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Speech It is my honour to speak to the General Assembly for the first time as President of the United States.

We meet this year in a moment of great pain intermingled with extraordinary possibility. We have lost so much to a devastating pandemic that continues to claim lives around the world and has such great impact on our existence. We are mourning more than 4.5 million people – people of every nation and from every background.

Each death is an individual heartbreak, but our shared grief is a poignant

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that we face today at the dawning of what must be a decisive decade for our world – a decade that will quite literally determine our futures.

As a global community, we are challenged by urgent and looming crises, wherein lie enormous opportunities if we can summon the will and resolve to seize these opportunities. Will we work together to save lives, defeat the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) everywhere and take the necessary steps to prepare ourselves for the next pandemic? For there will be another one. Or

will we fail to harness the tools at our disposal, as the more virulent and dangerous variants take hold?

Will we meet the threat of the challenging climate we are all already feeling ravaging every part of our world with extreme weather? Or will we suffer the merciless march of ever worsening droughts and floods, more intense fires and hurricanes, longer heat waves and rising seas?

Will we affirm and uphold the human dignity and human rights under which nations in common cause more than seven decades ago formed this institution? Will we apply and strengthen the core tenets of the international system, including the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as we seek to shape the emergence of new technologies and deter new threats? Or will we allow those universal principles to be twisted and trampled upon in the pursuit of naked political power?

In my view, how we answer these questions in this moment, whether we choose to fight for our shared future or not, will reverberate for generations yet to come. Simply put, we stand, in my view, at an inflection point in history. And I am in this Hall today to share with the General Assembly of the United Nations how the United States intends to work with partners and allies to answer these questions and the commitment of my new Administration to helping to lead the world toward a more peaceful, prosperous future for all people.

Instead of continuing to fight the wars of the past, we are fixing our eyes on devoting our resources to the challenges that hold the keys to our collective future: ending this pandemic, addressing the climate crisis, managing the shifts in global power dynamics, shaping the rules of the world on vital

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We have ended 20 years of conflict in Afghanistan, and as we close this period of relentless war, we are opening a new era of relentless diplomacy, of using the power of our development aid to invest in new ways of lifting people up around the world, of renewing and defending democracy, of proving that, no matter how challenging or complex the problems we are going to face, government by and for the people is still the best way to deliver for all of our peoples.

As the United States turns its focus to the priorities and regions of the world that are most consequential

today and tomorrow, such as the Indo-Pacific, we will do so with our allies and partners through cooperation and multilateral institutions like the United Nations to amplify our collective strength and speed our progress towards dealing with these global challenges.

It is a fundamental truth of the twenty-first century, within each of our countries and as a global community, that our own success is bound up in others succeeding as well. To deliver for our own people, we must also engage deeply with the rest of the world. To ensure our own future, we must work together with our partners towards a shared future.

In my view, our security, our prosperity and our very freedoms are interconnected as never before. I therefore believe that we must work together as never before.

Over the last eight months, I prioritized rebuilding our alliances, revitalizing our partnerships and recognizing they are essential and central to America's enduring security and prosperity.

We have reaffirmed our sacred NATO Alliance and our commitment to Article 5 of the North Atlantic Treaty. We are working with our allies towards a new strategic concept that will help our Alliance better take on today's and tomorrow's evolving threats.

We renewed our engagement with the European Union, a fundamental partner in tackling the full range of significant issues facing our world today.

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climate to emerging technologies.

We are engaging with regional institutions, from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to the African Union to the Organization of American States, to focus on people's urgent needs for better health and better economic outcomes.

We are back at the table in international forums, especially the United Nations, to focus attention and to spur global action on shared challenges.

We are re-engaged at the World Health Organization and working in close partnership with the COVAX Facility to deliver life-saving vaccines around the world.

We rejoined the Paris Climate Agreement, and we are running to retake a seat in the Human Rights Council next year at the United Nations.

And as the United States seeks to rally the world to action, we will lead not just through the example of our power but, God willing, with the power of our example.

Make no mistake: the United States will continue to defend ourselves, our allies and our interests against attack, including terrorist threats, as we are prepared to use force if any is necessary. We are prepared to defend the vital national interests of the United States, including against ongoing and imminent threats, but such a mission must be clear and achievable, undertaken with the informed consent of the American people, and, whenever possible, in partnership with our allies.

United States military power must be our tool of last resort, not our first. It should not be used as an answer to every problem we see around the world. Indeed, many of our greatest concerns today cannot be solved or even addressed through the force of arms. Bombs and bullets cannot defend against COVID-19 or its future variants.

To fight this pandemic, we need a collective act of science and political will. We need to act now to get shots in arms as fast as possible and expand access to oxygen, tests and treatments to save lives around the world. For the future, we need to create a new mechanism to finance global health security that builds on our existing development assistance, and a global

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United States has already put more than \$15 billion towards the global COVID-19 response. We have shipped more than 160 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to other countries. That includes 130 million doses from our own supply and the first tranche of a half-billion doses of Pfizer vaccine that we purchased to donate through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility.

Planes carrying vaccines from the United States have already landed in 100 countries, bringing people all over the world a “little dose of hope”, as one American nurse termed it to me – a dose of hope direct from the American people and, importantly, with no strings attached. Tomorrow, at the United States-hosted Global Summit to End COVID-19, I will announce additional commitments, as we seek to advance the fight against COVID-19 and hold ourselves accountable around

specific targets on three key challenges: saving livings now, vaccinating the world and building back better.

This year has also brought widespread death and devastation from the borderless climate crisis. The extreme weather events that we have seen in every part of the world, which everyone here knows and feels, represent what the Secretary-General rightly called “code red for humankind”. The scientists and experts are telling us that we are fast approaching a point of no return, in a literal sense. To keep within our reach the vital goal of limiting global warming to 1.5°C, every nation needs to bring its highest possible ambitions to the table when we meet in Glasgow for the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We will then have to continue raising our collective ambition over time.

In April, I announced the United States ambitious new goal under the Paris Agreement on Climate Change to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from the United States by 50 to 52 per cent below 2005 levels by 2030, as we work towards achieving the clean energy economy with net-zero emissions by 2050. My Administration is working closely with our Congress to make critical investments in green infrastructure and electric vehicles that will help us lock in progress at home towards our climate goals. The best part is that making those ambitious investments is not just good climate policy. It is a chance for every one of our countries to invest in ourselves and our own future. It is an enormous opportunity to create

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people.

We also have to support the countries and people that will be hit the hardest and have the fewest resources to help them adapt. In April, I announced that the United States would double its public international financing to help developing nations tackle the climate crisis. Today, I am proud to announce that we will work with the Congress to double that number again, including for adaptation efforts. That will make the United States a leader in public climate finance and, with our added support together with increased private capital from other donors, we will be able to meet the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion to support climate action in developing nations.

As we deal with those crises, we are also encountering a new era of new technologies and possibilities that have the potential to release and reshape every aspect of human existence. It is up to all of us to determine whether such technologies are a force to empower people or to deepen repression. As new technologies continue to evolve, we will work together with our democratic partners to ensure that new advances in areas from biotechnology to quantum computing, to 5G, to artificial intelligence and more are used to lift people up, solve problems and advance human freedom, not to suppress dissent or target minority communities.

The United States intends to make a profound investment in research and innovation, working with countries at all stages of economic development to develop new tools and technologies to help us tackle the challenges of this second quarter of the twenty- first century and beyond. We are hardening our critical infrastructure against cyberattacks, disrupting ransomware networks and working to establish clear rules of the road for all nations as they relate to cyberspace. We reserve the right to respond decisively to cyberattacks that threaten our people, our allies or our interests.

We will pursue new rules of global trade and economic growth that strive to level the playing field so that it is not artificially tipped in favour of any one country at the expense of others and every nation has the right and the opportunity to compete fairly. We will strive to ensure that basic labour rights, environmental safeguards and intellectual property are protected and that the benefits of globalization are shared broadly throughout all our societies.

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formed the guarantors of international engagement for decades and that have been essential to the development of nations around the world — bedrock commitments like freedom of navigation, adherence to international laws and treaties, and support for arms control measures that reduce risk and enhance transparency.

Our approach is firmly grounded and fully consistent with the United Nations mission and the values we agreed to when we drafted the Charter of the United Nations. They are commitments that we all made and that we are all bound to uphold. As we strive to deal with these urgent challenges, whether they are long-standing or newly emerging, we must also deal with one another. All the major Powers of the world have a duty, in my view, to carefully manage their relationships so that they do not tip from responsible competition to conflict.

The United States will compete — and will compete vigorously — and lead with its values and strength. We will stand up for our allies and friends and oppose attempts by stronger countries to dominate weaker ones, whether through changes to territory by force, economic coercion, technological exploitation or disinformation. But we are not seeking — I will say it again — we are not seeking a new Cold War or a world divided into rigid blocs.

The United States is ready to work with any nation that steps up and pursues the peaceful resolution to shared challenges, even if we have intense disagreements in other areas. Otherwise, we will all suffer the consequences of our failure if we do not come together to address urgent threats like COVID-19 and climate change or enduring threats like nuclear proliferation.

The United States remains committed to preventing Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon. We are working with the P5+1 to engage Iran diplomatically and seek a return to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We are prepared to return to full compliance if Iran does the same. Similarly, we seek serious and sustained diplomacy to pursue the complete denuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We seek concrete progress towards an available plan with tangible commitments that would increase stability on the peninsula and in the region, as well as improve the lives of the people in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

We must also remain vigilant to the threat that terrorism poses to all our

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almost all experienced it. Last month, we lost 15 American heroes and almost 200 innocent Afghan civilians in the heinous terrorist attack at the Kabul airport. Those who commit acts of terrorism against us will continue to find a determined enemy in the United States.

However, the world today is not the world of 2001, and the United States is not the same country that we were when we were attacked on 9/11, 20 years ago. Today we are better equipped to detect and prevent

terrorist threats and we are more resilient in our ability to repel them and to respond.

We know how to build effective partnerships to dismantle terrorist networks by targeting their financing and support systems, countering their propaganda and preventing their travel, as well as disrupting imminent attacks. We will meet terrorist threats that arise today and in the future with the full range of tools available to us, including working in cooperation with local partners so that we need not be so reliant on large-scale military deployments.

One of the most important ways in which we can effectively enhance security and reduce violence is by seeking to improve the lives of the people all over the world who see that their Governments are not serving their needs. Corruption fuels inequality, siphons off a nation's resources, spreads across borders and generates human suffering. It is nothing less than a national security threat in the twenty-first century.

Around the world, we are increasingly seeing citizens demonstrate their discontent at seeing the wealthy and well-connected grow richer and richer, taking payoffs and bribes and operating above the law, while the vast majority of the people struggle to find a job, put food on the table, get their business off the ground or simply send their children to school.

People have taken to the streets in every region to demand that their Governments address their basic needs, give everyone a fair shot to succeed and protect their God-given rights. In that chorus of voices across languages and continents, we hear a common cry: a cry for dignity – simple dignity. As leaders, it is our duty to answer that call, not to silence it. The United States is committed to using its resources and its international platform to support those voices, listen to them and partner with them to

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For example, there is an enormous need for infrastructure in developing countries, but infrastructure that is low-quality or that feeds corruption or exacerbates environmental degradation may only end up contributing to greater challenges for countries over time. Done the right way, however, with transparent, sustainable investment in projects that respond to the country's needs and engage their local workers to maintain high labour and environmental standards, infrastructure can be a strong foundation that allows societies in low- and middle-income countries to grow and to prosper. That is the idea behind the Build Back Better World initiative.

Together with the private sector and our Group of Seven partners, we aim to mobilize hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure investment. We will also continue to be the world's largest contributor to humanitarian assistance, bringing food, water, shelter, emergency health care and other vital, life-saving aid to millions of people in need.

When an earthquake strikes, a typhoon rages or a disaster occurs anywhere in the world, the United States shows up. We will be ready to help. And at a time when nearly one in three people globally does not have access to adequate food — adequate food, just last year — the United States is committing to rallying our partners to address immediate malnutrition and to ensure that we can sustainably feed the world for decades to come. To that end, the United States is making a \$10-billion commitment to end hunger and invest in food systems at home and abroad.

Since 2000, the United States Government has provided more than \$140 billion to advance health and strengthen health systems, and we will continue our leadership to drive such vital investments to make people's lives better every single day and to give them a little breathing room.

As we strive to make lives better, we must work with renewed purpose to end the conflicts that are driving so much pain and hurt around the world. We must redouble our diplomacy and commit to political negotiations, not violence, as the tool of first resort to manage tensions around the world.

We must seek a future of greater peace and security for all the people of the Middle East. The commitment of the United States to Israel's security is without question and our support for an independent Jewish State is unequivocal. But I continue to believe that a two-State solution is the best

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long way from that goal at this moment, but we must never allow ourselves to give up on the possibility of progress.

We cannot give up on solving raging civil conflicts, including in Ethiopia and Yemen, where fighting between warring parties is driving famine, horrific violence and human rights violations against civilians,

including the unconscionable use of rape as a weapon of war. We will continue to work with the international community to press for peace and bring an end to such suffering.

As we pursue diplomacy across the board, the United States will champion the democratic values that go to the very heart of who we are as a nation and a people: freedom, equality, opportunity and a belief in the universal rights of all people. It is stamped into our DNA as a nation, and, critically, it is stamped into the DNA of this institution – the United Nations. We sometimes forget. I quote the opening words of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

“... the equal and inalienable rights of all members

of the human family is the foundation of freedom,

justice and peace in the world”.

The founding ethos of the United Nations places the rights of individuals at the centre of our system, and that clarity and vision must not be ignored or misinterpreted.

The United States will do its part, but we will be more successful and more impactful if all our nations work towards the full mission to which we are called. That is why more than 100 nations united around a shared statement and the Security Council adopted resolution 2593 (2021) outlining how we will support the people of Afghanistan moving forward, laying out the expectations to which we will hold the Taliban when it comes to respecting universal human rights.

We all must advocate for women and the rights of women and girls to use their full talents to contribute economically, politically and socially and to pursue their dreams free of violence and intimidation, from Central

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We all must call out and condemn the targeting and oppression of racial, ethnic and religious minorities, whether that occurs in Xinjiang, northern Ethiopia or anywhere in the world.

We all must defend the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex individuals so that they can live and love openly without fear, whether in Chechnya, Cameroon or anywhere.

As we steer our nations towards this inflection point and work to meet today's fast-moving, crosscutting challenges, let me be clear: I am not agnostic about the future we want for the world. The future will belong to those who embrace human dignity, not those who trample it. The future will belong to those who unleash the potential of their people, not those who stifle it. The future will belong to those who give their people the ability to breathe free, not those who seek to suffocate their people with an iron hand.

Authoritarianism and the authoritarians of the world may seek to proclaim the end of the age of democracy, but they are wrong. The truth is, the democratic world is everywhere. It lives in the anti-corruption activists, the human rights defenders, the journalists, the peace protesters on the front lines of the struggle in Belarus, Burma, Syria, Cuba, Venezuela and everywhere in between. It lives in the brave women of the Sudan who withstood violence and oppression to push a genocidal dictator from power and who keep working every day to defend their democratic progress. It lives in the proud Moldovans who helped deliver a landslide victory for the forces of democracy with a mandate to fight graft and to build a more inclusive economy. It lives in the young people of Zambia who harnessed the power of their vote for the first time, turning out in record numbers to denounce corruption and chart a new path for their country.

And while no democracy is perfect, including the United States – which will continue to struggle to live up to the highest ideals to heal its divisions and face down violence and insurrection – democracy remains the best tool we have to unleash our full human potential.

This is a moment where we must prove ourselves the equals of those who came before us, who with vision and values and determined faith in our collective future built our United Nations, broke the cycle of war and

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together to affirm that the inherent humanity that unites us is much greater than any outward divisions or disagreements.

We must choose to do more than we think we can do alone so that we accomplish what we must, together: ending this pandemic and making sure we are better prepared for the next one; staving off climate change and increasing our resilience to the impacts we already are seeing; ensuring a future where technologies are a vital tool to solving human challenges and empowering human potential, not a source of greater strife and repression. Those are the challenges that will determine what the world looks like for our children and our

grandchildren and what they will inherit. We can meet them only by looking to the future.

I stand in this Hall today, for the first time in 20 years, with the United States not at war. We have turned the page. All the unmatched strength, energy, commitment, will and resources of our nation are now fully and squarely focused on what is ahead of us, not what was behind.

I know this — as we look ahead, we will lead. We will lead on all the greatest challenges of our time, from COVID-19 to climate, peace and security, human dignity and human rights. But we will not go it alone. We will lead together with our allies and partners and in cooperation with all those who believe, as we do, that it is within our power to meet those challenges and to build a future that lifts all our people and preserves this planet.

But none of this is inevitable; it is a choice. And I can tell Member States where America stands. We will choose to build a better future. We, all together, have the will and capacity to make it better. We cannot afford to waste any more time. Let us get to work. Let us make our better future now. We can do this. It is within our power and capacity.

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