destruction of historical sites that are part of the world’s cultural heritage. The lies of the so-called Islamic State include the claim that it is their duty to destroy historical sites, because the Prophet Muhammad destroyed the idols that had been introduced into the Kaaba in Mecca. That reasoning is based on a false analogy. The Kaaba was built by the prophet Abraham for the worship of the one true God, and later generations added the idols. The Prophet Muhammad was commanded to purify the Kaaba of those idols for its use by his followers and to bring it back to its original form. The historical sites being destroyed by the so-called Islamic State were never used for the worship of the one God and then later desecrated, so the argument for destroying them does not and cannot apply. Moreover, God informs us that the sites that we travel to and that denote past civilizations, some of which were global super-Powers in their time but are that no longer, are signs that remind us not to be arrogant, but to walk the earth humbly. We must combat the so-called Islamic State and its warped ideology by explaining why their path is un-Islamic and why their actions are evil, theologically incoherent and a travesty of Islam, which commands us to be knowledgeable, compassionate and humble.

The Malaysian Government has helped to develop an important body of scholarship that does just that. An international group of Sunni and Shia scholars representing a cross-section of the global Muslim community has been convened in Kuala Lumpur. Its mission is to define an Islamic State, based on the continuity of Islamic religious thought through the past 14 centuries. Such a State is nothing like the entity in Syria and Iraq that usurps that name. The scholars have unanimously emphasized that an Islamic State must deliver justice in all its forms, political, economic and in the courts, to its citizens. It must be based on the objectives of sharia, or *maqasid* sharia, which are the protection and enhancement of life, religion, intellect, property, family and dignity.

An Islamic State must defend the various peoples under its rule and preserve their religions, languages and historic sites, because God commands us, “Indeed, we have made you nations and tribes, that ye may

know one another". God could have created us as one religious community, but in order to test us, He did not do so, and He orders us to compete with each other in being virtuous. A true Islamic State, therefore, aids God's divine intent to test humankind and urges us to compete in virtue, in knowledge, kindness, compassion and humility, but, crucially, it does not coerce us to do so. Those are Islam's true principles. The so-called Islamic State knows nothing of Islam's noble ideals, compassion or solemn duty to care for and learn about our fellow human beings. They are violating divine will. They are desecrating the name of our religion through their self-proclaimed caliphate, to which no true Muslim will pledge allegiance. That is the message that we must spread to Muslims and non-Muslims. And I call on the Umma to rise with one voice and let the world ring when we say to the so-called Islamic State that it does not represent us.

Let no one doubt how seriously Malaysia regards the problem of militants, both those who wish to use Kuala Lumpur as a transit point and those who wish to sow violence and destruction at home. Much of our work on that problem cannot be revealed for security reasons. Some may be led to think that, because Malaysia has not suffered a successful terrorist attack, we do not have national security challenges. That is not the case. Our tireless and ever-vigilant security forces have intercepted many would-be IS recruits transiting through Kuala Lumpur. It is because of our efforts that those recruits have not fallen into the darkness that blights Syria and Iraq. But, unfortunately, some have. We have identified 39 Malaysians who have travelled to join the so-called Islamic State, and we have arrested more than 100 of our citizens suspected of links to the so-called Islamic State.

Those threats are real. There are people who want to bring terror to our streets. We will not stand for it, and they will not succeed, for Malaysia has been and will always be a land where many faiths and ethnicities freely prosper and thrive. But we must strive harder to combat the terrorist threat together. Military and intelligence services need to share information and countries need to collaborate more and dare to pre-emptively arrest as necessary. We have passed legislation to enable that. When the evidence is irrefutable, we will take action unhesitatingly. If our citizens' lives are threatened by the possible bombing of a mall or a railway station, we would be negligent in our duty if we did not intervene before it was too late.

The year 2015 has given us examples of inspiring new approaches. For instance, the United States restored diplomatic relations with Cuba. That was a historic achievement and an exemplary display of moderation in action. It took courage. It would not have happened had those wishing to cling to old political divisions held sway. Forward-thinking leaders put their people's interests first.

Similar courage is needed to permanently address the injustice that the Palestinians have suffered since 1948. Decades of impunity and the systematic dehumanization of Palestinians has culminated in increasing violence, illegal settlements and violations of rights. The frustration and anger felt by the Palestinians resonates with Muslims worldwide. If the world continues to turn a blind eye to their suffering, we risk another catastrophe in the occupied Palestinian territory. We will also fail to uphold the right to self-determination, which was one of the founding principles of the United Nations when it was created 70 years ago.

On that note, given the violations of the Al-Aqsa Mosque that took place on Rosh Hashanah in Jerusalem this year and the aggression against its worshippers three weeks ago, I call on the Israeli Government to live up to Judaism's highest ethical principles and, in particular, to the essential message of the Torah, as succinctly expressed by the sage Hillel of the first century before the Common Era. When asked to describe the Torah in a nutshell, he said, "That which is despicable to you, do not do to your fellow".

That dictum, known universally in all religions as the Golden Rule, could herald the dawn of a much needed revitalized relationship between Muslims and Jews. Currently Israel is exerting its authority over Islam's third holiest site, in defiance of the jurisdiction of King Abdullah of Jordan, its lawful custodian. It is, therefore, Israel's duty to facilitate the visits of Muslims from all over the world. For that is an aspiration held by all devout Muslims that they pray to realize in their lifetime.

Putting people first will not always be easy, but the problems of today require new and global solutions. As a member of the Security Council, Malaysia will continue to raise such issues. Reforming the Security Council so as better to reflect the realities of 2015, rather than those of 1945, represents a good start in building a new and adequately responsive global architecture.

We in Malaysia know how much that is needed. We were extremely disappointed that the proposed Council resolution to set up an international tribunal on the matter of the shooting down of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17 was not adopted because the right of veto was used. We will continue to seek justice through other legal options, because we owe it to the families of those who perished in that outrageous crime.

But whether it be reforming the United Nations, combating extremism or dealing with migration, greater mutual effort is necessary. We must look into ourselves and our own traditions to create new mechanisms. We believe that moderation is key. Moderation is not about being weak. On the contrary, it shows courage and strength — the strength to push for peace and put the people first. It is a principle that runs through all civilizations and faiths. Islam embodies it in the concept of *wasatiyyah* and Confucianism as *chung yung*. Both translate as the middle path or the golden mean. It is a principle that we must rediscover. At the twenty-sixth Summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations in Malaysia in April, we reaffirmed our commitment to such an approach, when we adopted the Langkawi Declaration on the Global Movement of Moderates.

Malaysia stands ready to share its experience of upholding Islam and marginalizing extremism; of implementing the objectives of shariah, while practicing democracy; of maintaining a multi-ethnic society, where different faiths coexist and prosper; and of showing that Islam can not only succeed, but also drive progress and successful economic development. As we cooperate to solve the scourges of poverty, hatred, war and human-made and natural disasters, which have given us today's refugee crises, we must draw from our spiritual traditions that generosity of spirit that goes beyond legal requirements.

The eightieth chapter of the Koran, the surah 'Abasa, opens with God criticizing the Prophet Muhammad — whom we Muslims regard as God's Beloved — because he frowned and turned away when one of his followers, a poor blind man, interrupted him to ask a question while he was preaching to a rich and powerful unbeliever. If God promptly rebuked the Prophet Muhammad, how much more do we — especially we the leaders of the Muslim world — stand to be rebuked by our Creator if we frown and turn away from our fellow Muslims, those who are poor and marginalized and are now fleeing Syria in massive numbers, causing social and economic distress

in Europe? Are we not then partially responsible for the ensuing European hostility directed at Islam, the faith we love, and at our fellow Muslims?

On that account, over the years, Malaysia has taken in numerous individuals fleeing war, starvation and persecution. We currently have hundreds of thousands of irregular migrants, and we took in more earlier this year, when there was a dire humanitarian situation in the Andaman Sea. I am pleased to announce today that, in order to help alleviate the current refugee crisis, Malaysia will do its share and open our doors to another 3,000 Syrian migrants over the next three years.

New international solutions are needed to deal with the migration crises. The millions fleeing are people, and they are people like us. They should be of concern to us all. We must respect our common humanity. We must transcend the silos of race and faith. When we look at the images of the desperate migrants, who are the victims of extremists or whose lives are degraded by hunger and poverty, we must see them not as strangers, but as our brothers and sisters.

It is only when we see that dreadful picture of three-year-old Aylan Kurdi, who was washed ashore, and recognize our own children in that tragic boy's innocent face that we will act as our better selves. People around the world cry out for our help. We cannot — we must not — pass on by.

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

Dato' Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

Mr. Lajčák (Slovakia): During the past 70 years we, the States Members of the United Nations, have been driven by the noble ideals and aspirations that the visionary founders of the United Nations laid down in its Charter in 1945. At the same time, we have been regularly confronted with the grim realities of international affairs. Over its history, the United Nations, both as an intergovernmental Organization and as an actor on the world stage, has been tested by numerous conflicts, humanitarian crises and immense

political and economic changes in the world, as well as by a lack of financial stability.

Throughout all those years, the United Nations has played a crucial role in preventing global conflicts and has carried out vital work around the world in its service to humankind. From the outset, the United Nations has made major contributions to furthering the development and codification of international law as a way of regulating international relations. We should take a step back to see how far we have come and how far we need to go in meeting the challenges that exist across the three pillars of the Organization's work: peace and security, development and human rights. New and acute challenges to the multilateral system and new threats to peace and security that transcend national borders have, unfortunately, emerged. Each and everyone is concerned by the threats of pandemics, climate change, migration, cybersecurity, and the multifaceted and violent nature of terrorism, including organized crime. There are no exceptions.

The United Nations is the right place where all those threats should be addressed and eventually solved. I am deeply convinced that the United Nations remains strategically positioned to provide leadership and effective multilateral responses. A strong and effective United Nations means a better world, a more caring and accepting world, where nations and peoples of different religions, cultures and history can live together in peace — a world where right is might, not might makes right. I believe that strengthening the United Nations is the best investment for achieving the universal desire for peace, development, equality and justice in the world.

We should collectively seek practical means that will enable the current system to live up to its original purposes. That will enable the United Nations to meet the weighty demands that are being and will be made upon it today, tomorrow and in many years to come. The Member States are the owners of the United Nations. Every country — big or small, from North or South, landlocked or insular — has an important individual responsibility and role to play as a driver of the necessary change. My Government has always had strong confidence in the United Nations and remains ready to fully shoulder its responsibility and commitments in that regard.

The scale of global development challenges is unprecedented. A couple of days ago, in this very place we adopted the historic document defining the

Sustainable Development Goals, "Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" (resolution 70/1). We may call it a programme for a better planet, but it is not about the numbers, but about changing our mindsets. It is setting up the new philosophy of existence in a sustainable future. Its cornerstone is full inclusivity and zero disparity.

The global security environment has never been as dynamic and uncertain as today. The number of major civil wars has almost tripled. The number of conflict casualties has skyrocketed. The most worrisome fact is the increased number of civilian casualties, including women and children. The United Nations works to maintain international peace and security in a world where security threats are becoming more complex and asymmetric, and conflicts more intractable and less conducive to traditional political settlements. The current pattern of violence also has serious implications for the implementation of mandates to protect civilians in the field. The United Nations has increasingly come under attack in areas where it has been present. Naturally, in such conditions, the level and the main priorities for United Nations involvement are being re-evaluated in a process of strategic reflection.

A secondary effect is the dramatic increase in the number of refugees. The World Bank estimates that roughly one fifth of the world's population is affected by some form of violence or insecurity. The total number of people forcibly displaced by war, conflict and persecution rose to roughly 60 million by the end of 2014. On a daily basis, we are confronted with gruesome images in the news or directly in our streets, squares and transportation hubs. Forced displacement has, sadly, become a deliberate and widespread tactic, meaning that displacement is not only a short-term humanitarian problem, but also a long-term development and State-building issue.

The current migration crisis is one of the most complex challenges, one that we have to face up front and address together. It affects all of us — the countries of origin, transit and destination. It therefore requires joint responses. Both immediate and long-term measures are absolutely necessary to address those challenges, which include illegal migration, the smuggling of and trafficking in human beings, and gross human rights violations.

We must offer our assistance to those in need and prevent further tragedies involving refugees. For that to happen, we need systematic and comprehensive action

and close cooperation on the part of countries, both of origin and of destination, that will bring a long-term sustainable solution. We must address the root causes of migration, namely, conflicts, intolerance, violence, poverty and a lack of the conditions needed for a decent life, just to mention a few.

As acknowledged many times before, the irreplaceable nature of the Organization is most marked in peacekeeping. The past two decades have significantly tested the concept and conduct of United Nations peacekeeping operations. Slovakia has been an active contributor and stands ready to continue its cooperation with the United Nations in that field.

I was particularly pleased to see that both review panels — the High-level Independent Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and that of the Advisory Group of Experts on the 2015 Review of the Peacebuilding Architecture — have put strong emphasis on enhanced conflict prevention, diplomatic engagement and mediation support in the work of the United Nations system. Speaking from my personal experience as a mediator in South-Eastern Europe, I cannot but support the importance and high relevance of preventive diplomacy across the conflict spectrum and as a part of broader, nationally owned strategies to promote sustainable peace and development. The culture of conflict prevention and the conflict-resolution approaches that are now taking root in the United Nations system must be further developed, alongside more effective peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

It has been 15 years since the adoption of the landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security. Yet the impacts of conflicts on women and children are still inordinate, and their engagement in peace processes is still insufficient. Gender equality is a natural precondition for sustainable development, stability and peace. As former Secretary-General Kofi Annan said,

“When women thrive, all of society benefits, and succeeding generations are given a better start in life.”

The presence of women negotiators in high-profile United Nations peace and mediation processes, the role of women deployed by the United Nations to major conflict zones and high-stake inter-State negotiations, as well as in peacekeeping and peacebuilding in general, is irreplaceable and should continue to grow.

International terrorism in its most violent forms is an increasingly alarming threat to global peace and security, and those forms have become more diverse and fragmented in recent years. Slovakia strongly condemns all terrorist acts as criminal and unjustifiable. No terrorist act should be left without an adequate response from the international community. No perpetrator should be left unpunished and no movement affiliated with any form of terrorism should be tolerated.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The United Nations has done much to set standards in the fight against international terrorism and to encourage and help Member States to meet them. The tenth anniversary of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy in 2016 will provide us with an opportunity to make our efforts in this struggle more efficient. It should be carried out in a multilateral and coordinated manner, with full respect for human rights and the rule of law. We should also redouble our efforts to conclude a comprehensive convention on international terrorism. Last but not least, Member States must strengthen their prevention efforts by working directly with affected communities to counter the violent extremism and radicalization that lead to terrorism. If we want to tackle this threat, we need to confront extremism in all its forms, violent and non-violent. Hate has never been the way to achieve a better future for anyone.

(spoke in French)

We are now fewer than 60 days away from the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris, where the international community will discuss a new international climate change agreement. The impact of climate change is visible and undeniable throughout the world. Extreme droughts, melting of polar ice, substantive changes in long-term climate patterns and the rise in sea levels are the most glaring examples. As a result, Slovakia is committed to adopting at the United Nations climate conference this December a global binding climate agreement that will accelerate the shift towards societies and economies that are low-carbon and climate-resilient worldwide.

(spoke in English)

There are various internal and external forces that could drive any organization to change. Terrorism, weapons of mass destruction, poverty, disease, disparities causing socioeconomic tensions resulting in migration — all these challenges pose vital threats to humankind, and the only difference is how quickly the catastrophe strikes. The logical questions therefore relate to how ready we are to effectively react to challenges of the twenty-first century and whether we can draw useful lessons from the response to Ebola as an international health security threat.

Continuous management reform, optimal use of modern technologies, and gradual improvement of methods and structures for work that takes into account changes in the world are crucial if an organization wants to stay relevant. This is especially true for the United Nations. The seventieth anniversary of the Organization is viewed by many as a timely moment for achieving tangible progress. We need to address all existential challenges with the same attention. Act as one. Struggle as one. Deliver as one. One planet, one humankind, one destiny.

Let our work here at the United Nations be as real, practical and focused as possible so that we can deliver good results in the spirit of cooperation and compromise. The key desired result should be a strengthened and more effective, streamlined and responsive United Nations — a truly global organization that is better able to address interconnected and multidimensional threats and challenges to international peace, security and development.

I would like to conclude by quoting Norman Cousins, an American political journalist and professor, who received the United Nations Peace Medal in 1971:

“If the United Nations is to survive, those who represent it must bolster it; those who advocate it must submit to it; and those who believe in it must fight for it.”

The current General Assembly session will be a new test of our commitment and ability to join forces in the pursuit of common goals. I am confident that under the leadership of President Lykketoft, we will be able to achieve the desired outcome.

The Acting President *(spoke in French)*: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Frank-Walter

Steinmeier, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany.

Mr. Steinmeier (Germany) *(spoke in German; English text provided by the delegation)*: The founding of the United Nations 70 years ago cast light on the dark twentieth century. That was a pivotal moment for our world. It came not against a backdrop of glorious sunshine and green pastures, but amid the ruins of the Second World War with its more than 50 million graves. As the winter of the Cold War spread its frosty fingers, the mothers and fathers of the United Nations forged the foundations of a new order — an order that is not perfect, and which may never be perfect, but which has often enough protected us from relapse into the old barbarism.

Today, 70 years on, it is clear that we are again living in turbulent times. Millions of people are gravely affected by wars and violence, and more than 60 million people have fled their homes — more than at any time since the end of the Second World War.

The foundations of the United Nations are still strong, but the world order built on them has come loose from its moorings. The old balance of power is under pressure. Powerful new players have emerged on the world stage. Most serious of all, non-State actors are now increasingly responsible for war and violence. They abide by no rules — not even the minimum standards enshrined in the international law of war.

We therefore urgently need new buttresses and pillars so that the order based on the United Nations can withstand the tempests of our times. What form could these new pillars take? How should the world order of tomorrow look?

I do not think that there is a theoretical answer to that question; the only answer is a practical one. Just as the Charter of the United Nations was adopted as a bold response to war and suffering, today new pillars will be built only if States are ready to assume responsibility and work together to find concrete answers to the crises of our times — to poverty and underdevelopment, to refugees and migration, to the devastating civil war in Syria and the failing States across the arc of crisis from Libya to Afghanistan, to religious extremism and terrorism and the murderous deeds of the people who call themselves the Islamic State.

There is, however, one major difference between now and the situation 70 years ago. The world of today

is more closely interconnected than ever before. Borders are becoming blurred. In this age of globalization, some say, the world has become a village. If that is so, then we are all neighbours, and I would advise us to act as good neighbours. We come from very different backgrounds. We have different traditions, religions, values and world views. That diversity must be respected. No world view takes precedence over any other, but I can think of no culture in which people are unaware of what it means to be a good neighbour and in which people do not appreciate living in an atmosphere of good-neighbourliness.

Nobody is investing as much hope in that spirit of good-neighbourliness today than the millions of women, men and children who have fled their homes. My country has assumed its responsibility towards them over the past months. Since the beginning of the year, we have taken in 600,000 refugees. Currently, upwards of 10,000 new refugees are arriving every day. Those statistics show that even we cannot absorb such numbers by ourselves over the long term. We need to arrive at a European solution, together with our European neighbours, as well as with our neighbours around the Mediterranean, especially Turkey.

Secondly, the relief agencies of the United Nations system — the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs — all help people in need, on the spot and with no intermediaries. It is scandalous that those organizations are underfunded to the point that they have to cut food rations and medical aid. Accordingly, I met with the members of the Group of Seven and other partners the day before yesterday, and I am delighted to report that together we have raised an additional \$1.8 billion, of which over \$100 million will come from Germany, intended for the United Nations relief agencies. That will also help relieve the burden on the neighbouring countries in which the huge majority of refugees arrive, especially Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. They too need our help, so that one exodus does not trigger another.

But good-neighbourliness comprises more than just humanity and compassion. Good-neighbourliness also presupposes that we agree on joint rules that we all must obey. They include respecting each other's borders and sovereignty. That fundamental norm is still being violated, even in Europe. The European

Union unanimously condemned Russia's annexation of the Crimea and the actions in eastern Ukraine, and we responded, not only in terms of condemnation and isolation, but also by launching a political process to defuse the conflict. The Organization for Security and Cooperation (OSCE) has played an indispensable role in that process from the outset. We want to further strengthen the OSCE as an institution for our common security when we Germans assume its chairmanship next year.

Active political responsibility is also part and parcel of good-neighbourliness. A neighbourhood in which nobody looks beyond their garden gate will not be worth living in for long. People must be vigilant, because there are many conflicts that can only be solved in concert and by means of multilateral diplomacy. While that may take time and perseverance, it works.

This past summer, the five permanent members of the Security Council and Germany concluded an agreement with Iran. After more than 10 years of negotiations, we managed to agree that Iran will never have an atomic bomb and that we can verify this. The negotiations succeeded in bringing a number of actors to the same table, including Russia and the United States of America. The negotiations have therefore proved that while neighbours may not like one another, they can still solve problems together. Indeed they must do so, if living side by side is not to become unbearable for them both.

The agreement that was reached has created common ground on which greater security can be established in the Middle East, if we persevere in our joint efforts. However, the realities are still somewhat different. In Syria, in the fifth year of the war, the slaughter knows no end. We will only put an end to it by acting together. We have to halt the brutality of Al-Assad's dictatorship, as evinced by its use of barrel bombs and torture. We have to break the control of the Islamic State. We have to silence the guns in Syria and provide the people who live there with access to humanitarian aid.

Moreover, we also share the commons goals of preserving the territorial integrity of Syria and restoring conditions in which all ethnic and religious groups can live in peace with each other, as well as in peace with neighbouring countries. Those are goals that all the actors must believe in, whatever differences may exist between the United States of America and Russia or between Saudi Arabia and Iran.

We already have a basis for joint action aimed at achieving those goals, as illustrated by Security Council resolution 2139 (2014). We must now implement it together with all the stakeholders as a first step towards defusing the conflict. I appeal to the stakeholders in Syria and Syria's neighbours — but not only to them. Instead of multilateral decisions, such as those recently taken by Russia, regarding military action in Syria, we need Russia to now take political action that will advocate transition in Syria. That would be an important contribution to ending the stalemate. For that stalemate is a lethal one, which claims new lives every day.

At the risk of repeating myself, let me stress that when dealing with a humanitarian catastrophe as horrifying as the one in Syria, we are all neighbours. That is what must prompt us to crawl out of our diplomatic trenches, for there can be no military solution. Neither supposed eternal truths nor national interests must be allowed to obstruct efforts to take the first steps in defusing the conflict in Syria.

In these turbulent times, the idea of universal good-neighbourliness would be no more than a dream if there were not already an umbrella, a roof, under which universal good-neighbourliness has been practised for decades. Today we need the United Nations more than ever. We need a legitimate and responsive United Nations, and that is why Germany is campaigning for the reform of the United Nations and the Security Council. That is why we are working with others on the major global projects, on the ambitious 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (resolution 70/1), which has just been adopted and on the equally, if not more, ambitious goals to combat climate change, which we hope to adopt together at the Conference of the Parties in Paris this December.

The United Nations provides a framework, a roof, for our global endeavours. But under that roof, the work must continue at many levels. We Germans believe, first, that the way forward lies in regional cooperation in the European Union and the OSCE and in cooperation with other regional organizations, such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and the African Union, among others. Secondly, we are committed to re-establishing and stabilizing State structures across the arc of crisis from Libya to Iraq and Afghanistan. And thirdly, especially in our capacity as President of the Human Rights Council, we are championing the fundamental importance of human rights. For no political order can endure if the people are not secure in their rights.

In conclusion, I would like to return to the founding of the United Nations 70 years ago. As magnificent as that moment was, it also inspires a sense of great humility in me as a German, because the Charter of the United Nations was part of humankind's response to the war and inhumanity that had originated in my country. In the seven decades that have passed since that time, Germany has been fortunate enough to be gradually and cautiously welcomed back into the heart of the international community. For that, we Germans are grateful, but we are also aware of our responsibility. When Mr. Willy Brandt became the Federal Chancellor of Germany in 1969, he said that we Germans want to be a people of good neighbours. At the time, Germany was still divided, and those words were meant as a gesture of reconciliation towards Poland, France and the other European neighbours that had suffered greatly at German hands.

Today, when a Syrian family in Berlin tells me their tale of war and expulsion, Mr. Brandt's words take on a new meaning. Now the world has become smaller, but the crises are no fewer. It is time for us to once again reaffirm that we Germans want to be a people of good neighbours to others near and far.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Jean Asselborn, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Minister for Immigration and Refugees of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg.

Mr. Asselborn (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): The United Nations was created, not to lead humankind to heaven but to save it from hell. These were the apt words of Mr. Dag Hammarskjöld, who served as the second Secretary-General, from 1953 to 1961, and saw things for what they were. The United Nations was created according to the people's will 70 years ago, following the Second World War, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. Today, in a world beset by armed conflict, violent extremism, radicalization and terrorism, in a world where war, persecution and violations of human rights force millions and millions of people — men, women and children — to leave their homes and to take to the road in mass exoduses in search of safety and dignity, the achievement of that goal seems far more urgent than ever.

The choice of theme for the seventieth session of the General Assembly, "The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights", was

wise indeed. As we have said many times from this rostrum, human rights and the rule of law are closely interconnected and one cannot exist without the other. I shall not revert again to the historic adoption of the post-2015 development agenda except to recall that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, speaking in San Francisco in June and commenting on the importance and scope of this universal programme, observed that we were the first generation that could put an end to poverty in the world and the last generation that could take action to prevent the worst consequences of a warming Earth.

That observation should cause us to renew our commitment to a better future for all, to show solidarity, to unite our forces, pursuant to the Charter of the United Nations. As we did when we reached agreement on the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we must spare no effort to come together at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris in December, so that we can accept an ambitious and binding climate change agreement that applies to all countries and will keep the increase in global warming to below 2°C. As President of the European Council, Luxembourg will spare no effort to ensure that the Paris meeting will be a success. We must seize this historic opportunity.

Another priority project during Luxembourg's presidency of the Council in which I will invest all my energies is that of migration. According to the data of the Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees, today there are 59.5 million displaced persons, including refugees, or more than at any time since 1945, at the end of the Second World War. As the Secretary-General noted, the continuous flow of migrants and the surge of human misery bring us face to face with our responsibilities as political leaders, as members of the international community and, obviously, as human beings.

In times of crisis, unfortunately, various unilateral vague desires and nationalist or populist reflexes seem to reappear. We saw that happen again, tragically, in the summer. But no country can face the unprecedented crisis of migrants and refugees alone. Withdrawing into ourselves is not the answer. We must act together, as the countries of origin, transit and destination of migrants, and respond to the challenges posed by migrant movements in the Mediterranean, the Balkans

and elsewhere. Only if we firmly anchor our actions in respect for our international commitments, shall we find a solution worthy of our shared values, the values for which the United Nations and the European Union were founded.

At the level of the European Union we took a first step during the past week by deciding to relocate within the countries of the Union 120,000 people who clearly need international protection. Other decisions will follow shortly. The European Union will respond to the urgent needs of refugees by donating at least an additional €1 billion to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and other such bodies. We will increase our assistance to Lebanon, Jordan and Turkey to deal with the Syrian refugee crisis. We will help Western Balkan countries deal with the flow of refugees, including through pre-accession instruments.

We cannot simply deal with the symptoms of the crisis. We must also tackle the root causes of migration and of refugee flows: development inequalities, especially in Africa; conflict and violence; the absence of the rule of law; persecution and violations of human rights; and impunity. That brings us back to the interconnectedness of security, development and respect for human rights and the need to adopt a comprehensive, integrated approach for the most effective application to development and migration of a combination of foreign policy, security, trade and cooperation instruments. The upcoming Valletta summit on migration on 11 and 12 November will provide an opportunity for us to discuss a comprehensive approach to the question of migration with our African partners, an opportunity which I welcome.

For more than four years, Syria has been synonymous with war, violence and exodus. One in six Syrians has now fled the country. One out of two has had to leave home. Every day 9,500 persons are added to the list of displaced persons. Every minute a family is forced to abandon everything. A whole of generation of children has been exposed to war, violence and death and deprived of fundamental freedoms, protection and education. More than 220,000 people have lost their lives. Indiscriminate aerial bombing, the release of barrel bombs, the acts of violence and the violations of human rights and international law continue unabated. The sieges continue. The denial of assistance and the obstruction of humanitarian assistance persist. Crimes

against humanity and war crimes are committed every day with impunity.

That cannot continue; it must be stopped. The situation is the Security Council's responsibility and it is the responsibility of all of us. The solution to the Syrian conflict cannot be humanitarian, nor can it be military.

Today, the worst thing is the indiscriminate shelling in an undisciplined way and without prior coordination. The people are waiting for us to end the carnage rather than to make it worse.

A solution to the conflict can only be political. As we have said time and again, any lasting settlement requires a political transition that meets the legitimate aspirations of the Syrian people, in line with the Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex). Words must be followed by actions. It is time for negotiations to finally begin. All of us must support Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura in his efforts. The fate of the Syrian people and the stability of Syria and of its neighbours within and beyond the region depend on it.

In that context, I will say a word on the destructive barbarism of the terrorist group Daesh and the urgent need to combat it. The tragic current situation in Syria, Iraq and Libya, and its repercussions in Europe, demonstrates that the international community must work together to stop the advance of Daesh. The day before yesterday, my country participated in a summit meeting organized by President Obama, which was the continuation of a discussion held in the Security Council one year ago (see S/PV.7272). The Assembly can continue to count on our country's support in combating Daesh and violent extremism, whether in terms of preventing radicalization, exchanging intelligence, countering the phenomenon of foreign terrorist fighters or taking measures against terrorist financing.

I must mention another tragedy at the heart of the tumult in the Middle East, which is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The year 2015 was sadly emblematic of the impasse of the peace process, which, at present, is only that in name. In an environment characterized by a total lack of prospects and the continuing cycle of revenge, the idea that there might be an alternative to the two-State solution is beginning to gain public support and to be applied on the ground. During my travels in the region last month, I was able to see that development for myself. But it involves an illusion, and perhaps a

very dangerous one. The two-State solution remains the only way forward. The conditions for that solution are obvious, both with respect to the 1967 borders and the establishment of Jerusalem as the capital of the two States.

The call to stop the settlements is not a matter of Israel-bashing, as it was described by the Prime Minister of Israel earlier today. Rather, it is a call to reason, to give the resumption of negotiations a chance. But to save the two-State solution, we must change our mindset. We must think outside the box. Now is no longer the time for efforts that lead nowhere. We must encourage a new negotiating format, broaden the circle of participants so that there is a greater involvement of Europe and especially of the Arab countries, reactivate the role of the Security Council and set a reasonable time frame within which to conclude the negotiations.

Israel has the right to live in peace and security, but it is clear to me that Israel's security in the long and medium term will depend on the creation of a sovereign and democratic State of Palestine, living alongside it. The two-State solution is the only solution that is just and moral for both parties. As of yesterday, the Palestinian flag began to fly beside those of the States Members of the Organization. Let us all work to make it become more than just a symbol.

The comprehensive solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, which the E3+3 and the European Union reached after several years of negotiations with Iran, demonstrates that we should not lose faith in the power of diplomacy, even when tackling the thorniest of issues. The international community has made considerable efforts in those negotiations with Iran, which also serve the security interests of Israel. Let us be less fatalistic. Israel's right to exist is not affected by that agreement. In fact, the opposite is the case. We believe that the full and rigorous implementation of the Joint Plan of Action, adopted on 14 July, will mark a fundamental turning point for peace and security in the region.

We could also say much more regarding other regions in the world, including Africa, as well as my own continent, Europe, where a conflict dating from another era started to affect Ukraine in February 2014 and is still ongoing. Thanks to substantial mediation efforts and commitment on the part of Germany, France and the European Union; thanks to close cooperation between regional and international organizations, first and foremost among them the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and thanks to

the continuous monitoring of the United Nations, especially of the human rights situation in the Crimea and in eastern Ukraine, the foundations of a settlement of the crisis in Ukraine have been established in recent months. Commendable efforts have also been made with respect to regional autonomy and decentralization. The upcoming regional elections will be critical. It will be especially vital to hold them throughout the country and, therefore, in the Donbas region, under the authority of Ukrainian law. It is essential that each party fully respect the commitments entered into in the Minsk agreements.

When we talk of Ukraine, the Middle East, South Sudan, the Central African Republic, Mali or Burkina Faso, there is one constant in all the situations, which is that diplomacy and the commitment to human rights and the rule of law must prevail, if we are to solve today's profound crises. Our Secretary-General has fully risen to the challenge with the Human Rights Up Front initiative, firmly reminding us of our collective responsibility to protect and to place human rights at the centre of United Nations efforts to prevent conflict. To that end, all the actors and organs within the United Nations system must play their respective roles.

Allow me to focus on the particular role of the Security Council and its members. According to the Charter of the United Nations, the primary responsibility for maintaining peace and international security was conferred upon the Security Council to "ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations". The paralysis of the Council, when populations are threatened with horrific crimes, runs counter to the spirit of the Charter. That is why we welcome and support the initiative launched by France aimed at ensuring that the permanent members of the Security Council refrain from using the right of veto in cases of mass atrocities.

But beyond the permanent members, each of the Member States must assume its responsibility. Each one has its role to play, in working towards decisive action by the Security Council to prevent or halt mass atrocities. We therefore encourage all Member States to support the code of conduct as it relates to the action of the Security Council against genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. It will be officially launched on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. The same code of conduct has been developed by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, of which Luxembourg is a

member. The responsibility to protect must cease to be an abstract principle and become a concrete reality.

At 70 years of age, the United Nations must be able to adapt in order to be up to the challenges it faces. On that account, we welcome the ongoing reviews that aim to make United Nations actions more efficient in its peacekeeping operations, peacebuilding or in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), which recognizes women's indispensable role in peace and security. Luxembourg will continue to engage with the numerous Member States that wish to push forward a reform of the United Nations. I am obviously thinking, in particular, about a reform that would make the Security Council more effective, transparent and representative of today's world.

Let me conclude my remarks as I began them, with a quotation. This one is from Mahatma Gandhi. I understand it as an exhortation and a reminder of the responsibilities that we must shoulder, if we want to realize the dream of the creators of our Organization, which is the dream of a world of peace and dignity for all and the dream of a better world: "You must be the change you wish to see in the world".

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for External Affairs of the Republic of India.

Ms. Swaraj (India) (*spoke in Hindi; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): The United Nations is marking its seventieth anniversary this year, making this session of the General Assembly a historic one. I hope that this year will also be historic for the United Nations in terms of outcomes. I would like to assure the President that he will receive India's full support in his efforts.

Seventy years ago, the foundations of the United Nations were laid at the San Francisco Conference, in a city on the west coast of this country. India was one of the signatory countries of the Charter of the United Nations, although at that time we were not independent. We obtained our independence two years later. When the United Nations was established, a rather diminutive-looking man with the powerful weapon of non-violence was writing the final act in a struggle that would become a symbol of hope for the colonized and the oppressed everywhere. I am grateful that the United Nations has proclaimed the birthday of this extraordinary man as the International Day of Non-Violence. It is a pleasing coincidence that tomorrow is 2 October, and

that we will be celebrating his birthday then. Mahatma Gandhi said, "The difference between what we do and what we are capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems". His message is most fitting in the context of the United Nations.

The seventieth year of any human being's life is a milestone from which to look back and reflect on what one has achieved and what one has lost. Similarly, for people associated with an institution, the seventieth year provides an opportunity to analyse whether the institution has fulfilled its purpose and achieved the goals set for it at its establishment. Today we need to ask ourselves whether we have fulfilled the purpose and achieved the goals for which the United Nations was established 70 years ago. When I ask myself that question, I receive an affirmative answer for some questions and a negative one for others. For example, the United Nations has been successful in preventing a third world war, assisting decolonization and dismantling apartheid. It has been successful in combating global epidemics, reducing global hunger and promoting democracy and human rights.

Yet, when we ask ourselves whether we have been able to prevent conflicts taking place in various parts of the world, the answer is "no". If we ask whether we were able to find permanent solutions to those conflicts, the answer is "no". If we ask whether we were able to show the path of peace to a world which is treading the path of violence, the answer is "no". According to those parameters, the United Nations appears to be ineffective at maintaining international peace and security, an institution that has failed to effectively address new challenges in that area.

Today, the world is ravaged by war on three continents, with the Security Council powerless or unwilling to stem the flow of blood. Traditional solutions that rely on force have only exacerbated problems. We must ask ourselves if we have the political will to craft alternatives to conflict and to pursue them with commitment and single-minded dedication. Nowhere is such a goal more important than in peacekeeping. Under the blue flag, men and women are constantly working to prevent conflict, protect civilians and sustain peace processes. With 180,000 peacekeepers deployed so far, India has been the largest contributor to international security provided by the United Nations. Even today, about 8,000 Indian military and police personnel are participating in 10 peacekeeping missions, operating in highly challenging environments.

India remains committed to continuing its support to United Nations peacekeeping operations and even to enhancing its contributions, as announced by our Prime Minister at the leaders summit on peacekeeping. Our new contributions will cover all aspects of peacekeeping: personnel, enablers and training. At the same time, no dilution of the cardinal principles of peacekeeping must occur. The fact that troop-contributing countries have no role in the formulation of mandates, which are often amended without consultation, is a matter of concern. That is a clear violation of Article 44 of the Charter of the United Nations. We also believe that peacekeeping operations cannot be a substitute for political solutions, a fact that the High-Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations underscored.

As we mark the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, I take this opportunity to pay tribute to the more than 3,300 peacekeepers, including 161 from India, who have made the ultimate sacrifice. We stand ready to contribute to the memorial wall for United Nations peacekeepers, which was approved by the General Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

The safety of our peacekeepers, the security of our nations, and indeed the future of the international community itself now depend on how we respond to the greatest threat that we face today: terrorism. It is a threat that India has lived with for more than a quarter of a century, and one that was tragically brought home to this very city in the autumn of 2001. Since then, we have not adequately countered the proliferation of terrorist acts, the rise of extremist ideologies and the impunity of States that back terrorism.

Only organized international action can defeat international terrorism. The world must demonstrate zero tolerance for terrorists who kill and maim innocent civilians and base its action on the principle of prosecute or extradite. The international community must make countries that provide financing to terrorists and safe havens for their training, arming and operations pay a heavy price.

Equally important, the establishment of an international legal regime, under a comprehensive convention on international terrorism, can no longer be held up. Nineteen years ago, in 1996, India proposed such a regime at the United Nations, but the Member States have been unable to adopt it and have become mired in the issue of definition. We have to understand that no such distinction exists as good terrorists and bad terrorists, and that terrorism cannot be linked

to any religion. A terrorist is a terrorist, and anyone who commits crimes against humanity cannot have a religion. Therefore, I appeal to everyone to come together during this seventieth anniversary year of the United Nations and to pledge to unanimously adopt a comprehensive convention on international terrorism.

While on the subject of terrorism, I take this opportunity to share the challenges that we face in our ties with Pakistan. None of us can accept that terrorism is a legitimate instrument of statecraft. The world shared our outrage at the 2008 Mumbai terror attacks, in which citizens of many nations were helplessly butchered. That the mastermind behind the attack is walking free is an affront to the entire international community. Not only have past assurances in this regard not been honoured, but new cross-border terrorist attacks have taken place recently, and two terrorists from across the border have been captured alive. We all know that these attacks are meant to destabilize India and legitimize Pakistan's illegal occupation of parts of the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir and its claim to the rest of it.

Let me use this occasion to spell out our approach clearly. India remains open to dialogue but finds talks and terrorism to be incompatible. Yesterday, the Prime Minister of Pakistan proposed what he termed a new four-point peace initiative. I would like to respond to this. We do not need four points. We need just one — give up terrorism and let us sit down and talk. This will solve all the problems. That was precisely what was discussed and decided by the two Prime Ministers in Ufa this July. Let us hold talks, at the level of national security advisers, on all issues connected to terrorism and arrange an early meeting of our Directors-General of Military Operations to address the situation on the border. If the response is serious and credible, India is prepared to address all outstanding issues through bilateral dialogue. Even as we counter the menace of terrorism, we must acknowledge that real social and economic progress remains a critical goal. The elimination of basic human want leads almost invariably to more peaceful societies, as is evidenced by a map of the conflicts that engulf parts of the world.

Just a few days ago, we adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1), with the Sustainable Development Goals at its core. They constitute a blueprint that is more comprehensive and holistic than the Millennium Development Goals. However, their successful implementation will require political resolve and an inclination to

share both technology and financial resources, while simultaneously improving our delivery mechanisms. As a woman and an elected Member of Parliament, it has been my firm conviction that there is a shortcut to real social change, and that is empowering the girl child. Our Government's policy and our Prime Minister's programme of Educate the Girl Child to Empower Her was conceived with that vision.

Our future rests on our building a sustainable planet for our children and our children's children. As we prepare to meet in two months' time, in Paris, the world expects us to deliver an ambitious and credible agreement on climate change. We have a duty to take common action, but in doing so we must keep in mind the larger historical contributions of some and the differentiated responsibilities of others. If Mahatma Gandhi were among us today, he would ask if we have used the resources of the planet for our needs or for our greed. He would also ask if adapting our lifestyle choices and reducing extravagant consumption would help us to correct our course. For this reason, the agreement in Paris needs to be comprehensive and equitable, while delivering concrete action. Developing countries can do more if they are enabled in their efforts by support from developed countries in the areas of finance, technology transfer and capacity-building. India is and always has been a willing partner in global efforts towards this goal. We will play our due role in reaching a meaningful, equitable and effective agreement in Paris.

India's reverence for the environment is based on our traditions, which have always held nature as sacred. The health of the planet is tied to our own well-being, and it is this holistic approach that guided us in our call for the First International Day of Yoga, which was celebrated with much fervour in 192 countries of the world, as well as in this hallowed institution. I thank the international community for its enthusiasm and support in this regard. I hope that the seed that has been planted will grow into a magnificent tree.

I also congratulate States for their prompt action in tackling the threat of global epidemics. By linking our efforts, we have managed to eradicate smallpox and nearly eradicate polio. HIV/AIDS has been controlled and, more recently, the Ebola outbreak was contained, although not before an unacceptably high price in lives had been paid. The Ebola epidemic is an important example of how national action and international support can resolve a global crisis. We are proud that

India played its due part in these efforts. Inspired by our successes, we must redouble our efforts to eradicate other diseases, whether it be tuberculosis or malaria.

Natural disasters and man-made conflicts also deserve our coordinated response. In recent months, the international community has been found wanting in its response to the refugee crisis caused by the conflict situations in Syria, Iraq and Libya. What is needed is a swift response backed by political will. Our own response to humanitarian crises in our neighbourhood has been quick, responsive and holistic. Whether in Nepal or Yemen, India has emerged as a net security provider, assisting not only our nationals but those of other countries that sought our help. India will be hosting the first Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in November 2016, when the topic will be the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

Like the United Nations, India has walked a long way these past 70 years. As 1.25 billion of my countrymen would attest, we have done so happy in the knowledge that our democratic traditions are deeply embedded. Nonetheless, every once in a while, there is a need for transformative change — one that can reinvigorate the nation and redeem its spirit. Ever since the new Government of Prime Minister Modi took office a year and a half ago, we have committed ourselves to this renewal. It is one that has enabled India to play its rightful role in international affairs, while also becoming the fastest-growing major economy in the world. The driving force of this comprehensive renewal has been premised on the motto of *sabka saath, sabka vikas*, which places emphasis on the welfare of all our people.

At the same time, we have started to reach out enthusiastically to all our partners in the international community. Our efforts have focused, first and foremost, on our immediate neighbourhood and the results have been truly transformational. We have also reached out to our extended neighbourhood, renewing ancient linkages and constructing modern economic partnerships, including, most recently, a summit with 14 Pacific island nations. Our Act East policy has replaced the previous one, Look East, with a more vigorous and proactive engagement in an economically vibrant region, and complements our Link West engagement.

We remain committed to the Middle East peace process, which is key to preventing further radicalization of the region. We continue to hope that a

solution can be reached to the Palestinian question. We have also qualitatively upgraded our relations with all the major Powers.

Africa is a region with which we have historical bonds, a solidarity born out of a common struggle against colonialism and a belief in a future of shared prosperity. Later this month we will host the third India-Africa Forum Summit, the first time that the leaders of all 54 African countries have been invited.

As a nuclear-weapon State, India is aware of its responsibility, and its support for global, non-discriminatory and verifiable nuclear disarmament is undiminished.

As with nations, so it is with institutions. Only periodic renewal can provide an organization with meaning and purpose. In a world that continues to be dominated by wealthy and influential nations, the United Nations notion of sovereign equality has permitted the developing world to question some unfair norms. But it has not permitted a fundamental challenge to the inequity of a system built for a world that longer exists. If we are to preserve the centrality and legitimacy of the United Nations as the custodian of global peace, security and development, the most urgent and pressing need is reform of the Security Council. This is the need of the hour. How can we have a Security Council in 2015 that still reflects the geopolitical architecture of 1945? How can we have a Security Council that still does not give Africa and Latin America seats as permanent members?

We must include more developing nations in the decision-making structures of the Security Council. And we must change the way it does business by doing away with outdated and non-transparent working methods. Giving it more legitimacy and balance would restore its credibility and equip it to confront the challenges of our times. We are happy that during the past year, under the leadership of Their Excellencies Mr. Sam Kutesa and Mr. Courtenay Rattray, we have achieved what we had been unable to do in two decades of discussions — a text for negotiations unanimously adopted by the General Assembly as decision 69/560. That first but critical step must be a springboard for action at this historic seventieth session.

For an organization such as the United Nations, 70 years has a unique significance. It is an occasion for revitalization and for renewal. I invite everyone in this Hall to contemplate the idea of the United Nations as

a banyan tree. In the eastern tradition, the banyan tree connotes wisdom, and yet is non-judgemental and all-encompassing. It has not one trunk but many, growing outwards, each connected to the others as well as to the sky and the earth. Its expansive branches provide shade and relief, and its base has always been a place for discussion and debate.

At 70, unlike the men and women who might have planted its seed, the banyan is still young. But without constant regeneration and expansion, it withers away. That could be the fate that awaits the United Nations. Either we can take this historic opportunity to renew this critical institution or we can condemn it to irrelevance and tragic withering. We could easily lose ourselves in a labyrinth of our own creation, but if we seize the day, we will see a United Nations growing to its full potential, a United Nations that can reduce the gap between what it does and what it is capable of doing, a mighty banyan tree providing the canopy for a peaceful and prosperous humankind. I end my statement with the hope that the United Nations will grow into such a banyan tree.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Minister of State and Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Democratic People's Republic of Algeria.

Mr. Lamamra (Algeria) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of Algeria, I would like to warmly congratulate Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. I would also like express my thanks and gratitude to Mr. Sam Kutesa, the Assembly's President at its previous session, for the many achievements realized during his presidency, which we hope to build on and strengthen.

The current session coincides with the commemoration of the seventieth anniversary of the creation of the United Nations. It is taking place at a time when the international community is facing multiple challenges and opportunities that are the result of seven decades of profound changes and collective efforts, which have had their share of both successes and failures. Peace and stability have been restored in many parts of the world that were once ravaged by destructive wars; people have liberated themselves from the yoke of colonialism in Africa, Asia and Latin America; and the world has seen a qualitative leap

forward and significant development in the past seven decades.

That situation is in sharp contrast to the colonialism and foreign occupation that persist in some regions, along with the worsening poverty and hunger that remain the biggest challenge for the United Nations today. There are also new threats posed by terrorism, organized crime, drug trafficking and human trafficking. In this context, I would be remiss if I failed to mention the images that the media have brought us of the massive influx of refugees into Europe as a result of the war- and crisis-induced humanitarian tragedies that unquestionably denote a collective failure to deal with conflicts and their consequences in several regions, particularly the Middle East.

The outcome document of the Summit on the post-2015 development agenda (resolution 70/1), held a few days ago, has both confirmed that failure and at the same time renewed the universal commitment to tackling the challenges facing humankind on the economic, social, security and environmental fronts, above all the need to unite our efforts to fight poverty and take new approaches to advancing development and improving the living conditions of people, who should be the focus of those efforts. At the same time, scarce natural resources must be safeguarded and the environment protected.

From this rostrum and at this pivotal meeting, Algeria once again affirms the validity of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and renews its commitment to continuing to work to ensure the triumph of the values that unite us and that have made the United Nations a mirror of the concerns of the peoples of the world, their ambitions and hopes.

I would like to stress once again the need to continue United Nations reform, adapting its mechanisms and modernizing its tools, to enable it to fulfil its mission more efficiently. It is a question, on the one hand, of reaffirming the central role of the General Assembly as the conceiver and mouthpiece of international cooperation for development and the implementation of its resolutions and approaches, and, on the other hand, of the necessary reform of the Security Council dictated by the new challenges and threats to international peace and security. This principal organ no longer mirrors the composition of the international community, particularly the African continent.

Algeria is participating in this historic session having achieved, before the deadline, most of the Millennium Development Goals adopted at the 2000 Summit. Under the programme of the President of the Republic, Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, Algeria has implemented an ambitious development policy and development plans whose purpose is to relaunch the economic growth and to provide for the social needs of all citizens, while continuing to strengthen the rule of law, independence of the judiciary, freedom of expression and equal opportunity for men and women.

Because of its central location in the Maghreb and Sahel areas and guided by the principles of its foreign policy, Algeria has continued to work for peace, security and harmony in its immediate neighbourhood and to bring political and economic support to its neighbours so as to strengthen Maghreb and African integration, convinced that this is an investment for the future of all and for the establishment of peace and stability at the regional and international levels. That is reflected in the steady approach of the international mediation team in Mali, led by Algeria, that resulted in the conclusion of a comprehensive agreement for peace and national reconciliation. We encourage all parties signatory to this agreement, and more generally, all political and social forces in Mali, and we invite the international community, particularly donor countries, to endorse this process and to back it politically and financially in an ongoing manner.

Algeria, which has stood by the fraternal Libyan people since the outbreak of the crisis in that neighbouring country, spares no effort to help it restore peace and stability and maintain its national unity. Algeria renews its support for the efforts of the United Nations in Libya to achieve an inclusive, comprehensive solution that involves all stakeholders in Libya with a view to immediately creating a Government of national accord.

In that regard, the efforts of the African Union in conflict resolution and peacekeeping in Africa are noteworthy. Indeed, the African Union has several achievements to its credit, with the continent contributing over 45 per cent of the world's peacekeeping personnel. I would recall that the latest African summit, held in Johannesburg, took important decisions reflecting the will of the countries and peoples of the continent to work towards finding African solutions to African problems.

In Western Sahara, after a quarter century of ceasefire between the two parties to the conflict, the Kingdom of Morocco and the Frente Polisario, and the adoption of the United Nations-African Settlement Plan, the Saharan people continue to live under occupation and the resultant suffering. Procrastination and attempts to flee responsibilities are ongoing and have prevented the achievement of a solution to this conflict, thereby undermining the credibility of the United Nations.

Algeria, which supports with conviction and firmness the right of the Saharan people to determine their destiny in complete freedom, appreciates the sustained efforts of the Secretary-General and his Personal Envoy, Mr. Christopher Ross. We call on the United Nations to set a firm date for the holding of a referendum in accordance with relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions, as was expressly requested by the African Summit in June 2015. Algeria will spare no effort to assist the parties to the conflict and the United Nations, with a view to an early implementation of the solution for which the fraternal Saharan people and other peoples of the Maghreb have been insistently calling.

With this same conviction of the necessity for settling disputes by peaceful means, Algeria has been following with great attention and concern the developments of the situations in Syria and Yemen, and the suffering of the two fraternal peoples in those two countries. Algeria therefore urges the protagonists to commit resolutely to the search for a peaceful solution to the crises in their countries. There is no other solution.

Algeria notes with satisfaction the growing global awareness of the need to fight international terrorism and to address its root causes and repercussions. That is why Algeria calls for comprehensive approaches to fighting transnational organized crime, including human trafficking and drug trafficking. We call for drying up the sources of funding for terrorist groups, especially by prohibiting and criminalizing the payment of ransoms. In this context, Algeria recently organized an international conference on deradicalization, whose recommendations stressed the need to promote the values of tolerance and moderation.

Algeria, which paid a heavy price to regain its sovereignty and rejoin the community of nations, understands the true value of the heroic struggle of the Palestinian people to recover their national rights

and shares their hopes as the Palestinian flag is now flying at Headquarters for the first time. This symbolic victory, which came after the international recognition of the Palestinian State, supports a just and definitive solution to the Palestinian issue designed to ensure the creation of a sovereign State, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Given the importance of the issue of climate change and its impact in the economic, social and environmental spheres, and even in political and security concerns, we express the hope that the outcome of the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held soon in Paris, will meet the ecological challenges that now threaten to make countries and entire regions disappear and that seriously jeopardize life on Earth.

I must also say that we need to admit that in spite of the achievements we have accomplished together at the United Nations and beyond, the instruments and procedures set up by the founding fathers seven decades ago no longer meet the requirements of the day, nor the aspirations of the world's population, which now exceeds 7 billion people. In other words, the new and multiple challenges generated by globalization and the profound changes and transformations that have affected international relations for decades demand that we make bold reforms capable of conferring the credibility and transparency needed by the multilateral system of cooperation.

The commemoration of the anniversaries of institutions, like people's birthdays, are ideal opportunities for introspective assessments and forward-looking projections. Therefore, we harken back to the historic results of the twenty-ninth session of our Assembly, held in 1974 under the presidency of Mr. Abdelaziz Bouteflika, on South Africa, Palestine and the new international economic order, to express the hope that the current session will derive inspiration from that memorable time in our Organization's life and will rise to meet the current challenges with a qualitative, collective and courageous leap forward to promote a humankind at peace with itself and free from fear and want.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Sebastian Kurz, Federal Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria.

Mr. Kurz (Austria): Seventy years ago, the United Nations was founded as the collective answer to war and genocide, which had cost the lives of millions of people. The principal idea of the United Nations was to prevent war, to uphold respect for international law and human rights, and to promote social and economic progress.

I myself have not lived through even half of this period. Nevertheless, I believe that today, 70 years later, we all have to ask ourselves if we have really succeeded. We are facing a record high of over 50 violent conflicts, stretching from Syria and Iraq to Yemen, the Sudan and Somalia. We are facing a rise in radicalization and extremism. And we are facing the highest number of refugees since the Second World War. Nearly 60 million people worldwide are on the move as refugees or internally displaced persons. Four million of them are Syrians who have left their country, fleeing from civil war and terror. Every day over 40,000 people flee their homes in search of peace, security or a new life. This challenge is not limited to one region or to one continent. It is a global challenge. It concerns the Mediterranean region, but also South Asia and large parts of Africa.

Europe is currently also witnessing a huge flow of refugees, in particular from the wider Middle East. These global refugee flows pose serious problems for the countries of origin and transit, as well as for the countries of destination. But all affected countries and regions have one thing in common: no country and no region can solve this crisis alone, and no single measure can provide a solution. We need a comprehensive approach covering all the refugee routes, including the countries of origin, transit and destination. Which organization, if not the United Nations, can provide the basis for this collective action? Which organization, if not the United Nations, can contribute to this comprehensive approach?

If we want to reduce the number of refugees, we have to focus our efforts on three key areas.

First, we have to confront the root causes in the countries of origin: civil wars and massive human rights violations and terrorism. In this context, we have to intensify our fight against Daesh and terrorist groups. They must be neutralized and defeated. In the case of Syria, it also means that we have to push harder for a closing of ranks in the region. We will be able to achieve meaningful progress only if major regional

players, such as Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and Iran, act in concert. And finally, it means that we have to bring all relevant parties to the Syrian civil war to the table, as United Nations Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura is trying to do. Let me be clear: that does not mean that the current political leadership of Syria can be part of a long-term solution. It has brought endless harm to the people of Syria. But if one wants to make peace, one does not talk only to one's friends.

The second point is that we need more unity at the international level. Huge efforts have already been made, but the United Nations and its Member States can and should do more. We will be able to make a difference only if we make it possible for the United States and Russia to pull in one direction. The Security Council has to demonstrate unity.

We need a mandate not only for action against Daesh, but also for the protection of civilians. It should include the establishment of safe zones and buffer zones, which would increase people's security and make access to humanitarian aid much easier. Action by the Security Council would also make it possible for many countries to have the opportunity to join in and offer their support. Our position is clear: Austria would stand ready to contribute to such a United Nations peace operation.

Thirdly, we need a change of system. A system that allows only the fittest or those rich enough to pay the smugglers to reach a safe haven like Europe is wrong. The current system is in fact indirectly sponsoring smugglers. Since 2000 more than 24,000 migrants and refugees have died on their way to Europe. The pictures of refugees drowned in the Mediterranean Sea or suffocated in trucks will continue to haunt us. We therefore need a change of system. We need to create the possibility for refugees to apply for asylum in their countries of origin or neighbouring countries. The United Nations could help in the establishment of such reception and information centres, which would allow resettlement programmes to be introduced.

In my opinion, trafficking in human beings is one of the worst crimes. We should consider systematic and large-scale smuggling a crime against humanity, so that the perpetrators can finally be brought to justice.

There is another crisis area we should not forget about. Last year, like most of those present, I referred to the Russian-Ukrainian conflict as probably the most serious challenge to peace and security in Europe

(see A/69/PV.15). One year later, we still do not see enough positive development. The conflict is ongoing, the number of deaths has even increased, and the socioeconomic consequences are huge.

There is only one way ahead: a peaceful settlement based on dialogue and negotiation. We must find a solution that provides for a free and stable Ukraine enjoying strong ties with both the European Union and the Russian Federation. In this respect the Minsk agreement is and remains the only option on the table. There is no alternative to implementing that agreement. All parties have to live up to their commitments. In that context, let me underline the crucial work the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is doing. The Special Monitoring Mission and the Trilateral Contact Group play a unique role for a peaceful settlement. The OSCE deserves our full support, and Austria will do its utmost to contribute to its work, especially during our OSCE chairmanship in 2017.

All these conflicts show that 70 years after its establishment, we need the United Nations more than ever. However, in some areas the United Nations is pushed to its breaking point. It urgently needs to be reformed in order to be prepared for the future. Which is the way forward?

First, we have to remind ourselves of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The Charter is and remains our backbone. Failure is guaranteed if we do not respect it.

Secondly, we have to look at the functioning of the main bodies. We need a Security Council that is united and can act swiftly. We therefore welcome the efforts to improve the Council's work, and we support the initiatives to suspend the use of the veto in cases of mass atrocities. In order to be able to address global challenges, we all need a United Nations that is capable of taking action and a Security Council that is more representative, accountable and transparent.

We highly value the fact that one of the headquarters of the United Nations is in Vienna, and we will continue to support it actively. We remain committed to act as a place for international dialogue, such as the Iran nuclear talks that took place in Vienna this year.

We will also continue to contribute to all diplomatic initiatives for a better world. In this sense, one key area for us is nuclear disarmament. The Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of

Nuclear Weapons last May failed to reach an agreement, but there is growing international momentum on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. At that Conference, I delivered a joint statement on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons on behalf of 159 States. And the Vienna Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons last December resulted in a humanitarian pledge, which has been endorsed by 116 States. Austria, together with other sponsors, will submit several draft resolutions on the humanitarian initiative, and we hope that they will receive broad support.

Seventy years after Hiroshima and Nagasaki, nuclear weapons still pose one of the most serious threats to humankind. I can assure the Assembly that Austria will fight for a world free of nuclear weapons to make our world a safer place.

The global challenges we are facing require a strong United Nations. We therefore thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for all his work. I can assure the Assembly that Austria will remain committed to the United Nations and to our Secretary-General. They can continue to count on our continuous support.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now call on His Excellency Mr. Charles Flanagan, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of Ireland.

Mr. Flanagan (Ireland): It is a great honour for me to address the General Assembly this afternoon on behalf of Ireland on the sixtieth anniversary of my country's joining the United Nations and the seventieth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations itself. At the intersection of these two special anniversaries, it has been a great privilege for Ireland to have co-facilitated the final negotiations of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the implementation of which is critical for the future of our planet and its people.

The SDGs are a tangible manifestation of the capacity of the United Nations to deliver positive outcomes in the most challenging circumstances, but we cannot be complacent. On the contrary, in this anniversary year, we must critically appraise our failures, as the international community, to prevent war, genocide, forced displacement and deprivation. Today we face unprecedented challenges in confronting the savage violence of well-resourced non-State actors, as well as of some States, with consequential humanitarian catastrophes unfolding in many parts of the world.

Strong and assertive leadership by the United Nations has never been as critical. I know the United Nations and its Members can live up to this great challenge.

In our 60 years at the United Nations, Ireland has pursued a series of policy priorities that continue to be central to our foreign policy. They include peacekeeping, non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament, development aid, promoting peace and security while we were on the Security Council, and advancing gender equality. I will touch upon these policies and outline their continuing relevance for Ireland today.

In the 1950s, when Ireland joined the United Nations, our then Prime Minister, John A. Costello, identified our goal as playing "our part to secure what small nations have always required, the maintenance of peace". We are extremely proud that the loyal service of Irish peacekeepers has been central to our negotiations with the United Nations since 1958. On 12 occasions our soldiers have led United Nations missions. There are currently 370 committed and courageous Irish peacekeeping troops serving in seven United Nations missions; 87 Irish peacekeepers have tragically lost their lives in the active service of the United Nations.

Ireland feels a strong sense of responsibility to protect the reputation and honour of United Nations peacekeepers. We owe this to our peacekeeping troops, past, present and future. And so, like Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, we received reports of sexual abuse involving some United Nations peacekeepers with shock and outrage.

United Nations peacekeeping missions must never be associated with exploitation because of the actions of a few. Ireland will always speak out to defend the vulnerable. We will not be silent about the plight of women and children harmed by the very people responsible for their protection. Those serving under the United Nations flag have a fundamental responsibility to behave in an honourable way and to be a force for good in this world.

Ireland demands decisive action in confronting any criminal behaviour by United Nations troops. This is vital to protect the good name of the United Nations and its peacekeepers, the overwhelming majority of whom are principled people. We want appropriate training, clear accountability and strict sanctions. I welcome the Secretary-General's commitment to making the United Nations firm zero-tolerance policy into an effective zero-crime reality.

United Nations peacekeeping and Ireland's contribution have adapted in scale and complexity to challenges over the past six decades. Continuing flexibility and innovation are essential. I therefore welcome the report of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and its comprehensive analysis of the challenges ahead and the changes required (A/70/95). In particular, our own experience of conflict in Ireland has taught us that full and equal participation by women in decisions around peace and security are vital to building a sustainable peace.

I now turn to the 1960s. From our earliest days at the United Nations, Ireland has been passionately committed to disarmament and non-proliferation. As the first State to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in 1968, following several years work as initiator of the General Assembly resolutions that led to its agreement, we have a deep and abiding commitment to the full implementation of the Treaty. Indeed, significant progress has been made on non-proliferation. We warmly welcome the agreement reached with Iran and look forward to its implementation. More broadly, we hope that this will also mark the opening of a new and constructive chapter in Iran's engagement in the international system. Conversely, the outcome of the 2015 NPT Review Conference in May was deeply disappointing. States with nuclear arsenals have special responsibilities, and Ireland will continue to press them to deliver on their commitments under the NPT.

Today there are at least 17,000 nuclear weapons posing a threat to our very survival. We cannot accept that status quo. Ireland wants real momentum injected into the nuclear disarmament pillar of the NPT. The SDG negotiation process underscored the very positive role that civic society groups and people around the world can play. Ireland would like to see that positivity, inclusivity and urgency in the nuclear disarmament debate.

We see the daily consequences of illegal and irresponsible flows of arms and conventional weapons in the appalling scenes of chaos and brutality into which parts of our world have descended. The scenes in our newspapers and on our television and computer screens are truly horrific. People wonder what can be done to stem this industrial-scale violence.

Part of the solution is the Arms Trade Treaty, one of the international community's most significant achievements in recent years. Ireland was one of the

first States to ratify the Treaty, and we have offered financial support to enable wider participation in negotiations and more effective implementation. The onus is now on all States parties to maintain the immense and sustained effort we put into negotiating the Treaty. We must ensure that we live up to its great promise, with the ultimate goal of enhancing peace and security and thereby saving lives.

Now to the 1970s. In 1974, having acceded to the European Union the previous year, Ireland established its programme of overseas development cooperation, Irish Aid. Since then Ireland has provided over \$13 billion in support of the world's most impoverished people and has championed the aid agenda within the European Union, which is the world's largest provider of development assistance.

Last week at Headquarters, world leaders adopted the new Sustainable Development Goals for the period up to 2030. We have committed ourselves to an ambitious programme and transformational agenda to end extreme poverty, to preserve the planet for this and future generations and to create conditions for balanced economic growth throughout the world. Reaching agreement on these Goals is one of the most important achievements of the United Nations in recent years. It was an enormous challenge, and we, the 193 Member States, rose to it. That was multilateral diplomacy at its best.

The United Nations has demonstrated its continuing relevance and, indeed, indispensability. I am proud that Ireland was able to make its contribution through the co-facilitator role played by Ambassador David Donoghue and his team in the negotiations which, working with Kenya, brought about this landmark agreement. Moving to successful implementation of this huge global agenda will be the next great challenge. We do not underestimate the challenges for all countries in implementing a universal agenda that is as broad and diverse as the new SDGs, but we cannot underestimate the huge achievement and benefits for humankind if it is successfully implemented.

Our development gains are threatened by the unprecedented scale of humanitarian crises facing our world. The total number of refugees and internally displaced people worldwide has now surpassed 50 million people. In Europe, we have clearly seen the tragic consequences for those who, driven by desperation, are taking inconceivable risks to find a safe haven for their families. Addressing the migration

crisis is a huge challenge for Europe and one that we are working hard to resolve. People are fleeing their home countries for a multiplicity of reasons. They are arriving in Europe from a multiplicity of routes. They undertake perilous journeys, often exploited by ruthless criminals along the way. This is a disaster that requires the close collaboration of the international community.

The United Nations is undertaking vital work in seeking to address the root causes of mass migration and to provide humanitarian assistance to those who have been driven from their homes by the ravages of war. I urge States to work with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Migration — an Irishman, Peter Sutherland, who is dedicating himself to assisting in the resolution of this global catastrophe. Ireland supports the humanitarian effort by providing crucial funding and other resources. We have deployed search-and-rescue ships to the Mediterranean. We are providing for the resettlement of over 4,000 refugees.

Ireland welcomes the Secretary-General's setting up of the High-Level Panel on Humanitarian Financing to address the growing gap between humanitarian needs and resources. We will participate fully in that and other processes leading to next year's World Humanitarian Summit.

In the 1980s, Ireland completed its first full term on the Security Council, motivated by its commitment to multilateralism and a rules-based international system. These values are under grave threat today. Russia's unlawful annexation of Crimea and the conflict in eastern Ukraine have had profound implications for the people of Ukraine and for the international system itself. Ireland calls on all sides to respect and fully implement the Minsk agreements and to cooperate with the peacebuilding efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in the region.

During our first term on the Security Council in 1981 and 1982, the Middle East was, as ever, prominent on the international agenda. Today, challenges in the region are even greater. In Syria, over 200,000 people have lost their lives and over 11 million people have been displaced. The Al-Assad regime continues to flout international law, while the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) inflicts gratuitous cruelty and suffering on the people of Syria and northern Iraq. Its casual barbarism is a threat to every value the United Nations holds dear, and therefore the United Nations has a duty to act.

Elsewhere in the region, Ireland remains concerned at the continued stalemate in the Middle East peace process. We are strong advocates of the two-State solution as the only way to achieve a just and lasting peace for the Israeli and Palestinian peoples.

In our pursuit of peace on the island of Ireland, we were, and continue to be, supported by steadfast partners who stayed the course with us through many difficult years, keeping faith where others saw hopelessness. In our wide-ranging work on conflict prevention, mediation and State-building, we seek to share our experience. We hope to bring this to the table when we seek election to the Security Council again in 2020.

I turn to the 1990s. Historically, Ireland has supported the promotion and protection of human rights, from our early support for decolonization to our opposition to apartheid in South Africa and through to our election to the Human Rights Council for the term 2013 to 2015. In 1997, our former President, Mary Robinson, was appointed the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. At the Human Rights Council, Ireland has sought to give concrete expression to the long-held convictions that have informed our positions within the United Nations. We have championed resolutions to promote and protect civil society space, which we recognize as essential to make other rights attainable. We advocate for the critical role of human rights defenders. We have led initiatives to prevent the morbidity and mortality of children under 5.

In Ireland, there is widespread concern about violent repression and terrorist attacks on religious minorities. We have seen an alarming rise in attacks on Christians, Baha'i, Jews and Muslims. Elsewhere people are oppressed and punished because of their gender, race or sexual orientation. In short, vulnerable minorities are under increasing attack from repressive State regimes and from transnational terrorist networks including ISIL, Al-Qaida, Boko Haram and others. The United Nations, as a champion of equality, plurality and diversity, has an important role to play in defending and protecting vulnerable groups. We fully support the Organization in this essential task.

This year Ireland became the first country in the world to legalize marriage equality by a popular vote. This has been a hugely positive experience for Ireland, and we urge other States to follow suit and to promote rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender

and intersex citizens. Similarly, Ireland has had its own historic experience of religious repression; therefore, religious freedom is a matter of great importance to my country.

Turning to the 2000s, I wish to emphasize Ireland's grave concern for vulnerable women and girls in many parts of the world and our strong commitment to gender equality. In the year 2000, just before our last membership of the Security Council, Ireland co-sponsored resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, reflecting our strong national commitment to this agenda. I hope that Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon may be succeeded by a brilliant female Secretary-General in due course, because that would send a powerful message to women and men throughout the world that here, in the United Nations, we are willing to remove the barriers that prevent women from fulfilling their true potential.

We strongly endorse the code of conduct on Security Council action on mass atrocity crimes, developed by Liechtenstein and the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group, and we support the declaration by France and Mexico on regulating the use of the veto. Ireland is ready for membership in 2021 of a much reformed and more representative Security Council, one that is better equipped to respond to twenty-first-century threats to international peace and security.

Realizing the United Nations core values in every Member State will mean a fairer, more prosperous and sustainable world for this generation and all those who come after. I wish to conclude with the words of the late Irish poet Seamus Heaney, "I have begun to think of life as a series of ripples widening out from an original centre".

In 2015, a very special anniversary year for us all, it is time to reflect on our own original centre — the United Nations Charter — and for all 193 Member States to recommit ourselves to delivering on its great promise: a peaceful, just and prosperous world.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The Acting President (*spoke in Arabic*): I now call on His Excellency Moussa Faki Mahamat, Minister for Foreign Affairs and African Integration of the Republic of Chad.

Mr. Mahamat (Chad) (*spoke in French*): Fifteen years ago, we welcomed unanimously the adoption of

the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) and the Millennium Development Goals as the appropriate response to the poverty-related problems facing many of our countries. With the adoption of the post-2015 development Agenda (resolution 70/1), the General Assembly, at its seventieth session, has once again reaffirmed States' determination to fight poverty by seeking new ways and means of promoting development. The success of the implementation of the Agenda will require suitable joint responses to the numerous challenges facing the world.

For many African countries, success in this endeavour will hinge on their security situation and their ability to finance their development plans and strategies. On a daily basis they face challenges that include terrorism and a drop in export prices. The successful implementation of this new development Agenda will also depend on the solidarity of developed countries towards developing countries in terms of effective financing. That is why we have high expectations that the conclusions of the third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa, will be translated into reality.

The theme of this session, "The United Nations at 70: the road ahead for peace, security and human rights", means that we should place at the very heart of our general debate the issue of resolving the challenges that our Organization currently faces, the most intractable of which include armed conflicts, terrorism and migration. There is no doubt that Africa is one of the epicentres in that respect, given the multiple tragedies taking place there.

In the Central African Republic, for example, the particularly bloody clashes of recent days are jeopardizing the few hard-won victories achieved during the transition. The international community must not throw in the towel and must help the country emerge from this phase by providing it with the necessary budgetary support to hold elections within the set time frame.

In the Lake Chad basin, the terrorist activities being carried out virtually on a daily basis by the terrorist group Boko Haram against the countries of the subregion have not ceased despite considerable losses it suffered during the military operations carried out by a coalition of those countries' armies. A multinational joint task force has been set up by the countries members of the Lake Chad Basin Commission in order to put an end to the abuses committed by that nefarious group.

We remain confident that, with the intensification of this military cooperation, we will be able to once and for all eradicate this evil terrorist group. We also expect the United Nations and all of our partners to provide material, financial and logistical support to that force.

Aside from military action, these countries have decided to adopt an emergency development programme to help the most vulnerable populations fight against the deep-seated causes of insecurity, which are linked to poverty. This initiative, which originated in the Lake Chad Basin Commission, is a game-changer in terms of the peace and security efforts in the region and merits our support.

In Mali, the peace agreements signed recently in Algiers, which are aimed at transforming that country back into the haven of peace and tolerance that it had always been, are being put seriously to the test by armed groups, despite the presence of international forces. Chad calls on all parties to show wisdom and to respect their commitments in implementing the aforementioned agreements.

In Libya, the presence of a number of elements linked to the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant continues to contribute to the collapse of that country and is an additional source of concern and even destabilization for Africa as a whole and in particular for neighbouring countries, including Chad. We urgently call for an end to the violence and for the establishment of a Government of national unity.

In South Sudan, Chad is working actively alongside a number of African countries to end the fratricidal war taking place there. Political actors must make every effort to concentrate solely on building their young State. The Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the ad hoc committee tasked with supporting it in mediation must continue to stand firm and act cohesively so as to achieve a lasting solution to this terrifying crisis.

In the Sudan, we support the holding of the national dialogue planned for next month, and we call upon the political class as a whole and all armed groups to take part in the process.

The majority of African crises are born of or fuelled by underdevelopment. That is why several initiatives have been launched, including the 2013 United Nations Integrated Strategy for the Sahel, that have given rise to great hopes for the countries of the region, confronted as they are with the dual challenge of insecurity and

underdevelopment. It is regrettable, however, that the announcements made in the context of the Strategy are taking a long time to be translated into reality.

Turning to the rest of the world, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict remains unresolved, prolonging the suffering of the Palestinian people and intensifying rancour on all sides. It is high time to overcome the psychological obstacles by promoting the creation of a viable Palestinian State living in peace side by side with Israel. The raising yesterday of the Palestinian flag within the United Nations compound is, we hope, an important step towards finding a peaceful solution to this conflict, which is as old as our Organization.

In addition to this endless conflict, we are witnessing particularly violent crises in Iraq, Syria and Yemen. The international community must make every effort to help these countries overcome these tragedies, whose repercussions are being felt not only in the Middle East but also in the rest of the world. International peace and security are under serious threat from what is now happening in that part of the world. Religious radicalism and terrorism have found extremely fertile ground for their expansion.

The crisis situations that we have just described have greatly contributed to the upsurge in terrorism and the formation of criminal groups of all stripes. Terrorism, which spares no continent and no community, is fast becoming a global scourge. The acts of extreme violence committed against peaceful populations under religious or doctrinaire pretexts run counter to the principles of international law and human rights as well as religious principles.

In Africa, States grappling with terrorism are being forced to spend the lion's share of their resources on security instead of on economic and social development. My country, Chad, is in this situation. We recently fell prey to that scourge with the death of around 100 persons assassinated in terrorist attacks in the capital and on the islands of Lake Chad. Chad is therefore paying for its involvement against terrorist groups in Mali and Nigeria, on whom it inflicted heavy losses, but Chad not will yield. It will continue to hunt down those terrorist groups relentlessly. All we ask from our partners is that they give us robust support, both technical and material, to enable us to provide the response needed in this faceless war.

The capacity of terrorists and extremist groups for transborder harm requires a collective and nimble

response. The way to fight terrorism together is to pool our resources and our response strategies through intensifying regional and international cooperation. In that connection, we propose that 2016 be declared the Year of Fighting Terrorism. It would be an opportunity to think seriously about the deep-seated causes of that phenomenon, the ways and means to contain it and to eliminate it in the long term.

The increase in the number and seriousness of crises has also created a phenomenon whose scale is unprecedented in the world: migration. Indeed, for some months now, the world has been witnessing an unexpected expansion of international migration. Those consequences are tragic for hundreds of thousands of women and children desperately seeking a better life. The international community will be able to put an end to this migration only if appropriate solutions are found to its origins and underlying causes, particularly in resolving conflicts and eradicating poverty in the countries of origin.

We also need to find solutions for the thousands of refugees and persons displaced throughout the world. They also need our help. Chad is the African country with the second-largest number of refugees, returnees and displaced persons on its territory, estimated at over 500,000. They come from the regions bordering Chad, particularly Sudanese Darfur, the Central African Republic, Nigeria and Libya. They live in difficult environmental and humanitarian conditions.

Once again, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all friendly countries and especially the Secretariat's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the International Organization for Migration for their support to those in need and for the advocacy they do for our country.

Our world has been facing an insidious threat for some time now — climate change. That will be dealt with at a major conference in Paris next month. Chad will actively be present at that conference because it is one of the major victims of degradation due to climate change. We are a Sahelian country threatened by drought and desertification, and we are powerless in the face of the progressive drying up of Lake Chad. We strongly hope that the negotiations will lead to an agreement and give us some hope that we can save our planet, including the imperilled Lake Chad.

The celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations also coincides with a very happy event, namely, the normalization of relations between the United States of America and Cuba, which Chad welcomes. We commend the courage shown by the leaders of those two countries to achieve that outcome. We urge them to continue their constructive dialogue until we see a complete and definitive lifting of the embargo that Cuba has unjustly suffered for decades, which will enable that country to recover the place it merits in the concert of nations.

Before concluding my remarks, the delegation of Chad would like to congratulate the President on his election and thank his predecessor for his remarkable work. We also pay tribute to the Secretary-General of our Organization for his personal and steady investment in the search for peace and security in the world.

I hope that this general debate will be crowned with success and, above all, that we will become much more aware of our individual and collective responsibilities. We also hope that it guides humanity to peace, security, stability and prosperity.

The meeting rose at 3.25 p.m.