

## 2021 Speech - Russian Federation



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<b>Speech</b>	I am glad to have this opportunity to speak from the rostrum of the General Assembly. The fact that we have once again gathered in this Hall symbolizes our collective readiness to resume our normal communication, which had been suspended since the onset of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Essentially, we have no other option since broad cooperation at the United Nations is particularly relevant now when the number of problems on the international agenda is increasing. The range of cross-border threats is also expanding. Numerous regional hotbeds of tension have a substantial

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increasingly there is no consensus among the leading powers on the principles of the world order.

For Russia, it is obvious that threats and challenges can be countered effectively only through concerted efforts made in strict compliance with the universally recognized norms of international law, above all the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. This global Organization should play a central coordinating role in world politics in order to fully unlock its potential for universal multilateralism and legitimacy.

Recently, we have witnessed persistent attempts to diminish the role of the United Nations in resolving the key problems of today, to marginalize it or to transform it into a malleable tool for promoting someone's selfish interests. Such attempts are clearly evident in the concept of a so-called "rules-based order" that the

West persistently introduces into political discourse in opposition to international law.

Naturally, no one can be opposed to rules as such. After all, that is exactly what the Charter of the United Nations is — a set of rules. Those rules, however, were approved by all the countries of the world. Similarly, any new norms governing international interaction must be agreed in universal forums, above all in this one. On the other hand, when rules are established behind closed doors, circumventing this universal Organization, they cannot be fully legitimate.

By shifting the discussion on key issues to formats that suit it best, the West wants to exclude from global decision-making processes those who have independent and different points of view. Following the same logic, Germany and France recently announced the creation of the Alliance for Multilateralism; but what kind of structure could be more multilateral than the United Nations? Berlin and Paris, however, have decided that at the United Nations there are many conservatives that hinder the efforts of the vanguard. They have proclaimed the European Union (EU) to be the epitome of effective multilateralism, and all others are supposed to emulate it.

There is a recent example: the United States Administration has come up

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hijacking the right to decide to what degree a country meets the standards of democracy. Essentially, that initiative is in the spirit of the Cold War, as it declares a new ideological crusade against all dissenters. It should be noted that the initiative is being implemented against the background of President Biden's words that the United States does not seek a world divided into opposing blocs. The fact is that the Summit for Democracy will be a step towards dividing the global community into "us" and "them".

It is also telling that, while it declares the primacy of democracy in its relations with all its partners, Washington is concerned only with the domestic situation in relevant countries. When it comes to establishing democracy in international relations, the United States and its allies quickly lose any interest in the discussion, because no one dares to encroach on the authority of NATO and the EU. Those are the rules.

President Biden recently announced the rejection of military methods used, as he put it, to remake other countries. We expect the United States to go one step further and reject not only the use of force but also any other methods of imposing their development model on others.

The rules-based order is founded on double standards. When it serves the West's interests, peoples' right to self-determination is absolute. For example, the artificially created entity of Kosovo, which was earlier forcefully seized from a European country, Serbia, was recognized as an independent State in violation of Security Council resolutions and without any referendums.

It does not bother anyone that the Malvinas are 12,000 kilometres away from Great Britain and that Paris and London still control their former colonies, despite the relevant United Nations and International Court of Justice decisions, and have no intention of giving them their freedom.

On the other hand, when the right to self-determination runs counter to the West's geopolitical interests, as it did when the people of Crimea expressed their free will in the 2014 referendum on the peninsula's reunification with Russia, the West forgets all about that right and introduces illegitimate sanctions against its exercise. The reason is simple — the Crimean people were trying to break free from the ultra-radicals who were behind the coup in Ukraine supported by the West. That means that since the good guys came to power in Kyiv, they are, according to the

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Applying the concept of a rules-based order – in the same way, the United States preserves the obsolete trade embargo against Cuba and strives to impose its will on the people of Venezuela and Nicaragua – in flagrant violation of the Charter-based principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States. The use of unilateral restrictive measures undermines the prerogatives of the Security Council and runs counter to the Secretary-General's call to suspend such measures at least for the duration of the pandemic.

Efforts by a number of countries to rewrite the history of the Second World War are also intended to weaken the United Nations-centric world order. EU and NATO member States refuse to support the General Assembly resolution on the inadmissibility of the glorification of Nazism and reject proposals

to condemn the practice of destroying monuments to those who liberated Europe from the “brown plague”.

Instilling a rules-based order rather than ensuring unconditional compliance with international law is fraught with the risk of a dangerous relapse into a policy based on blocs and the creation of dividing lines, this time between a group of Western countries and the rest of the world. However, recent events have shown that arbitrary rules can be applied within the Western bloc as well if one of its members becomes too independent.

At least, many world media have picked up the unfolding story of submarines being supplied to Australia in the context of the talk of Europe's strategic autonomy, which has intensified since the hasty withdrawal of the United States from Afghanistan. The chaos that accompanied that withdrawal is a further demonstration of the rules on which the West intends to build its world order.

We are convinced that it is time to draw lessons from the dangerous repercussions of the policy of undermining the United Nations-centric architecture, which was created in the aftermath of the Second World War and has repeatedly proven itself to be a reliable bulwark against disastrous eventualities. In the face of global challenges, the world needs unity rather than a new divide. Russia strongly advocates that we reject any confrontation and stereotypes and join efforts to solve the key tasks of

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we have the instruments to ensure that. Above all, the United Nations and the Security Council should be adapted to the reality of a polycentric world order by enlarging the Council and providing increased representation for Asia, Africa and Latin America. The permanent members of the Security Council, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, bear a special responsibility to the Organization and must encourage genuine collective action.

President Putin has proposed to convene a summit of the five permanent members of the Security Council to hold a frank discussion on global stability issues. There are also great expectations for the prospect of a Russian-American dialogue on the future of arms control, the start of which was agreed at a Russia- United States summit held in Geneva.

Where there is goodwill, finding a mutually acceptable solution is very realistic. The world was encouraged when the new United States Administration agreed to our proposal to extend the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty without any preconditions. It was very significant that the joint statement of the Russian and American Presidents reaffirmed the commitment to the principle that nuclear war has no winners and such a war must never be fought.

A responsible approach is also needed in other spheres of strategic stability. After Washington's withdrawal from the Treaty between the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles, Russia made a unilateral commitment not to deploy intermediate- or shorter- range conventional or nuclear missiles in regions where there are no similar United States-made weapons. We continue to await the response of NATO members to our proposal to proclaim a similar moratorium, reinforced – and I emphasize this – with mutual verification measures.

We also recognize the new challenge and threat of States that intend to militarize the Internet and unleash a cyberarms race. Russia advocates the adoption of a United Nations agreement on ways to ensure international information security. The process should not be based on anyone's special rules but rather on universal agreements that allow for the consideration of all concerns in a transparent and fact-based manner. That is the aim of our initiative to elaborate standard norms for responsible

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cybercrime.

In addition to digital space, some countries view outer space as an arena for confrontation. We see that as a dangerous trend and propose to prohibit the placement of weapons and the threat or use of force in outer space. The relevant Russian-Chinese draft treaty remains before the Conference on Disarmament.

Russia consistently puts forward initiatives on other issues requiring concerted action. Today, 20 years after the atrocious terrorist acts in New York, President Putin's call to form a broad counter-terrorism coalition on the basis of international law and without double standards is more relevant than ever. We await a response to the Russian initiative to elaborate a convention on the suppression of acts of chemical and biological terrorism.

We can make progress in resolving regional conflicts only by acting on the basis of international

law and involving all stakeholders and addressing their concerns. In Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Yemen and other hotspots, all external actors have to show an understanding of the cultural and civilizational specifics of society, reject the politicization of humanitarian aid and assist in the creation of broadly representative bodies of authority that involve all the major ethnic, religious and political authorities of the relevant countries.

Guided by such an approach, Russia has constructively engaged in the promotion of an Afghan settlement via the extended troika and the Moscow format and helped to stabilize the situation in Syria in the framework of the Astana process. Russia has also been working with all Libyan parties in order to implement political reforms.

The processes under way in the Middle East should not sideline the task of reaching a sustainable Israeli-Palestinian settlement, within the universally recognized international legal framework, providing for the creation of an independent and viable Palestinian State coexisting in peace with Israel. We advocate the resumption of direct negotiations between the Israelis and the Palestinians and galvanizing the role of the Quartet of international mediators, in coordination with the League of Arab States.

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Iran and its Arab neighbours. Together with our partners, we seek a resumption of the full implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action as soon as possible. A holistic approach is required to settle the situation of the Iran nuclear programme if we are to sustainably stabilize the entire region. That is the objective of the updated Russian concept of collective security in the Persian Gulf, which was recently circulated in a Security Council and General Assembly document (see A/75/999-S/2021/740).

In the context of seeking ways to overcome regional crises, we are ready to share Russia's unique experience of the peaceful coexistence of different civilizations, religions and cultures. We expect the World Conference on Intercultural and Interfaith Dialogue, to be held from 16 to 18 May 2022 in Saint Petersburg, to produce substantial, practical results. The Conference enjoys the support of the Secretary-General and the leadership of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

Today the humanitarian, socioeconomic and environmental dimensions of the work of the United Nations are increasingly significant. It is essential to avoid the temptation to turn them into yet another arena for geopolitical games and unfair competition. The COVID-19 pandemic is our common enemy. We support the mutual recognition of vaccines that have been approved by national oversight bodies in order to promptly lift restrictions on international travel.

It is vitally important that we not cease efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We hope that the decisions adopted at the recent United Nations Food Systems Summit will promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

We advocate strengthening the central role of the United Nations in building an agenda for environmental protection on the basis of equality and respect for each other's interests, including by giving due consideration to socioeconomic realities. Otherwise, it will be difficult to mobilize all States towards reaching global climate goals.

We should fine-tune the work of all mechanisms that can impact the efficiency of global governance to search for a balance of interests and fully leverage inclusive associations such as the Group of 20, which brings together both old and the new dynamically developing global centres, such

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It was with great interest that we heard of the global development initiative proposed by the President of China, Xi Jinping. It resonates with our own approach.

Russia, together with its partners and allies, supports strengthening a mutually reinforcing network of alliances by developing integrative processes within the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Eurasian Economic Union, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation

Organization. President Vladimir Putin's initiative to create a greater Eurasian partnership that would also engage the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, the key actor defining the norms of behaviour in the Asia-Pacific region, is also positive.

In general, the regional dimension of the world's development plays an increasingly defining role. Much will depend on whether we succeed in redirecting the growing rivalry among regions onto a constructive track. Which is more important — Europe or Asia? The Indian Ocean or the Pacific Ocean? Will a Latin American Union on the model of the European Union be established? Why make Africa an arena for confrontation?

Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations is dedicated to relations with regional organizations. On that basis, the Secretary-General brings such organizations together every year to host an exchange of opinions on issues of global politics. We believe it would be very useful to take the next step in that format and use it to draft some proposals on how to harmonize regional aspirations in order to enable the most effective global response to the challenges of our time.

We are all in the same boat. It is in our shared interests to make sure that the boat stays safely afloat on the waves of global politics. We are all different, but that must not prevent us from working for the benefit of our nations and all of humankind. It is the only way that we may be able to fulfil the honourable mission of the United Nations — to save this generation and succeeding generations from the scourges of war, hunger and disease and to build a more peaceful, stable and democratic future for all.



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