



General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

Distr.: General
13 January 2021

Original: English

Seventy-fifth session
Agenda item 8

General debate

Note by the President of the General Assembly

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

The statements contained in the present document were delivered on the afternoon of Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly (see A/75/PV.7). Document A/75/592 and its addenda 1 through 11 contain the statements delivered in the 4th through the 15th meetings of the General Assembly (A/75/PV.4-A/75/PV.15).

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

21-00389 (E)



Accessible document

Please recycle



Ecuador (see A/75/PV.7, annex I)

Address by Mr. Lenin Moreno Garcés, Constitutional President of the Republic of Ecuador

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

[Original: Spanish]

President of the General Assembly; Secretary-General; Heads of State and Government,

For many years, the General Assembly has discussed cooperation, dialogue, solidarity, the importance of progress in science and technology and ending poverty in the world.

It has also discussed the urgent need of strengthening the Organization and multilateralism.

The pandemic, which is affecting the planet, has made it high time to turn those good intentions into more meaningful actions.

COVID-19 has put every pressure to bear on multilateralism. Six months after it began, we are dealing not only with a health emergency, but also a social and economic one.

Without exception, every country has been hit by the deadly virus.

We will not be able to save lives and revive the economy without the support of multilateral organizations, private enterprise, the academic community and society, as a whole.

For Ecuador, the support of international financial agencies has been key these past months.

That is why we commend the calls for a multilateral response to the crisis.

The Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund recognizes the importance of supporting emerging and developing economies, and the President of the World Bank is talking about a debt moratorium for poor countries.

Ecuador supports and appreciates those proposals and calls for middle-income countries to be taken into account, as every nation is facing serious economic problems.

Dear friends, COVID-19 has historically changed the world today and, in all probability, its future.

Poverty, inequality and unemployment will worsen, which will have an impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. We risk backsliding with regard to the gains made over the past few years.

Ecuador's national development plan — Lifetime — which we have not been remiss in implementing, is aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We firmly believe in the need for a strong, solid and committed multilateral system that ensures financial and technical support to all.

The pandemic has shown that technology is key to guaranteeing citizens' rights, such as access to remote health care, education and work.

But it has also shown the great digital divide that exists among our nations, which is a product of inequality.

The post-COVID era will pose for us the challenge of reviving economies and focusing on small- and medium-sized businesses, which create thousands upon thousands of jobs.

It is necessary to offer flexible and sufficient lines of credit with acceptable terms, as well. But it is also imperative to meet the commitments of official development assistance.

Colleagues from around the world, my country underscores the work of the World Health Organization and its leadership during this crisis.

That is why we support the COVAX Facility initiative, to step up access to COVID-19 vaccines and the repository of technologies to combat the pandemic.

Only in this way will we be able to enjoy fairly distributed patent-free vaccines, with special attention afforded the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people.

The pandemic has affected us all, but its impact has been most severe on vulnerable groups.

In addition to COVID-19 itself, the lockdown, the lack of employment and poverty have exacerbated gender-based violence. Women and children have had to stay at home with their abusers, risking their physical and mental safety and sometimes even their lives!

Older adults and people with disabilities are also suffering disproportionately from the crisis because of their increased risk of infection.

In Ecuador we have provided welfare vouchers, mobility and self-care assistance and, in many cases, decent housing at no cost.

Together with 145 Member States we endorsed the policy brief, entitled "A Disability-inclusive response to COVID-19".

Likewise, we recognize the vulnerability of indigenous peoples. We must give them priority attention commensurate with their circumstances, and we must guarantee them access to treatments and vaccines.

Migrants have also been disproportionately affected by the pandemic. As a host country, Ecuador seeks to guarantee the exercise of their rights with a humanitarian response.

We will continue to firmly support the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, as well as the full implementation of the Declaration of Quito on Human Mobility of Venezuelan Citizens in the Region.

Fellow Presidents, the sustainable use of natural resources and climate change is an issue that we cannot ignore.

The failure to implement environmental agreements has very serious economic and social repercussions.

Ecuador recently expressed its concern about the presence of a large foreign fishing fleet, which since May 2020 has been operating in very close proximity to the Galapagos Islands.

We have reiterated that, without distinction of the flag, we will ensure that our maritime rights prevail over the exclusive economic zone.

We are aware of the enormous responsibility to protect the Galapagos, which was designated as humankind's first Natural World Heritage site.

We call on the countries that fish in the waters of the south-east Pacific to self-regulate and limit their activities.

We, the members of the Permanent Commission for the South Pacific, namely, the brotherly countries of Chile, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru, condemn illegal fishing in areas adjacent to our countries' waters.

We have also agreed to strengthen sharing information on the location of vessels in order to improve monitoring and surveillance.

Ecuador therefore reaffirms its commitment to conserve the marine environment. As a demonstration of that, on 11 August, we joined the Global Ocean Alliance.

The initiative, led by the United Kingdom, seeks to designate 30 per cent of the world's oceans as marine protected areas.

We are also committed to the conservation of the Amazon.

We subscribe to the Leticia Declaration and what is known as the Financing Initiative for Sustainable Development and Bio-Economy for the Amazon.

With the establishment of the multi-donor fund, administered by the IDB, significant resources will be allocated to conserve what are the lungs of the planet and improve the quality of life of indigenous peoples.

We are facing new challenges the solution to which lies in unity and peace, not conflict.

Recently, 172 countries supported the call of the Secretary-General for a global ceasefire and silencing all weapons.

We are confident that the call and the relevant Security Council resolution (Security Council resolution 2532 (2020)) will serve as a first step towards achieving definitive and sustainable peace throughout the world.

Today, our obligation is to join our efforts and fight the pandemic.

For now, that is our common enemy!

Recently, the commemoration of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki served to remind us of the devastating consequences of nuclear weapons. We therefore welcome the forthcoming entry into force of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

The pandemic must serve as an additional reason to step up disarmament obligations and make available the needed resources for revitalization.

Friends and Heads of State and Government, I conclude by stressing that Ecuador firmly supports the initiative to move forward meaningful reform of the UN system.

It is necessary to ensure greater accountability and maximize its efficiency.

It is imperative to overhaul the system that we created at the end of the Second World War, as it does not reflect today's reality.

It is also important to guarantee the allocation of funds, to which end States must fulfil their obligation to contribute to the Organization without conditions or threats.

Today, our peoples demand cooperation so we will be able to face the economic and social challenges of the post-COVID-19 era.

Only together will we be able to win this cruel war, a cruel war that has already taken the lives of nearly 1 million people.

Dear friends, I hope that, in the very near future, we will be able to give one another the fraternal hug that we owe another inside and outside our countries.

Thank you very much.

Bolivia (see A/75/PV.7, annex II)**Address by Ms. Jeanine Áñez Chávez, Constitutional President of the Plurinational State of Bolivia***Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Spanish]

Thank you very much. It is a pleasure and an honour to share the Assembly Hall with all of you.

At no other time has Latin America seen more clearly that it must choose between the two roads that lie before it.

The two roads do not lead — as many intellectuals in the region have asserted — either towards the left or the right; statism or neo-liberalism; or socialism or capitalism.

The two roads, one of which we must choose, are simpler. One is the road of freedom and the other is the road of oppression.

In other words, we are once again faced with the dilemma that arises between the choices of democracy or dictatorship. In short, we are faced with the dilemma of modernity.

Did we create the State to oppress or to guarantee freedom? Ladies and gentlemen, it is time to choose.

Let us admit that, in general, Latin America has not overcome the threat of authoritarianism.

And let us concede that very important people in Latin American politics remain in the thrall of authoritarian temptation.

And, consequently, let us accept that many of our societies are at risk of surrendering to new forms of authoritarianism and oppression.

And what are these new forms of authoritarianism that threaten several of our nations?

They are simply the pursuits of caudillismo and authoritarian populism.

They encourage the appropriation and, if necessary, kidnapping of public life by a caudillo and his caste.

It is not matter of parties, the armed forces, unions or ideologies. In sum, it has nothing to do with any organization or institution conceiving of the common good.

It is about individual pursuits of power.

Those pursuits aspire to see the Caudillo and his caste gain complete control of the political sphere, culture, the economy and ultimately the freedom of the people.

They are founded on the idea of privilege. And, for that reason, run contrary to the idea of rights.

It is the system of the few. It is the system of castes. It is the system of the political elites. It is the system of the political clan.

In short, Latin America has before it the road offered up by caudillismo and authoritarian populism. But it also has another path, which is different and opposed to caudillismo and authoritarian populism, respects the people and is based on democracy. In effect, after having lived through the populist era, Latin America has the option of building political coexistence, based on the republican tradition — which is the tradition of freedom.

That is the road we are building in Bolivia. It is the road leading towards returning power to the people. It is the road leading towards validating the rule of law.

It is the road leading towards overcoming more than a decade of populist and authoritarian caudillismo. It is the road leading towards restoring the freedom of the citizens.

And it is precisely in order to build that road to freedom that we are supporting fair and transparent elections on 18 October.

And we are supporting them despite the fact that the proponents of caudillismo populism attempted to stop and sabotage them with brutal and violent actions a few weeks ago.

Those actions included blocking highways so that oxygen intended for patients who had fallen ill to COVID-19 would not get by. It was an extraordinarily inhuman and cruel way of sowing chaos and terror. Such actions led to death and damage, which under the eyes of the law can clearly be seen as crimes against humanity.

The Bolivian people, however, courageously and determinedly stopped the organized and systematic attempt to overthrow democracy and reinstall the dictatorship in Bolivia. We are a people who have decided to turn the page and leave behind the populist dictatorship.

We are a people who no longer want to see Governments building palaces or museums dedicated to the caudillo. We are a people who want democracy, health care, employment, education and opportunities.

And that is why the decision of the current Government to invest 10 per cent of the national budget in health care has been a very important step for Bolivia.

And that is also why the efforts we have made in health care have been very important in achieving in three months what had not been achieved for decades in our country. They involved thousands of health-care jobs and other initiatives to equip hospitals and treat free of charge thousands of citizens who contracted the coronavirus disease.

Similarly, in keeping with the purpose of establishing the Republic — the Government of the people, the Government under the law for all and the Government devoted to political freedom — we have established in Bolivia a support system for the people, which is unprecedented in our history.

The pandemic reminded us of the enormous importance of helping one another.

It reminded us of our Christian value to care for one another. And it reminded us of the ethics of mutual help as a path leading towards healthy coexistence among people who consider themselves to be brothers and sisters, free and equal.

The support and assistance system that we have established is based on the providing cash vouchers to the population — directly to all Bolivian families, with special emphasis on the people and families who are most in need.

Well then, in view of the two roads of freedom and oppression, which I took the liberty of expounding upon, it is a pleasure to say in the Assembly that Bolivia has chosen the road of freedom.

But I would be remiss if I did not conclude my statement without condemning before the world the systematic and abusive assault that the Kirchnerist Government is carrying out from Argentina against the institutions and republican values in Bolivia.

We have nothing against the noble Argentine people. Moreover, it is a nation that we esteem and love like a brother. We have nothing against Peronism, which we value as a political tradition — the national popular tradition — and has been the driving force behind enormous achievements in the social modernization of Argentina.

It is a tradition that we are familiar with in Bolivia where the 1952 Revolution, which exemplified the national popular tradition, set the stage for extraordinary progress with regard to equality and social justice.

Nor do we harbour any bitterness towards other Governments, such as the Government of Havana, with which we do not agree ideologically. But we maintain the due respect and courtesy that characterize the relations between two sovereign States and between two brotherly peoples, who share a common history.

But the case of the Argentine Government is different. It involves behaviour that I described earlier when I spoke of the populist castes, which do not hesitate to use frankly abusive methods to carry out their plans, obtain power and take stands that run contrary to promoting freedom.

What is the Argentine Government's authority to make interference the key to its foreign policy towards Bolivia? And what is its authority to protect a violent conspiracy by Evo Morales against Bolivian democracy from Argentine soil?

And even worse, what is the authority of the Argentine Government to offer impunity to Evo Morales in cases as serious as the national and international investigations that are under way against this former dictator, for human rights violations, for sexual violations against girls or underage women, or for complicity in political murder?

Kirchnerist populism knows that the Bolivian nation is not the private property of any caste. We are a sovereign and respectable people.

Bolivia is respected. Bolivian democracy is respected. The Bolivian people respect themselves.

Nor can I fail to mention the maritime issue in this speech. I call on the international community in these new times to resolve through negotiation and fraternal understanding the critical and pending problems between States, such as the Bolivia's lack of sovereign access to the Pacific Ocean.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Bolivia has chosen freedom. She has chosen the republic. And no matter who your enemies are, the important thing is that democracy, freedom, institutions and republican values have come to stay in Bolivia.

We invite the world to look at our electoral process, which, unlike that promoted by Evo Morales last year, will be clean and free of fraud. We invite the world to look at our system of aid, bonds and solidarity, which has launched in Bolivia a historic stage of assistance to those who need it most.

We invite the world to visit us, because we are a people that, despite so many political, social, economic and health difficulties, now looks forward with courage, freedom and joy.

Thank you very much. God bless you.

Ukraine (see A/75/PV.7, annex III)

Address by Mr. Volodymyr Zelenskyy, President of Ukraine

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

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

Distinguished Mr. President,

Your Excellences! Ladies and Gentlemen!

On behalf of Ukraine I have the honour to congratulate you, Mr. Bozkir, on your election as President of the 75th UN General Assembly session. You are steering the Assembly in hard times when even traditional international instruments and formats may not work. That is why I want to assure that Ukraine has been and will continue to be a reliable partner for you and the United Nations, even despite the fact that we are separated by thousands of kilometers.

A year ago, in New York we discussed threats to the future of the world, we devised plans, we made forecasts. But could anyone have imagined back then that the year 2020 would stage such a crash test for the planet? The countries lock down their borders, the Summer Olympic Games postponed, and the session of the UN General Assembly is held online. A year ago, we would say that this is a script for the apocalyptic blockbuster, not the realities of 2020.

In such uneasy for the world times it makes sense to recall the feelings of the leaders of the United Nations founding states 75 years ago. The humanity just survived the most horrendous war. The world resembled a soldier who was strolling across a blood-drenched field a minute after the explosions stopped. Emaciated, hollowed, at a loss but alive.

The Second World War became a “global earthquake” that claimed tens of millions of lives. Yet humanity managed to recover. And on 24 October 1945, at the conference in San Francisco, the UN founding nations, with Ukraine among them, put aside all contradictions and got united to build a better world together.

Undoubtedly, during these 75 years numerous achievements were made in terms of economic development, poverty eradication, minimization of wars and cataclysms that could have happened was it not for the United Nations. The humanity conquered the Space, and even can hold UN sessions remotely thanks to modern technologies.

Speaking the language of these technologies, the UN has become a software that saved the world from critical errors.

At the same time, we have to acknowledge that the system is getting glitched more and more. It is being attacked by new “bugs” or “viruses”. And their containment is not always efficient.

I am saying it as the Head of a state in which in the 21st century the Russian Federation annexed the Crimean Peninsula. Head of the state, which is containing Russia’s military aggression in Donbas for the seventh year in a row.

What feelings would the founders of the United Nations have, had they known that 75 years later, in the center of Europe, there would be a war? That in Crimea

human rights would be flagrantly violated, that persecutions of Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars would be taking place. That militarization of the peninsula and water areas around it would be building up, which would undermine security balance of the Black Sea region. Would they change something in the UN Charter and mechanisms of the United Nations had they known that 75 years later, as a result of the war in Donbas, there would be 14,000 killed and almost 1.5 million people would lose their homes?

Undoubtedly, over the last year we proved that Ukraine really strives for peace. We managed to unblock the dialogue, we resumed meetings of the Normandy format leaders, we made substantial progress in mutual release of the detained persons. And starting from 27 July, there is a comprehensive ceasefire in place, which, despite attempts to disrupt it, still gives hope for achieving sustainable ceasefire. And it is badly needed to keep moving towards genuine peace.

The next steps on this way should become the withdrawal of unlawful military formations and armaments from the occupied territories, return of control over the state border, and, finally, restoring territorial integrity of Ukraine within the internationally recognized borders.

We are grateful to our international partners for the help and support on this difficult way. We hope for further unity of the international community on this cause. I'm convinced that it is the United Nations that should play an important role in restoring sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, along with respect of the international law. We need to improve the existing mechanisms to this end.

It is unacceptable when sovereignty of the independent state is violated by one of the permanent members of the UN Security Council. It ultimately proves that the mechanisms of the 1945 do not work today to the full extent. All this can bring about further depreciation of the Security Council. Ukraine will actively participate in its reform. This body should become more representative, balanced, transparent and efficient. It is in the United Nations' vested interest to have an effective instrument if somebody is violating and abusing the veto right and the status of the permanent member.

In addition, availing myself of this opportunity I want to invite our friends to participate in the establishment of the international Crimea platform for concerted actions to protect the rights of the Crimeans and de occupy the peninsula.

I also call for support of the updated resolution "Situation with human rights in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol, Ukraine" that will be presented to the General Assembly by the end of this year.

And what is the most important — the cases of Crimea and Donbas should not become customary elements of the international landscape where only reports, conferences and protocol statements on the anniversaries of occupation will be taken as sufficient form of the international reaction.

On the contrary — until the wound in the center of Europe is bleeding, the pain will be felt all over the world. And the only recipe for the efficient treatment is the de-occupation of Crimea and Donbas.

I understand that from 2014 on this message is heard at the UN every year. But this is exactly where the biggest problem lies. And it is not only about the Ukrainian

case; it is about all global threats to the planet, reports on which are getting longer and longer with every passing year.

And what is the most terrifying is that calamities have become a new normal. The world got accustomed to horrible news. They still shock but are quickly forgotten once a new information bomb explodes on the global agenda.

At the last year's Assembly session, I said: "There is no more a notion of somebody else's war. Our planet is not that big anymore".

It is proved by the MH17 case. It is proved by the environmental threats. By problems with access to food and drinking water.

It is proved by information threats to the world. When disinformation and fake news can influence world markets, stock exchanges and even electoral processes.

Ukraine, being one of the countries that from 2014 on actively counteracts the propaganda and information attacks, stands ready to initiate the establishment in Kyiv of the headquarters of the international office to counter disinformation and propaganda.

The fact that our planet is not that big anymore was finally proved by the year 2020. Fires in Australia that shook the world. Or downing of a Boeing 737, when Ukrainian aircraft carrying the citizens of Ukraine, Canada, Iran, Afghanistan, United Kingdom and Sweden was struck down over the territory of Iran.

And of course — COVID-19 pandemic, which spread at a lightning speed. The mankind did not even manage to google "Covid" and "Wuhan" when coronavirus was already knocking on the door of every house.

Consider also this. Coronavirus spares no one. It does not care whether the country has nuclear weapons or what is the level of its GDP, whether the state is part of G7 or G20, whether Christianity, Islam, Judaism or other religions are professed in this country. All of it matters nothing for COVID.

The COVID-19 showed that global world is not just the world without borders. It is also about global responsibility, when counteracting joint threats should involve not 7, not 20, but at least 193 countries.

Today we are coming to understanding that the fight against COVID-19 will not take just one year. It is hardly the last pandemic that we will have to see through. That is why we have to emerge from the existing crisis stronger and well prepared.

This is the test for all countries. A race for limited resources will only exacerbate the problems. What we need is sincerity in dialogue and active solidarity, because this is where the value of multilateralism lies.

We have to overcome together the most serious economic crisis of the last years. The expected figures of GDP fall are sometimes double-digit. This is not just the statistics interesting for selected experts. This is the reduction of quality of life of billions of people, looming rise of a threat of hunger for millions.

To unite efforts of all the countries is a must of our time. Ukraine cannot stand aside and is ready to make its own contribution in ensuring, in particular, the food security of the mankind.

Mr. President,

Every year the call for actions instead of talks is getting louder and louder in the General Assembly. It testifies to the crisis the United Nations, the security architecture, the health of humanity, our economies and the world as a whole find themselves in.

The 75th anniversary of the UN foundation should become an impetus for transforming our Organization into a more dynamic and efficient body.

I really want to start my speech in 2021 by saying that the 75th General Assembly session will come down in history as an example of returning to active multilateralism and efficient international solidarity.

A session which did not only recall the Purposes and Principles of the UN Charter but started to permanently and unwaveringly follow them.

A session which revived the truth that was fundamental when the UN was established: we don't have a planet B. We live here and just once.

And this is exactly the future we want, and this is exactly the UN we need. I sincerely wish you, Mr. President, to achieve this goal, along with all stakeholders. I am convinced that these are 193 UN Member States.

Thank you for attention.

Suriname (see A/75/PV.7, annex IV)

Address by Mr. Chandrikapersad Santokhi, President of the Republic of Suriname

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

Your Excellency Volkan Bozkir, President of the General Assembly Your Excellency António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations Excellencies, Colleagues, Ministers and Permanent Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Introduction

Mr. President,

We are indeed at an unprecedented time during the historic anniversary for this global body of Nations. It would have been an honour for me to personally deliver my maiden address at the rostrum of the General Assembly. The onset and continued prevalence of COVID-19 has prevented this. Thankfully we can make optimal use of modern technology.

As President of the 75th session of the General Assembly you will undoubtedly face challenges in the conduct of international relations and conference diplomacy. Please allow me to pledge our full support in the successful discharge of your duties.

We salute your predecessor, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande, for his skillful leadership of the previous session and wish him well in his future endeavors.

To Secretary-General António Guterres, we wish to pay tribute for his sterling efforts in guiding this organization.

Mr. President,

The COVID-19 pandemic is, apart from the human toll, turning food supply chains upside down, paralysing economies and eroding consumer purchasing power.

And the United Nations World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) mid 2020 report, has confirmed what we as leaders and communities have experienced, that the pandemic has unleashed a health and economic crisis unprecedented in scope and magnitude.

This compels us as an international community to embrace multilateralism as an effective way to win this battle and our best defense against future global threats, and to continue seeking effective means to support small and vulnerable nations.

The theme of this years' session of the General Debate is therefore opportune.

Mr. President,

The United Nations remains the premier international multilateral organization and should exert its eminent role and place in the development and furthering of the principles pertaining to international relations, international law, international peace and — development.

At the same time, the UN has been instrumental in bringing the world together to defend human rights, democracy and democratic institutions, uphold the rule of

law, and good governance, sustain peace and security and advance the path towards realizing the 17 sustainable development goals.

Despite considerable progress made in global discussions on a variety of matters — from climate change, sustainable development, migration, refugees, terrorism, cyber-warfare to nuclear proliferation — we have experienced that multilateralism has occasionally come under attack.

Since the founding of the United Nations 75 years ago, the geopolitical field has changed drastically. The Security Council membership and its working methods need a structured evaluation.

Can you imagine that we have been elaborating for more than two (2) decades about reform of this main Organ!

It is therefore fitting to ask ourselves if this organ is still relevant in its current form. Does it answer to the questions of today's challenges and aspirations?

I hope, Mr. President, that we don't have to ask ourselves this question again in 75 years!

It is therefore of utmost importance that multilateralism adapts to these changing times.

I call on the international community of nations to embark on a strategic assessment of the existing multilateral framework.

Let us , based on the current realities, and challenges, dare to create a new multilateralism that fundamentally focuses on peace and prosperity of all nations and allows for the increased efficiency in the supporting institutional framework.

A multilateralism, that acknowledges all nations, irrespective of their size and development level and place in the global order, as equal and with respect.

A multilateralism where compliance by every state with international law and internationally accepted principles forms the bedrock of our interactions;

A multilateralism, based on international cooperation to confront the many global challenges and seizing the common opportunities, that promotes a culture of inclusiveness and equality.

Unilateral actions have always proven counterproductive and will never lead to achieve any defined objective. Nevertheless, dialogue and the active involvement of all countries, taking into account international principles, is what we should strive for.

More importantly, mr. President, a multilateralism that necessitates us to recommit to the vision of the UN Charter.

In this regard, we call for the lifting of the longstanding unilateral economic, financial and commercial embargo against the Republic of Cuba and its people.

Multilateralism for climate change

Mr. President,

While the focus of the international community is currently on managing and containing the further spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, we should continue to

dedicate our attention to other challenges of equal or even greater impact on the sustainable development of countries and the entire planet.

Addressing the impact of climate change is one of these challenges.

As a country with 239 miles of a low-lying coastline, Suriname is among the top 10 of most vulnerable countries with respect to the disastrous effects of sea-level rise as a result of global warming.

Despite this position, Suriname has taken the lead as the country with the highest forest cover and low deforestation rate, to advocate for the mobilization of financial resources in support of our sustainable development, while making a significant contribution to mitigating global warming.

It is estimated that our standing forests store 12 gigatons of forest carbon per year. Not a small contribution at all, I believe!

However, these national commitments may only serve particular domestic concerns, but to maximize their impact strong international engagement is necessary with ambitious and attainable targets.

Suriname will focus strongly on generating investment and business opportunities. It is mainly for this reason that my Administration will develop and act on the widest implementation of SDG Number 17, by the promotion and facilitation of clean and corruption free Public Private Partnerships (PPP).

Reform of the international system

Mr. President,

In the past years we have realized reforms of the United Nations system, but much remains to be done.

Participation of developing countries, especially the small economies, in the global financial and trading system is one of the long overdue reforms that has to take place.

I believe that global strategic collaboration and complimentary financial — economic approaches are required. This can be achieved through closer partnerships between the IMF, World Bank and the WTO.

The way forward

Mr. President,

Developing countries and nations in the South should not be passive in their quest for development.

Consequently, South-South cooperation, not to the exclusion of North-South relations, should be further explored and expanded in articulating and promoting the collective economic and business interests.

This is in essence what our people elect us for. This is what the international community expects of its leaders, to be examples of inspiring leadership and vanguards of hope for our common humanity.

It is the same hope that allows us to break down walls of mistrust, which may take the form of intolerance, fear, or violence. It is the same hope that leads us to strive for peace and prosperity as our predecessors did.

It is particularly this hope that will give the upcoming generation of leaders the strength to elevate this global Assembly of World Leaders to a place where, collectively, the nations of the world should find ways to make a better life possible for all of the global community, for the next 75 years.

I congratulate all of us with reaching this milestone anniversary. Let us all in unity, respect and solidarity strive to make the next 75 years even better and save for our future.

I thank you.

Switzerland (see A/75/PV.7, annex V)

Address by Ms. Simonetta Sommaruga, President of the Swiss Confederation

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

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

Mr President of the General Assembly,
Mr Secretary-General,
Distinguished Heads of State and government,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

There are moments that leave their mark for generations. The founding of the United Nations seventy-five years ago was one such moment. For this, we can be grateful to our parents.

Are we nevertheless permitted to take a critical look at the UN today? — Yes, we are... We even have to.

In fact, seventy-five years on and there are still wars, there are more refugees and displaced people than ever before, there is a climate crisis currently without a solution, millions are going hungry and we haven't achieved gender equality.

We could criticise the UN for this — but who are we really talking about, when we blame “the UN”? We are in fact talking about ourselves, because the UN is its Member States. And it is often Member States that stand in the way of the UN's work. They block decisions or refuse to implement them, undermine resolutions or flout their principles.

This weakens the UN. And it weakens all of us, too. If we want a strong UN, then we — Member States — must strongly support the organisation and work together to pursue its objectives. Because the goals of the UN are our goals.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We live in an era marked by geopolitical tensions. Many States are also increasingly polarised in their internal affairs.

More than ever, the UN is indispensable for the promotion of peace and security in the world. It embodies the causes of human rights, sustainable development and a world governed by the rule of law. We would do well to work together to achieve the goals of the UN because they benefit all of us and they make us stronger.

My country is proud to contribute to the achievement of the UN's goals, even if it is not always easy. It is difficult to translate the goals we have set ourselves — on climate or gender equality for example — into national policy. But that is why all of us politicians are elected: to offer our respective populations and humanity as a whole a decent life in freedom and security.

My country also advocates for an international order regulated by the rule of law. We are committed to international humanitarian law and to the prevention of conflicts, and we provide good offices wherever they are desired. My country is prepared to take on more responsibilities, which is why for the first time, Switzerland is a candidate for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the period 2023–2024.

Switzerland of course wholeheartedly supports the Secretary General's appeal for a global ceasefire. But beyond such an appeal, is there anything else we can do?

We must put even more effort into preventing conflicts. Here too, human rights must remain at the centre of our action. "International Geneva" also contributes to conflict prevention, for example by hosting the Human Rights Council and the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat.

By prosecuting the worst crimes, the International Criminal Court is contributing to uphold international humanitarian law. We reaffirm here our support for the International Criminal Court as an integral part of a rules-based international order. To facilitate debate on the best ways to adhere to these humanitarian norms, Switzerland was one of the first countries to publish a voluntary report on its national implementation. My country would welcome it if other countries followed.

While it is right to try to prevent conflicts and to seek to mitigate their worst humanitarian consequences, it is also crucial to find lasting solutions to the conflicts that are ongoing. As the capital of peace, "International Geneva" contributes to this by providing a space for dialogue between the parties to a conflict.

Switzerland's peace policy draws on essential characteristics of my country's political culture, such as power-sharing, openness to dialogue, tolerance and consideration of everyone's interests. In the future, Switzerland intends to further step up its capacities and expertise in mediation and facilitation in order to support those who wish to end conflicts through dialogue.

Ladies and gentlemen,

While "International Geneva" contributes to peace and security in the world, it is also the seat of the World Health Organization, which has played such a crucial role since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The current health crisis has caused untold suffering in the world. The most vulnerable have been hit hardest: the child in the overcrowded displacement camp; the single mother who has lost her job; the young adult whose job prospects have been destroyed; or elderly people and the sick, who are particularly at risk.

My country is coping with this pandemic as best it can.

The World Health Organization plays a central part in fighting the pandemic. As host state of the WHO and other international health organisations, Switzerland is committed to ensuring that they can take effective action. For this to happen, the WHO must have sufficient resources and the support of all of us to carry out its reforms. Is it fair to demand so much from this organisation when 80% of its funding comes from voluntary contributions?

Beyond the necessary fight against the current pandemic, we must think now about the world that will emerge from this crisis and that cannot entirely be

yesterday's. If every crisis is a suffering, it is also a moment of change that allows us to reinvent ourselves.

So let's reinvent ourselves, keeping in mind the goals we set for ourselves when the UN was created seventy-five years ago.

Ladies and gentlemen,

There are moments that leave their mark for generations. Such moments require decisive and courageous action. This is true today. From my country's perspective, the most urgent tasks are to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement, and to step up our efforts for peace.

It is up to us — the political representatives of our countries — to take the right decisions for the good of our fellow human beings and our planet. Let us assume this responsibility.

Let us strengthen the UN's capacity to act, and ensure that the decisions we make today will be a source of pride for generations of tomorrow.

Serbia (see A/75/PV.7, annex VI)

Address by Mr. Aleksandar Vučić, President of the Republic of Serbia

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

Your Excellencies,

The 75th UN anniversary and the 75th anniversary of the signing of the UN Charter is an important jubilee for the entire mankind.

The Republic of Serbia strongly supports multilateralism and principles of the UN Charter.

Sovereign equality of the countries, denial of use of force, non-interference in internal matters of other countries, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity, peaceful resolution of conflicts and respect for differences are the principles whose validity has never been and must never be questioned.

Big changes in the international scene brought by the 21st century only make the need for strict observation of the UN Charter and its well-known basic principles stronger.

In this year of big jubilees, we mark at the same time the 75th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. As a representative of a country and people who suffered a lot and had many victims in fighting Nazism and fascism, I want to convey that it is our common duty to keep the memory and learn from the most devastating conflict in modern history, as well as to jointly confront any attempt of relativization of ferocious crimes from the Second World War. Only with the help of lessons learned from the bitter past we can build a new, brighter vision of future.

The Republic of Serbia is not among the big countries, neither by its territory nor by its population.

That is why the United Nations General Assembly is a place of utmost significance, a place where the small ones as well have the right and opportunity to make their points, and defend them with arguments.

That is why I am honored to address you today on behalf of the Republic of Serbia, a country that is firmly committed to the policy of peace and prosperity for the entire mankind.

The debate we are having today in virtual format speaks for itself about the situation of today's world and it is a confirmation that we must do anything to preserve and strengthen the United Nations and the General Assembly, as the most important forum where opinions of all member states on the most important topics of global importance can be heard.

The topic of this year's debate reminds us of the importance of multilateralism as the founding principal of the United Nations. We firmly believe that only by joint actions, mutual harmonization and respect, answers can be found in facing global challenges such as the ongoing Pandemic of the Communicable Disease COVID-19.

The pandemic additionally emphasized the need for close and intensive international cooperation, whereby UN and its specialized agencies and organizations,

like the World Health Organization, have the irreplaceable role in organized response to newly occurred challenges that are not only of a health nature, but they also have socio-economic, political and security dimension.

COVID-19 pandemic strongly confirms the need and necessity of existence and strengthening of the role of the United Nations. The relevance of this forum must never be questioned.

We firmly believe that only by mutual cooperation, harmonization of positions and mutual respect, a global response in facing this modern plague can be found.

The United Nations we need, both today and in the future, must be adapted to newly occurred circumstances and ready for joint response to the modern age challenges.

In that regard, the existing situation is the opportunity we must take for promoting system of international coordination and support.

Precisely in that regard the United Nations must have a key role and that is why we need to work continuously on adapting, strengthening and efficiency of the United Nations system, because it is the best way towards full achievement of the idea of multilateralism.

Newly occurred reality in the world is another proof that modern challenges know no borders of the countries.

Serbia is also facing problems in fighting this disease that caused tectonic changes worldwide and we received assistance of the friendly countries when we needed it the most, and I take this opportunity to thank them once again.

I have to say many thanks to our European partners, to our Chinese friends, and to our Russian friends as well.

Likewise, we showed solidarity and provided assistance to other countries and we will keep helping those who need it most in these difficult times.

I avail myself of this opportunity to extend big gratitude for help and support provided by the United Nations and the World Health Organization to the Government of the Republic of Serbia in fighting pandemic.

On the other hand, and beside already allocated financial support for strengthening response of healthcare systems to COVID-19, we will keep supporting the World Health Organization, as well as the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovation (CEPI) as a leading stakeholder in the field of immunization.

Even though the pandemic has shaken the strongest world economies, I have to say that Serbia managed to keep stable budget, as well as the entire fiscal and monetary system which is fully prepared to withhold assistance measures for economy, which is open for potential investment plans.

We invested huge efforts in order to help survival of our economy, firstly thanks to disciplined and responsible management of public finance. Despite of the crisis effects, Serbia has excellent results in economy in the first two quarters of this year and we have strong reasons to believe that by the end of the year we will remain among the most stable economies in Europe.

We are not a rich country, and I will say also that we are not a poor country, but we hope that by the end of the year we'll have the biggest growth rate in entire Europe. So far, in the first six months, we became the first country — at least the country with the biggest growth rate, and I hope that we will be able to continue in the same manner.

Dear Friends,

Full membership to the European Union is a foreign policy priority of the Republic of Serbia. However, our European path does not exclude commitment to development of cooperation and deepening relations with countries from all regions. We cherish partnership relations with the Western countries, including more intensive cooperation with the USA, but at the same time we are proud of exceptional relations with the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China. And, as you can see, we don't hide that, we are very proud of our friendships. Cooperation with friendly African, Asia-Pacific and Latin American countries is also in the focus of our foreign policy activities.

Additionally, improvement of regional cooperation is the basic starting point of our foreign policy and we believe that in relations with our neighbors we have acted as a responsible and reliable partner. We are committed to preservation of regional stability and intensifying cooperation in all areas, being that it contributes to reconciliation process, closer connectivity and development and it is to the benefit of the citizens of the entire region.

We are aware of the seriousness and complexity of the problem in relations with some of our neighbors and we are committed to resolving them exclusively through dialogue, taking into consideration interests of all interested parties.

In that context, Serbia strives to put special emphasis on the development of economic cooperation, believing that such approach may contribute to raising mutual trust, confidence, and thereby easier resolving of open issues.

Guided precisely by the need to promote economic cooperation and create favorable investment climate in the Western Balkans region, in the fall of 2019, together with the Prime Minister of the North Macedonia and Albania, Zoran Zaev and Edi Rama, we inaugurated the initiative directed towards enabling freedom of movement of people, goods, services and capital, and much closer cooperation between our three countries.

I want to underline that the initiative is open for other stakeholders from the Western Balkans and I hereby invite them to join, being that its essence is to be fully inclusive for everybody in our region.

We believe that European perspective of the region was and remains important incentive for necessary reform processes and promotion of cooperation. We believe that without full integration of the Western Balkans to the EU, common economic and political space in the European continent will not be complete and we are convinced that enlargement policy is not only in the interest of the citizens of the Western Balkans, but also in the interest of the European Union.

I am pleased that even in this difficult period caused by the COVID-19 pandemic a very high level of mutual solidarity in the region was demonstrated, which is to a great extent precisely the result of constructive and proactive relationship that Serbia has been building in previous years with its neighbors. We have cooperated

intensively with regional countries related to both repatriation of citizens and related to issues of humanitarian and medical assistance, but also regular supply of goods.

Decision on establishing “Green Corridors” in our region was a useful one, which enabled smooth transport of assistance, without delays at border and administrative crossing points.

Your Excellencies,

You are familiar with our problem regarding preservation of the territorial integrity of Serbia, i.e. efforts to resolve — despite all the obstacles, the issue of our Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija. Precisely the politics of Serbia for preservation of peace and stability, cooperation and economic progress I’ve mentioned earlier, is a sufficient incentive for approaching resolving this long lasting problem, in the best interest of the both Serbs and Albanians.

On this path, we were and we will face numerous pressures because Serbia is at the crossroads where different political interests collide. We believe that it will be possible to reach a solution after the long and difficult dialogue, but rest assured that Serbia will never agree to humiliations. Accepting anything that is not compromise is not for us. And, by compromise, both sides must be equally either satisfied or dissatisfied.

Recent renewal of the Belgrade-Priština dialogue under the EU auspices, after almost two years of deadlock, is by all means the first step on that path.

Additionally, big step forward in finding mutually acceptable solution for the issue of Kosovo and Metohija is a recent signing of the agreement on economic normalization in Washington, D.C., which involves a set of economic and infrastructure projects, which should enable better life for all citizens in that part of our country and of our region.

I take this opportunity to underline and praise very constructive and important role that the administration of the President of the United States of America Donald Trump played in reaching this agreement, which is an important signal of their commitment in finding lasting and sustainable solution for this important issue.

Dialogue between Belgrade and Provisional Institutions of Self-Government in Priština, which has continued in Brussels with the EU intermediation, is the real path for reaching sustainable agreement between two sides, but the starting point can by no means be humiliating and unacceptable so-called independence of Kosovo.

Despite of everything, we believe that the agreement between Serbs and Albanians is a key to regional stability. The Republic of Serbia remains committed to finding compromise solution for the issue of Kosovo and to building common future with the politics of peace and cooperation.

Ladies and Gentlemen, Your Excellencies,

The Republic of Serbia is not committed only to peace and security as well as to social and economic prosperity in the national and regional dimension, but it is also aware of the importance of active engagement in these areas globally. We attach big importance to the UN efforts in promoting and preserving peace and security worldwide and we actively participate in the collective security system.

By continuing the tradition of Yugoslavia's participation in UN peacekeeping missions, started in 1956, representatives of Serbia are actively engaged in UN and EU peacekeeping missions. It is with great pride that we underline that we are the leading country in the Western Balkans region, and the 9th biggest contributor on the list of leading European armed and police forces in UN missions.

Additionally, Serbia will continue contributing fight against terrorism through full implementation of the UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy and relevant Resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

Adoption of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 as well as Paris Climate Change Agreement are key steps in facing some of the biggest challenges today — global economic instability, growing social inequality and climate change effects.

Dear Friends,

The UN Charter should be a "Constitution" of the modern international community, collection of basic principles regulating international relations and processes in international community one must not stand back from.

Unfortunately, at the very end of the 20th century, in my country we were witnesses and victims of unilateral measures and activities that undermine and question not only the efficiency of multilateralism and international cooperation mechanisms, but the international law itself.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, at that time, was bombed without the consent of the United Nations Security Council, whereby the UN Charter was most severely violated.

After that, with a unilateral action by which the Provisional Institutions of the Self-Government in Priština declared independence of the so-called Kosovo, UN SC Resolution 1244 (1999) was violated and stability of the Republic of Serbia, but also of the entire region, was seriously endangered. Let me remind you that the Republic of Serbia is fully committed to finding compromise solution for the issue of Kosovo and Metohija. Our politics is a responsible one; we do everything to protect the interests of our people, but also regional peace and stability.

By defending its sovereignty and territorial integrity and by observing the UN SC Resolution 1244 (1999), the Republic of Serbia at the same time defends the international law, the UN Charter as well as the supremacy of the Security Council.

We believe that it is essential to further strengthen in the upcoming period efforts for preservation of principles this Organization was founded on 75 years ago. We are convinced that the role of the United Nations in these processes was and remains irreplaceable. Rest assured that the Republic of Serbia will continue to act as a serious and reliable partner in achieving common goals, strengthening cooperation within the United Nations and building better future for all of us.

Like I have already said, the Republic of Serbia is not within the group of big Countries, neither by its territory nor by its population. But, judging by its culture and contribution to science, our Country is among the most developed nations.

UNESCO which with special piety emphasizes our medieval art and I dare say the most significant man of the 20th and 21st century, our scientist Nikola Tesla, proves our contribution to civilization and common good. The time frame between

the White Angel fresco, the first painting that went to Orbit, and Tesla, covers the period from renaissance to our contemporaries.

In its striving towards lasting peace and common wellbeing, Serbia obliged itself to military neutrality. We rightly believe that it is one of the strongest messages of peace that went from the Balkans to the world.

The great American artist Isidora Duncan said after the Great War:

“Violence by the big and powerful can often be turned against them. The best example that the great should not brutalize the small is the example of the small Serbian nation, which put an end to an empire that had lasted almost a thousand years.”

Serbia despises any kind of violence. Serbia wants peace and prosperity, for itself and for the entire mankind. Serbia wants peace for its region.

Thank you for your attention and stay safe.

Guyana (see A/75/PV.7, annex VII)

Address by Mr. Mohamed Irfaan Ali, President of the Co-operative Republic of Guyana

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr. President,

The Republic of Guyana congratulates you on your election as President of the 75th Session of the General Assembly of United Nations. I wish you a successful tenure as you guide the work of the Assembly over the next year. I assure you of the support of Guyana as you contribute to fashioning the United Nations that we need in order to realize the future we want.

I join in thanking His Excellency Tijjani Muhammad-Bande of Nigeria for his sterling leadership of the 74th Session, especially through the unprecedented circumstances occasioned by the COVID-19 crisis.

It would be remiss of me if I did not commend Secretary-General Guterres and his team for their resolve and ingenuity in organising this Assembly in a virtual format for the first time. It is a reminder that every tool at our disposal must be employed to serve the best interests of humanity.

Mr. President,

My government assumed office on the 2 August this year. I take this opportunity to commend the international community, including the United Nations for defending the democratic rights of our citizens.

My government is committed to greater political inclusion and to enacting institutional reforms to ensure that democracy, the rule of law and constitutional rights are respected. My Government recognizes the dignity and worth of the human person and is determined to secure for the country's citizens a higher standard of living.

I join in congratulating the United Nations on its 75th anniversary. I hope that we can soon meet in more normal circumstances to formally celebrate this momentous milestone.

The United Nations was birthed 75 years ago amidst the scars of war and the promise of reconstruction. The international community conceived the United Nations and entrusted its hope in this body to usher in an era of peace and prosperity.

The Charter of the United Nations commits to ending the scourge of war, fostering respect for human rights, promoting the dignity of the human person, securing equality for men women and nations, defending the principles of international law and advancing human freedoms and social progress.

Every nation, no matter how large or small, has but a single vote within this Assembly. The General Assembly remains an invaluable fora where small states can make their voices heard and unite for their mutual benefit.

Developing states in particular owe a great debt to this Organization. Its agencies and affiliated networks — including the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF),

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) — have been instrumental in alleviating poverty, hunger and famine; saving and caring for lives; ensuring respect for human rights; promoting greater equality for women; safeguarding children; promoting the environment and providing technical assistance to developing states.

Mr. President,

I ask you all to cast your minds back to 2015, and the three pivotal UN conferences that took place during that year. In June, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa, addressed the main challenge facing developing nations — accessing development financing. In September, the Assembly hosted the Sustainable Development Summit and adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals which UN members agreed to realize by the year 2030. Most importantly, the Climate Change Summit in Paris culminated in the historic Paris Agreement. The Paris Agreement on climate change represents the single greatest commitment made by countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These three events exemplified the true character of this organization — the nations of the world uniting to boldly tackle these threat and to promote sustainable development.

The United Nations, armed with the lofty but ambitious vision of global security and prosperity, remains as relevant and necessary today as it was in 1945. The world has changed remarkably in ensuing 75 years but the United Nations has also adapted to and been an agent of change.

Among the changes which the United Nations has witnessed was the proliferation of newly-independent states, following the end of the Second World War. Many of these newly-independent states are developing countries which account for more than half of the world's states and population.

The United Nations make-up, inclusive of the Security Council, must reflect this reality. The Security Council, in particular, should be reformed to increase the number of developing countries that are permanent members.

Mr. President,

Developing countries continue to face constraints associated by limited access to development financing. Improved access to such financing is vital for the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals. The United Nations must continue to champion the need for great access to development financing for developing states.

The UN has a special duty to ensure that members' obligations under international agreements are fulfilled and that setbacks in meeting commitments are reversed. Guyana applause the ongoing work on reform of the United Nations development system (UNDS). We believe, however, that there should be greater focus on reforms that are tailored to allow the UN to respond adequately to existing and emerging gaps in development and to find solutions to existing threats.

Mr. President,

Multilateralism is the key to unlocking solutions to humanity's problems. The ongoing public health and climate crises have demonstrated that it is in the common interest of humanity that we fully embrace the ideals of multilateralism.

As a testimony to Guyana's commitment to multilateralism, in January of this year we assumed the Chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China. Our statement to the world is that a state's capacity for leadership is not constrained by its size.

A product of our multilateral efforts is the United Nations development agenda. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains a viable plan of action to shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path. In this critical Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development, we must be fully focused on eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions. No one must be left behind.

At this time, an earnest and thorough assessment of the development agenda is warranted, with a view to recommitting ourselves to its aims. It is therefore regrettable that we missed the opportunity to adopt a robust outcome document at the conclusion of the 2020 High-Level segment of the Economic and Social Council and the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development.

Global partnerships for development had never been more urgent in order to mobilize the means to implement the 'Agenda'. My government believes that both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should play a more proactive role in catalyzing partnerships and should serve as platforms for ensuring coherence in the joint economic, environmental, and socio-political initiatives being undertaken.

Now more than ever, we need a resurgence of political will and commitment to protect the multilateral architecture and institutions, including the International Court of Justice. Guyana reposes confidence in this institution. We are committed to the rule of international law, inclusive of the peaceful resolution of disputes.

In March 2018, Guyana filed its application in the International Court of Justice seeking an affirmation of the validity of the 1899 Arbitral Award and the international boundary that it established. We are happy to report that on the 30th of June, 2020 the International Court of Justice held its first virtual hearing on the controversy involving Guyana and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. Regrettably, Venezuela has refused to participate in the hearing. Guyana now awaits the determination of the International Court of Justice on whether the Court has jurisdiction to proceed to hearing the merits of the case.

Mr. President,

As we consider the state of our world today, we must acknowledge the challenges facing us and their implications for the progress and prosperity of our peoples. Foremost on the list is the COVID-19 pandemic and its multidimensional impacts. The pandemic has launched an attack on the health and well-being of our people while the economy has become a causality of this assault. The pandemic is reversing our gains on health, poverty and education.

More than ever, the resolve of the United Nations is being tested and it is evident that no single country can overcome the debilitating effects alone. This reality must inform the trajectory of the United Nations so that it can support the efforts of developing countries to rebuild and to become more resilient.

A strong multilateral system is required for collective action to stem this pandemic. I acknowledge the support of UN agencies in my country's response to the COVID-19 crisis. We trust and support the efforts of the UN system to ensure fair, transparent and timely global access to preventive tools, equipment and

materials for testing. In this regard, we recognize the important role of the World Health Organization in coordinating the response of the UN system and in global public health preparedness and response. We look forward to increased international cooperation to contain, mitigate and defeat the pandemic.

Mr. President,

Competing and compounded by the pandemic is climate change. Every year is another record breaking year for extreme weather conditions and climate events. As a low-lying coastal State, Guyana, is acutely aware of the high toll of these extreme weather conditions. But equally costly is climate resilience. Developing countries are thus set between a rock and a hard place. The only way to ease this burden is through concerted and balanced climate action, especially via mitigation, climate financing, technical cooperation and capacity building. We also urge all States to set ambitious targets in their Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement and to work earnestly towards them.

Guyana's Low Carbon Development Strategy (LCDS) reflects our national development agenda. The strategy will ensure that we fulfill our Nationally Determined Contributions and place our country along a path of sustainable and climate-resilient development.

Mr. President,

Progress on the Sustainable Development Agenda will be impeded by conflicts. We therefore must continue to devote our collective efforts towards the achievement of peace in every region of the globe.

Mr. President,

The future we want and the United Nations that we need are in our hands. It is ours to fashion. History must not find us victims of inaction or succumbing to failure.

Multilateralism is the pathway to achieving our ends. We must collectively work to preserve this instrument and to strengthen the United Nations as we build a better world for our generation and those to follow.

I thank you.

And God bless all the people of this planet, thank you.

Paraguay (see A/75/PV.7, annex VIII)**Address by Mr. Mario Abdo Benítez, President of the Republic of Paraguay***Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly*

[Original: Spanish]

President of the General Assembly,

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

As the Assembly is a virtual event, I extend warm greetings to everyone at this difficult time amid the pandemic. We are united more than ever before in the spirit of solidarity.

I welcome and congratulate Ambassador Volkan Bozkir on his election as President of the General Assembly and wish him success. I also welcome Secretary-General António Guterres and thank him for his work.

Mr. President,

The coronavirus changed everyone's life, brought with it much pain and uncertainty, led to the loss of countless lives and put strong pressure on the health systems of all countries.

I agree with German Chancellor Angela Merkel that it is the greatest challenge since the Second World War.

The health crisis also led to an economic crisis that destroyed jobs and caused debt and challenges in making payments. No country was prepared for it. That is why I believe that the multilateral financial institutions should redesign their strategies to promote economic recovery that is more humane, supportive and substantial.

Excellencies,

Today's world presents us with problems that cannot be addressed in isolation. That is why the deepening of multilateralism is an effective tool for responding to the needs we share, such as the quest for peace, the protection of human rights, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, protection of the environment, the fight against climate change, and international trade based on principles and rules. We therefore underscore the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as a road map that should guide us towards a more equitable world for future generations.

Landlocked developing countries have special needs and particular challenges that must be addressed. In this regard, Paraguay stresses the importance of the effective implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action on this issue, in particular by transit countries.

In the spirit of integration that seeks to boost trade and achieve mutual benefits for economies and societies, Paraguay is committed to the early signing of the agreement between MERCOSUR and the European Union, as well as with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).

Ladies and gentlemen,

I again endorse Paraguay's commitment to protecting life, family and human rights, as set out in our Constitution.

Therefore, we strongly condemn terrorism and criminal groups that today use children and adolescents as human shields to protect themselves. They exploit and expose them to violence, indoctrinate them and train them in the use of weapons. Children, who should be in their homes, are used by criminals who resort to kidnapping, extortion and drug trafficking to support themselves. It leaves painful scars on our families. Paraguay is affected by it.

This leads me to underscore the duty to protect the inhabitants of my country from these criminal groups that seek to justify their illicit conduct with narratives camouflaged by ideology and supported by propaganda designed to distort the truth. Illegality is bold when covered up; it is very skilled in acquiring the attributes of good will and altruism, but Paraguay refuses to be deceived. We will not rest until the full weight of the law is brought to bear on them.

The doors of my country will remain open to international organizations offering to support us and verify our efforts.

Paraguay acts with transparency and remains committed to the law.

Mr. President,

Paraguay supports the reform of the Security Council to make it more inclusive and responsive to threats to international peace and security. We will also continue to contribute troops to peacekeeping operations, as we have done for decades.

Distinguished delegates,

The Venezuelan diaspora is the second largest in the world. More than 5 million Venezuelans have been forced to emigrate to our countries. I again express my solidarity with the Venezuelan people as they continue to suffer. Paraguay will continue to support the international condemnation of human rights violations in Venezuela.

Based on the principle of universality for which the Organization is known, we support Taiwan's request to be included in the United Nations system.

We also welcome the historic establishment of diplomatic relations between the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain and Israel, under the auspices of the United States of America. We hope that these new ties will contribute to peace and prosperity in the Middle East.

Excellencies,

Only by working together to achieve our common purpose and build a modern international architecture and by rising to the occasion can we achieve the results that our people need and expect from us.

I leave you with the words of His Holiness Pope Francis: "When we emerge from this pandemic, we will no longer be able to do what we have been doing and how we have been doing it. No, everything will be different ... From the great trials of humanity, including the pandemic, we emerge either better or worse. We do not come out the same".

May our meeting, which demonstrates solidarity, be constant and help us to come out better.

Afghanistan (see A/75/PV.7, annex IX)

Address by Mr. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

Bismillah Rahman-ur-Rahim

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen,

We, the peoples of the United Nations, this year observe our 75th anniversary. We do so at a time of unprecedented global turmoil. All of us here today share a common condition — a condition that does not distinguish between developed or developing countries. This turmoil that defines our times is a global phenomenon. And while all of us bear a share of the burden of this turmoil, some countries bear a much larger share than others.

Afghanistan is one such country. We find ourselves simultaneously at the centre of regional opportunity and also at the centre of the manifestation of global problems. Afghanistan is positioned right at the heart of Asia. Our water ties us together; our cultures and languages give us a common denominator. South Asia's need for energy resources and Central Asia's abundance of them makes Afghanistan a critical connector. Asia cannot integrate without us. We are right at the heart of untapped potential that could bring prosperity and peace to our region. But this means that we are also right in the middle of the turmoil that is affecting us all today. We are experiencing the worst of it. But Afghanistan could be a model for successfully overcoming the turmoil we all face. That task, like the turmoil, is one that belongs to all of us.

We must first identify the drivers of this turmoil. There are five sources, all of which Afghanistan has been dealing with simultaneously. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed our vulnerabilities, to the point that we, as a global community, could no longer afford to ignore them. We Afghans were fortunate to have contained the first wave of the pandemic through close Government, business and societal cooperation, with minimal input from UN agencies, but the pandemic has exposed gaps in our systems that must be addressed.

The COVID-19 pandemic has done for us what World War II did for generations before us — both had such immense human costs and were phenomenon that had such a global impact that then, and now, we are forced to pay attention and take unprecedented action.

In the face of vulnerabilities exacerbated by the pandemic, another driver of inequality and unemployment is upending our world — the 4th industrial revolution. The digital age is upon us, challenging us to adapt the ways we consume, the ways we work, and the ways we govern.

In Afghanistan, we are experimenting with how to adapt so that this digital revolution can be wielded as a source of economic opportunity for our overwhelmingly young population, as well as a way to strengthen our systems of governance and rule of law. We are looking far ahead with the knowledge that if we try to replicate 19th or 20th century models now, they will become irrelevant as soon as we stabilize them.

The same can be said for global attempts to harness the drive of the 4th industrial revolution — we have to think ahead of our time.

This new kind of industrial revolution, combined with the pandemic, presented challenges in planning and executing this very gathering, and yet the UNGA leadership has managed to creatively transform this experience into one that is more efficient, effective, convenient and far less risky. I want to congratulate His Excellency Volkan Bozkir not only on assuming the Presidency of this 75th Session of the UNGA, but also for his success in overcoming the particular challenge of hosting a massive gathering of global leaders during the pandemic.

Violence and warfare have also evolved, an evolution we Afghans have witnessed and suffered in real time. We are living, and dying, inside the 5th wave of global terrorism, in which global terrorist networks are closely linked with global criminal networks, making warfare totally unconventional and peace-building even more of a challenge.

As a state and society, we have demonstrated the commitment, compassion and courage to take hard decisions to start direct peace talks with the Taliban. This won't be enough. For sustainable in Afghanistan, we must get to the root of the terrorism problem blighting our region and address it as the global phenomenon, and threat, that it is.

The untold sorrow of the Afghan people, particularly our women and children, during the last 40 years, serves as a reminder of the relevance of the UN Charter, and also of its unfulfilled promise, of “maintaining international peace and security.”

Climate change has effected another type of violence and suffering on our people. Afghanistan is the 17th worst affected country in the world.

Just last month, hundreds of Afghans were killed or injured, and had their entire homes and livelihoods destroyed, when massive flood waters ripped through the province of Parwan and 13 other provinces. Two years before, the other extreme — drought — led us to nation-wide wheat shortages and upended the livelihoods of the majority of our population who rely on jobs in agriculture to put food on their tables.

Drought and floods are seasonal occurrences for Afghanistan. We need regional solutions based on international models to address the problem of climate change.

We have signed memoranda of understanding with the Fortescue Metals Group to change Afghanistan into a leading green industry, energy and intend to produce 20,000 megawatts from hydro and use it to produce zero emissions steel and other products from an estimated \$1 trillion in mineral resources.

We are also in discussion with other corporations to turn 70,000 megawatts of wind, and 220,000 megawatts of solar into renewable energy, thereby become a hub for renewable energy and green industry in the region.

The fifth driver of turmoil is a culmination of the first four — an unprecedented explosion of inequality that will continue to perpetuate this state of turmoil, until — or unless — we take action. In Afghanistan we are focusing on human capital and human security to create the equality of opportunities for our fellow citizen and societal stability for our people.

I come back now to the first driver — the COVID-19 pandemic — because the scope and scale of its impact forced us to see the other four drivers, which were worsened and highlighted by the pandemic.

The pandemic taught us an urgent lesson: We can no longer ignore these drivers.

The cost of our inaction is uncertainty.

We are asking ourselves at this General Assembly what kind of future do we want to live in?

In truth, the extreme levels of uncertainty make the future very difficult to predict, but if I were to try and address that question my answer would be simple.

We have to get back to basics. We have to go back to the foundational values of the United Nations and the documents that enshrine them — the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — and we have to fulfill these yet-unfulfilled promises.

The future must hold, to quote the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, “ recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family,” which is truly the “foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

These values have been embraced the world over. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is today universal discourse. Its values have been reflected in almost all state constitutions since the demise of the Soviet Union.

But these values have not been actualized.

These should not be lofty ideals and aspirations of the international community. They should be achievable goals. In Afghanistan, they are urgent and real problems we grapple with daily.

What will it take to fulfill these promises of peace, prosperity, dignity, justice, and freedom?

To shape our shared future in a direction that will fulfill these promises for all of us will take unprecedented acts of cooperative and coordinated actions at all levels of the global village’s community, economy and governance.

We need frameworks for the future that present pragmatic solutions for collectively addressing and solving the five drivers of turmoil, particularly global terrorism and climate change.

This will require the type of imagination and leadership that gave us the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UN Charter and the capabilities that overcame the global turmoil inflicted on the world by the Second World War.

With these frameworks in place, we can get back to the foundational basics that the United Nations was created to address in the first place.

The United Nations that we need is an organization with the authorities, capabilities, capitals, and commitments to fulfill the purposes and principles of this Charter.

I would like to commend His Excellency Secretary-General Guterres for the progress made so far in his reform agenda for the UN. But we have much further

to go, and we all have a shared responsibility to shoulder in efforts to progress the sustainable development goals and progress peace, prosperity and security across the globe.

In Afghanistan, we are moving into the next five years with a clear plan for progressing the values of the UN, which are enshrined in our constitution, and working toward prosperity, security and peace in our own country.

Our plan is based on building our markets for economic development, moving from an aid to a trade model, increasing our labor and capital productivity in key areas in which we have a competitive advantage.

The objective is self-reliance, moving away from donor relationships to mutually beneficial partnerships.

At the same time, we will invest in strengthening state governance structures to create an environment conducive to growth. This means continuing to combat systemic corruption, improving our public financial management systems, and strengthen provincial and district level governance.

We are looking closely at the gaps and weaknesses exposed by the pandemic, and strengthening our systems for the long-term.

Though we are facing multiple drivers of turmoil all at once in Afghanistan, above all, peace remains our most urgent and important priority.

There is a passage from the preamble of the Charter of the United Nations that encapsulates our current goals for peace in Afghanistan. We want

“to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and... to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security”.

The role of the United Nations in standing for our shared values throughout the peace process is absolutely critical, and we thank the United Nations for their support so far throughout this arduous process. We thank the UN for their call for a global ceasefire.

The role of the UN and our international partners and allies will continue to be extremely important as our negotiating team sits across from the Taliban in Doha.

At those talks, the Afghan people have a clear and urgent priority: a ceasefire. An urgent end to the violence will, more than anything else, give us a chance to progress.

I would like to take this opportunity to call on every member of the General Assembly and the Permanent Members of the Security Council to help us achieve the end-state of a sovereign, united and democratic Afghanistan, at peace with itself and the region, capable of preserving and expanding the gains of the last 19 years. A democratically stable and prosperous Afghanistan will be an example of how our collective will can overcome the turmoil and uncertainty that defines our world today. Thank You

Poland (see A/75/PV.7, annex X)

Address by Mr. Andrzej Duda, President of the Republic of Poland

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

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

Distinguished Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Esteemed Delegates,

I congratulate Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the 75th Session of the UN General Assembly on his election to this honourable function and wish to express Poland's full support for his mission. I would also like to thank Mr. Tijjani Muhammad-Bande for his active presidency over the works of the 74th Session of the UN General Assembly.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year's 75th Session of the UN General Assembly is an extraordinary one and it will surely go down in history as such. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed not only the course of the event, but has also forced us to embark upon a completely new reflection exercise as well as look for solutions to the problems which the world has not grappled with for years on such a huge scale.

International situation is increasingly complicated whereas the palette of challenges and threats we face is constantly growing.

Upon completion of its two-year-long mandate in the Security Council last year, Poland continues to be engaged in its areas of priority, also within the framework of its three-year-long term in the Human Rights Council, which commenced this January.

Respect for international law, multilateral cooperation of states, international humanitarian law, protection of human rights and taking care of the natural environment are among themes of pivotal importance to Poland.

I wish that the adopted anniversary declaration, marking 75 years of the United Nations Organization, not only confirmed the obligations assumed by the founding fathers. I wish that the said declaration was an expression of the longevity of ideas forming the basis of our cooperation and a testimony of the political will to implement them. I wish it was a declaration of "global solidarity".

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Esteemed Delegates,

During my first term as Head of State, Poland intensified its presence within the United Nations system. We held a two-year-long mandate in the Security Council, we hosted climate conference COP24 in 2018 whereas our soldiers returned to the UN-peace keeping force in Lebanon, as part of UNIFIL. It was my personal decision that Poland should support — in deeds, not just with words — the efforts of the international community in the areas of key importance in the contemporary times.

The UN has immense achievements in securing peace, containing conflicts, and stabilizing situation in many regions of the world. And we must not let it be squandered. Striving for more effectiveness, reform of the structures and utilizing experiences, including the adjustment of failed solutions, must not serve as a tool for undermining the value of the Organization as a whole. Also, the approach to its individual agendas requires prudence and deep reflection.

We share a number of reservations and declare our readiness for a constructive discussion and active engagement while defending the achievements of the UN, which are undeniable and constitute a common political legacy of humanity. Construction through destruction of things that already exist is not only costly, but very risky at the same time. It creates the danger of shaking up the foundations of the strenuously developed rules and values and supplanting traditions as well as historical experiences.

Esteemed Delegates,

The theme of this year's session is looking for common and uniting answers to today's global challenges. Whenever we talk about community building in Poland and discuss common and selfless action in the name of a higher purpose, then there is always one word which springs to mind: SOLIDARITY.

This August in Poland we proudly celebrated a splendid anniversary: 40 years since the establishment of "Solidarity" — a grand social movement which led to the fall of the Iron Curtain and brought liberty, sovereignty and independence to Poland, Polish People as well as to other States and Nations in Central and Eastern Europe, and as a result to the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the demise of the "evil empire" — that is the Soviet Union. By the same token, the period of the Cold War came to an end. Beyond a shadow of a doubt, the world today would look quite different if it was not for "Solidarity".

Therefore, today, 40 years since the establishment of "Solidarity" in Poland and 75 years since setting-up of the United Nations Organization, I wish to urge all Heads of State and Government and all Esteemed Delegates to co-create the idea of "GLOBAL SOLIDARITY". This very idea should be the lodestar in our daily mission. I firmly believe that just like the "Solidarity" movement in Poland changed the course of history, also the "GLOBAL SOLIDARITY" might become the idea which will help to overcome contemporary crises in the world.

Three of these are, as far as I'm concerned, especially tangible and acute.

The first one is the socio-economic crisis, which results from a phenomenon we were unable to predict and for which we could not comprehensively prepare ourselves, i.e. the coronavirus pandemic. We all have been taken by surprise by how things developed over the last six months. Each and every state has had to face up to completely novel challenges. These have generated not only health related consequences but more broadly also social and economic ones. The fight with the pandemic demands more intensive cooperation and precisely SOLIDARITY.

The second one is either the newly emerging or the re-emerging crisis of the quality of relations between states. Unfortunately, it is increasingly the case that the relations turn into a confrontation, rivalry and even imperial domination. The fact that we have managed to avoid another global armed conflict in the last 75 years should doubtlessly be deemed as one of the success stories of the international

community. Simultaneously however, one can hardly say that those were the years of global security and global peace. The world was and still is shaken up by various kinds of aggression — from terrorist attacks to numerous regional conflicts, many of which have turned over time into the so called frozen conflicts and are incredibly difficult to solve. The policy of strength and aggression is by no means happening exclusively in the peripheries. It is also applied in the region of the world in which my country, Poland is located — in our closest neighbourhood.

The third crisis results from lack of relevant tools for efficient transformation of economies allowing them to maintain a permanent and stable level of economic growth while taking care of the quality of the natural environment. That definitely is one of the most fundamental challenges facing humanity today and in the nearest future.

I believe these crises will remain unsolved unless we focus on the idea of “SOLIDARITY”.

Therefore, it is important to make sure that the fight against inter alia the impact of the coronavirus pandemic does not result in deeper economic divisions among states and societies; that it does not assume the form of a ruthless economic rivalry and result in the wealthier ones getting richer at the cost of the poorer. By the same token however, that fight must not lead to constraining the sphere of our liberty whereas access to medical solutions must not depend on the size of the wallet.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I urge you to act together. In the name of SOLIDARITY Poland deployed, at the height of the pandemic, a number of military medical missions, among others to Italy and the United States, in order to help, acquire and share the knowledge on how to fight the pandemic and better respond to potential future crises.

Counteracting the economic dimension of the pandemic was one of the themes of a letter which I sent to European leaders in late April this year. In the letter I requested that, in the course of their economic recovery efforts, our governments care, more resolutely than before, not merely about robust GDP growth, but also about sustainable development of the countries in other aspects, including fair and efficient distribution of funds among those in need. Moreover, I urged European leaders to give together a new impulse to stimulate production in Europe, which would undoubtedly shorten supply chains, among other things. If we want to be, once again, a great innovative “production workshop” we must act together. From the perspective of our economic subjectivity this is of strategic importance.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In terms of the crisis in the quality of relations among states, I wish to stress that one of Poland’s unchanging priorities is the question of respect for international law. There cannot and there will not be a lasting peace in the world unless law is abided by. Our attachment to this value is mirrored by the slogan “peace through law”, which we promoted inter alia during our two-year-long term as an elected member state of the Security Council. In our actions undertaken in the UN forum we are consistent in highlighting the fundamental role of international law in preserving the global security architecture. It is indispensable to ensure cooperation among states in a situation when the fundamental norms of international law are violated, for instance in case of the aggression of the Russian Federation on Georgia or Ukraine.

Another concerning phenomenon refers to the violation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons, which was repeatedly the case in recent years. Poland did not and does not accept the fact that chemical weapons are still in use. On top of that, and that is even more concerning: the infringement of the Convention in 2018 coincided with the violation of the fundamental principle of international law: sovereignty and territorial integrity. It is upon our shoulders: those of the UN, the Security Council and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons that the responsibility rests to communicate to the world our strong opposition in this matter.

It is only through the enforcement of the fundamental principles and norms of international law enshrined among others in the Declaration on Principles of International Law adopted by the General Assembly half a century ago, will we succeed in building lasting peace and a safe world of equal states and free nations with no spheres of influence. Leaving cases of violation of international law, including interference in sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, unanswered by the international community will every time act as an encouragement to repeat such negative behaviour. Infringement of the norms of international law must result in consequences whereas those responsible must be held accountable.

Poland keeps underlining, in an incessant and consistent manner, the importance and the unique role of two other sub-areas of international law: human rights and international humanitarian law.

International humanitarian law and human rights are among greatest achievements of the international community in its striving to limit suffering and ensure respect for the rights of the civilian population in armed conflicts. The dissemination of the role of international humanitarian law is high on the agenda of the priorities of Polish foreign policy in recent years.

Therefore, I have appealed to the international community, through the UN Human Rights Council in which Poland currently holds a three year-long mandate, to pay attention to the violation of human rights in Belarus. I am glad that the Council has held a meeting dedicated to this issue.

In the name of SOLIDARITY we should all speak with one voice and demand that fundamental human rights be respected both in Belarus and in other places across the globe. Repressions of political opponents, mass detentions of peaceful protesters or violence and torture being applied against them cannot be tolerated in any state. Belarusians, just like any other free nation, have the right to shape their political future in a sovereign way, without external interference, without domination of other capitals, with the right to freely participate in international cooperation in line with their national interests.

The third on the list of crises in today's world is inadequate balancing of the environmental changes while staying on the path of economic development. We firmly believe it is necessary to create a more resilient, inclusive and environment-friendly economy. As a three-time host of the UN climate conferences: COP14 in Poznań in 2008, COP19 in Warsaw in 2013 and COP24 in Katowice in 2018, Poland is committed to fight with environmental changes.

At the same time, we argue that on the path leading to the attainment of the agreed goals we have to make sure that our actions are safe for the citizens, economies

and states. We need a climate friendly transition, which will be fair and balanced and take domestic conditions of every state into account.

We have already launched a transition aimed at ensuring a just green and low-emission economy. We know however that in this effort it is impossible to be successful on your own. It requires responsible cooperation of us all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Esteemed Delegates,

In view of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, fragile and too frequently violated international law and the need to transform our economies, we should be led by more than just the principle of common responsibility. These days it is also important to act in accordance with the ideals of SOLIDARITY. Poland invites all UN members to act in solidarity while countering the crises which are currently affecting us.

As life has shown, we as international community, have to face up to frequently unprecedented challenges — also the ones we do not expect. I believe that through common responsibility and SOLIDARITY we are going to find an effective response to them.

Dominican Republic (see A/75/PV.7, annex XI)**Address by Mr. Luis Rodolfo Abinader Corona, President of the Dominican Republic**

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

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

His Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres

Secretary General of the United Nations

His Excellency Volkan Bozkir

President of the 75th General Assembly of the United Nations

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Governments

Your Excellencies Ministers of Foreign Affairs

Honorable Heads of Delegation

Citizens of the world.

When the representatives of 51 nations, including mine, signed the Charter of the United Nations in San Francisco on 26 June 1945, the world was still in flames.

The horrors unleashed by the Second World War were still atrocious realities against which the international community conspired so they would never happen again. As a result of that commitment to peace and dialogue among peoples, this Organization was born in whose General Assembly I am honored to participate today for the first time on behalf of the Dominican people, and in whose name I congratulate the United Nations on its 75th Anniversary.

The world of 2020 is evidently different from that of 1945 and I am confident to proclaim that it is also better. And it is so, to a large extent, thanks to the United Nations effort during these three quarters of a century to maintain international peace and security, encourage cooperation between peoples to solve global problems and serve, ultimately, as meeting point for the nations that share this planet.

Without the UN the Universal Declaration of Human Rights would not exist, something inconceivable for us today; neither would we have organizations like UNICEF, FAO, the World Health Organization, the World Bank or international criminal courts. Nor would have been carried out the peacekeeping missions that, through its history, have avoided so much suffering.

The world of 2020 is better than in 1945 but far from perfect. New challenges and threats bring global problems whose scale requires joint solutions that can only be solved through loyal cooperation among the 193 nations represented in this Assembly.

75 years ago, the international community had to take on the colossal challenge posed by reconstruction after the ravages of war, which in turn brought about additional obstacles that required commitment, imagination and work to overcome.

However, it would be reckless to deceive ourselves. History is not linear; at every crossroads there is always the risk of setbacks that hinder goals achieved towards development, progress and peace, which are always so hard to reach.

Therefore, as leaders and servants of our respective nations, we must know there is zero margin of error if we intend to face the challenges of our time in our own way and alone.

If in the 75 years of the UN's existence, multilateralism and international cooperation have been valuable tools, now they are essential and it is imperative that everyone do their part.

That this meeting of the General Assembly has to be held by videoconference is already the perfect example of the main problem we, as leaders and servants of our respective peoples, must face. Covid-19 has put the entire planet in check joining threats such as climate change, which affects us all, but it is highly serious in island countries like the Dominican Republic. I am not exaggerating if I say that both dangers could bring other conflicts into the equation; which will, as usual, viciously prey upon the most vulnerable.

As a non-permanent member of the Security Council, the Dominican Republic has made a special contribution to the agenda of the Protection of Civilians in Conflict in the Context of Covid-19 through a Presidential Declaration that had the unanimous agreement of the Council. That is the spirit that should prevail in the immediate future when it comes to carrying out the policies allowing us to stop the pandemic first, extend treatment and vaccination later, and in the meantime, rebuilding what the pandemic has damaged.

In the Dominican Republic, the pandemic has hit us particularly hard because we have had a precarious social protection system, with per capita social spending of \$604 compared to the regional average of \$941. While the paradox exists that we are one of the nations with the highest economic growth in the region, it has not managed, so far, to close the equity gap.

We all here know, the equity gap will only be fixed by investing in Health and Education. This is why my Government is launching the most ambitious public health program in our history to achieve universal coverage by the end of the year as we increase public investment in the National Health System.

Along with this, there is a plan to promote quality Education that, among other measures, will provide students and teachers with electronic devices so that Covid-19 does not disturb at all their educational process. The future does not wait, and our students cannot miss a minute of their learning.

And this is why our young people are one of our top priorities; we will work to ensure they get the best education. In this sense, I believe there is no better education than a comprehensive one that encourages students' participation in all areas affecting them. Proof of this is the acceptance of the Dominican-French initiative to promote resolution 2535 (2020) — adopted unanimously by the Security Council in July 2020 — to strengthen the member states' commitment to the global agenda of youth, peace and security and that directly involves young people in these plans.

However, talking about peace and security without talking about development is, simply and plainly, wasting time. Before the pandemic this Organization was

already in a reform process to assist Member States in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda.

It is evident that achieving these objectives requires an “accelerated implementation” with the purposeful commitment of the developed countries.

However, five years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the majority of developing countries are lagging behind, and those middle-income nations – such as the Dominican Republic— face particular challenges, because although their economies are advancing institutional weaknesses prevail that lead to inequality. It is therefore essential to modify that Agenda so it responds to the reality and problems facing each country.

The Dominican Republic will spare no effort with the 2030 Agenda, because for years our country has been implementing a National Development Strategy that shares objectives with the United Nations Agenda. Yet, I recognize, to achieve full compliance in just ten years is a challenge requiring the collaboration of all civil society, with public-private collaboration with a national vision, and keeping in mind the essential assistance needed by lagging countries.

75 years ago, this organization was born with the purpose of banishing forever from the international community’s vocabulary the “we” versus “you” or “them” to assume the “everyone”. And this is what Covid-19 intends to put to the test. But I predict it will fail if this Assembly assumes the threat will be annulled through policies not combining the legitimate national interests of each country with the global solutions adopted by the entire international community. To do this, we must act in three areas: Health, Education and Technology.

In the field of Health, this meeting should help create the conditions of universal access to the vaccine against Covid-19 as soon as the remedy is available. From here, WE DEMAND that the vaccine be accessible to all human beings on the planet. The reason for the creation of an organization like this is to measure up to historical challenges such as this one. To achieve this, the role of the World Health Organization is essential, as well as the creation of a global solidarity fund that will serve as a reserve to mitigate the ravages of future pandemics.

In the field of schooling, we must share the most positive experiences, including online education, skills training and support investment efforts in educational policies.

Finally, the UN must be the engine and guide so that the 21st century is truly the century of knowledge thanks to ever advancing communication technologies. Hence, ending the digital divide is one of the urgent priorities for the international community.

However, all development and all progress will be useless if the values enshrined by this Organization in its Universal Declaration of Human Rights are not taken into account. The UN knows that it has the solid commitment of the Dominican Republic to defend these values; to advance towards higher levels of human dignity that promote policies to guarantee equality between men and women, as well as protect children affected by armed conflicts, or at risk of being sold as slaves, prostituted or used for pornography. Appalling realities happening on our planet today, that we have a moral mandate to eradicate once and for all.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I bring to this meeting the mandate of the Dominican people to proclaim our nation's commitment to protecting the environment and to continue supporting the Paris Agreements.

Furthermore, I believe the time has come to enhance its postulates. In the Security Council, we have advocated that security factors within the Climate Change context be more broadly and in-depth studied, because a natural phenomenon can cause or aggravate any conflict, mainly in highly fragile areas.

The occurrence of natural phenomena and extreme climatic events are becoming more frequent and their greater intensity particularly affects the small island developing states. Which forces this Organization to continue on the path of not considering such phenomena as isolated eventualities, but as common and recurrent realities for which we must be ready.

The list of threats and complications can scare anyone. However, this organization has demonstrated over three-quarters of a century that, through dialogue and cooperation, any goal can be achieved, no matter how remote it may seem.

Whoever thinks one can change the world by one's self is wrong, and whoever does not know how to measure one's strength to adjust our contribution will also be wrong. Therefore, on behalf of Dominican men and women, I share our deep commitment, purpose and work to provide solutions to the best of our ability. Close to eleven million Dominicans are eager to do their part.

The Dominican Republic was in the founding hour of this Organization and, since then, has demonstrated its will and commitment in the concert of nations for the sake of peace, prosperity, equity and global diversity. We are aware of our demographic and economic reality, but our condition will never be an excuse for not contributing the best of ourselves as we have tried to do for 75 years.

The UN, as I understand it, is not concerned with diplomacy, but with the future and, as Eleanor Roosevelt said on the day of the solemn proclamation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, "the future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of your dreams".

Let us therefore attain a world in peace, diverse, prosperous and sustainable for at least 75 more years.

Thank you very much.

Venezuela (see A/75/PV.7, annex XII)**Address by Mr. Nicolás Maduro Moros, President of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela**

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

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

H.E. Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the General Assembly,

H.E. Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General,

Heads of State, Heads of Government,

Authorities participating in this 75th Session of the UN General Assembly,

At the outset, I want to apologize for removing my face mask, which is necessary in this time of pandemic, and I want to greet all who watch and listen to us around the world.

Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, on behalf of the Constitutional Government of Venezuela and the People of our Bolivarian Republic for assuming the Presidency of this 75th Session of the General Assembly. A great occasion of great importance due to the stellar situation that humanity is going through caused by this world emergency generated by the COVID-19. I say a stellar situation because, in addition to posing serious difficulties for the complex planetary order, it is also an opportunity to reflect on and promote the change of paradigms that humanity itself, especially the great majorities who are vulnerable to poverty and exclusion, expect so much from us, so much from world leaders.

In this same General Assembly, in 2001, our Eternal Commander Hugo Chávez said,

“We come, then, without fear, in good faith and with much optimism about life, brotherhood, unity and the possibility that we, as the leaders of our countries, can seek, grasp and build together real solutions to real problems in the quest for justice and peace.”

From Venezuela, we believe that the world must be completely revised, with a great magnifying glass said Commander Chávez; a very powerful magnifying glass, because the world has become very bad, it has been stumbling from one mistake to another. It was a call made by Commander Chávez in 2001, to take a sense of reality in the re-founding of the United Nations Organization. And we have arrived at 2020, insisting on this need for renewal of the paradigms.

Venezuela recognizes that, in these 75 years, the United Nations Organization has given great contributions to humanity. However, we demand more will and efforts to preserve the achievements, to advance in new objectives. We insist on the need to strengthen South-South cooperation and to create alternative mechanisms for financing and technical support that will back up the initiatives and priorities defined by our peoples to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. This is a timely and urgent task and every day counts. “The South also thinks, the South also matters, the South also exists”, as the poet Benedetti said, from his centennial presence.

We must all work to save our planet. We make a call to achieve the highest political commitment to fight climate change which is a reality and an urgent priority. We recognize the importance of strengthening mitigation and adaptation actions, in accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. We therefore reaffirm the importance of the means of implementation for developing countries to carry out their climate actions. Noam Chomsky recently warned, “there is not much time left”.

Mr. President,

The United Nations and humanity as a whole face a deep and complex crisis, combining the COVID-19 pandemic with the global climate change challenges and sustainable development.

Added to this disturbing scenario is the no less alarming claim of the great powers to lead humanity into direct confrontation in the military sphere. This would be, perhaps, the last one for our species. The United States of America, far from taking a positive or proactive leadership position, conducts itself erratically under a government that is intransigent and hostile to diplomacy and high politics, since it openly disregards multilateralism and any type of pre-existing global rule.

The COVID-19 pandemic has come to change the realities and priorities of all humanity, because of its consequences for human life. The pandemic has made evident the inequalities in the world and exacerbated them. Unfortunately, some contingency measures in the face of the pandemic have increased the social and economic gaps within countries. That is why the international community, as a whole, must provide a global and coordinated response to support all nations in need, helping to create the conditions for stronger economies and more inclusive societies.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the collapse of the international geopolitical and geo-economic order was already taking place. However, this emergency has made us aware of and critically think about the contradictions of capitalism and its logical and operational inability to deal with these crises. In many cases, the States were reduced to a minimum expression and the imposed neo-liberalism suffocated the public institutions, turning the rights of the people into private services; health became a luxury. Let us hear in the streets of the world the fury of the peoples who feel orphaned and unprotected! The health and well-being of the population are not merchandise; the market cannot continue to regulate the destiny of humanity!

Venezuela believes that the role of the World Health Organization (WHO) should be an example of multilateralism that we need to strengthen. The WHO must be an organization that acts and speaks faithfully, without bowing to pressure, extortion and attacks from the powerful; that confirms its moral authority, its scientific capacity and cooperation based on solidarity.

We welcome the enormous scientific efforts of sisterly nations such as Russia, China and Cuba in creating an effective and safe vaccine against COVID-19, and we trust that such findings will be considered a global public good by each of our nations, with free access for all the peoples of the world, without discrimination.

From the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, we propose the creation of a revolving public purchasing fund within the United Nations System to guarantee access to food and health products, financed with public resources. This will make

it possible to face discrimination and the economic blockade against countries by making it easier for governments to acquire necessary goods and services.

We call for the strengthening of financing policies and funds aimed at the development of local production chains and new economic actors, as well as the creation of a bank of free technologies and universal education and training processes.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela advocates the adoption of a legally binding international instrument on development and the right to development, which will strengthen the struggle of peoples to overcome poverty and social inequalities and for social justice.

Our re-election as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council, by the sovereign and majority votes of the countries represented in the United Nations System — despite the incessant attacks by the U.S. empire and its satellites — has reaffirmed our commitment to promote respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people, without distinction of any kind and in a fair and equitable manner, strongly supporting any initiative in the fight against ethnic, gender, nationality and other related forms of intolerance. We are committed to upholding the principles of universality, impartiality, objectivity, non-politicization, and non-selectivity in their implementation. We are committed to international, intercultural, constructive, and cooperative dialogue to advance the promotion and protection of all human rights, including, of course, the right to comprehensive development of peoples.

Mr. President,

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela ratifies its commitment to the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with the principles set forth in the United Nations Charter and, in that sense, in relation to the territorial dispute over Guayana Esequiba, Venezuela reiterates its strict adherence to the Geneva Agreement of 1966. In particular, we emphasize the object, purpose, and reason for the Geneva Agreement, which clearly mandates reaching a practical, satisfactory, and mutually acceptable solution through successive mechanisms provided for in Article 33 of the United Nations Charter. It is through political, diplomatic and mutually agreed upon negotiation that we will reach the solution of this dispute inherited from imperial colonialism.

Mr. President,

The world has continued to face many injustices that affect innocent peoples, threatening their extermination; actions of States that are unjustified and inadmissible and that embarrass humanity.

Let us once again reiterate our support and solidarity with the Arab people of Palestine and demand respect for their historic territories established in 1967 by this United Nations Organization.

We support the call of the United Nations to put an end to the infamous, criminal, almost 60-year-old blockade against our sisterly nation of Cuba and, in this regard, we reaffirm the call to the U.S. government to immediately put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade it imposes on our sisterly nation.

Mr. President,

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates its commitment to the need to promote and strengthen dialogue and cooperation by building bridges among peoples, respecting cultural and religious differences, through conflict prevention, reconciliation and peacebuilding. The Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) has promoted the recognition of these initiatives, policies and values, with the celebration of the International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, and has joined the Group of Friends of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, who are waving the flags of pluralism and equity. There is still much to be done, and we will do it.

Mr. President,

Venezuela, as you know, is under constant attack. Our beloved Homeland is the victim of a multiform attack by the U.S. Empire, in the media field, in the political field, in the economic field; we have even been threatened with direct military aggressions.

The unilateral measures imposed by the Government of the United States of America have tried to subdue the Venezuelan people. However, our people, together with the Constitutional Government, have heroically resisted the opprobrium, the illegality, the inhumanity of an empire which today represents the most serious threat facing the multi-polar and multi-centered world.

Today, standing up, and with the dignity of the people, children of the glories of the Liberator Simon Bolivar, we say to the supremacist Government of the United States that the world is watching them, that the 21st century has millions of eyes that see beyond the media matrices. There is still time to return to international legality. We tell you that you are still in time to reverse the discredit and global malaise that your arbitrariness and arrogance provoke in the conscious world. Continuing on the path of violation of the United Nations Charter will lead them inexorably to the isolation, discredit and condemnation of the history of peoples, including that of their own people, the people of the United States, who have taken to the streets to protest against racism, against police brutality, against abuse.

Unilateral coercive measures have awakened not only the indignation and repudiation of the peoples against the alleged global dictatorship raised from the United States, which is trying to impose on us, but have also generated cohesion and national initiatives around new forms of production, technical and technological solutions. Inventiveness has been the answer to the persecution of our national industry. This is what the real Venezuelan is like, of flesh and bone, who is so hidden and who they try so hard to despise. Today I can tell you, Excellency that a revolution of innovation has been unleashed in our Homeland, a new offensive to transform into a virtuous cycle of opportunities the attempts of aggression to make our nation collapse.

We have made a titanic effort with our own capacities, in addition to the solidarity and cooperation of friendly countries and the United Nations System to confront the entire COVID-19 pandemic situation. We have avoided the worst, despite the plans, prognoses and catastrophic wishes of those who attack us. Neither the illegal blockade, nor the aggressions against our government have distracted us and prevented us from fulfilling a great effort: the goal of protecting the lives of our population.

Today we can say that we have applied about 1.9 million free tests, which has represented, today, the average of 62,489 tests per million inhabitants. We can say

that we are the Latin American and Caribbean country that has carried out the most tests on its people; we say this with humility and with the desire to always help the neighboring countries from whom, with frequency, we only receive aggressions from their governments. This, which is a Venezuelan truth, you will not hear it, you will not see it on the front pages of the traditional media, much less in the social networks or on the Internet; the blockade is also communicational.

That is why I want to stop and share our experience that could save lives in other places on the planet, just as the experience of China, Cuba and Russia has done with us.

Our social and health protection system allows us to go house to house to look for positive cases and to attend to suspicious or potential cases. We count on it; with the medical missions and the automatized protection system called Patria Web System, where more than 20 million citizens, adults, of a population of 30 million inhabitants, are registered, equivalent, as you can see, to more than two thirds of the population. This territorial system has allowed us to reach all the communities in our country. We have our own model, designed on the principle of prioritizing the lives of all equally. Thanks to this, we have been able to combine a healthy distance with the productive life of the country. We have called it the “Seven by Seven System” and we make it available to all nations, with the modesty that characterizes us. Seven days: a week of shelter in the homes, of deep quarantine, and seven days, a week of economic flexibility, broad and general; which ensures the implementation of a new normality, until we can overcome this pandemic.

Our government has prepared to face this challenge together with our people; we have the superior level of awareness that the Venezuelan population has accumulated and the efficiency of our public health system. In this way, we have been able to control the first signs of this pandemic that has battered the world, gaining time to improve all the protocols for prevention, treatment and protection of our people.

Venezuela is one of the few countries to apply free and differentiated treatment for the cases detected: asymptomatic, mild symptomatic, moderate symptomatic and severe symptomatic. Our policy of prevention and attention implies the total hospitalization of all positive cases, even when they do not present symptoms. This has prevented us from the exponential expansion of this disease.

Mr. President,

More than \$30 billion dollars have been taken from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, frozen and held in bank accounts in the United States and Europe. Likewise, any company or government that commercializes any good or service with our country be food, medicine, fuel, additives needed to produce gasoline — which our people need — etc., is being persecuted.

That is why we ratify to the world that Venezuela has prepared to resist and is resisting this offensive of criminal, inhumane aggression. Venezuela has prepared to overcome this blockade by the government of the United States of North America. It is a battle for pace, for our Homeland, for the region, for humanity. Our heroic Venezuelan people has assumed in the past the responsibility of its historical role before the ignominy of the most dangerous empire of the universal history; an empire that at the same time is writing the most horrifying chapters of inhumanity and criminal imposition. The world must know that we are prepared to fight them with the force of our history, our spirit, reason and international law.

I wish to reiterate once again our deep appreciation for the pronouncement of both the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet, demanding the immediate lifting of unilateral and criminal coercive measures, which are not only contrary to the United Nations Charter, but are clear obstacles imposed on the affected countries to adequately address the COVID-19 pandemic and the compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals.

The attacks — as you know — are not limited only to the unilateral coercive measures. On May 3rd, Venezuela faced an attempted maritime incursion by a group of mercenaries and terrorists, financed by the government of the United States and trained on Colombian territory, with the total and absolute support of the U.S. and Colombian governments. This group of terrorists was confronted in real time by the civic-military police union, and the perpetrators of this attack, of this armed incursion against Venezuela, were neutralized and captured, and are under the orders of the judicial institutions for due process.

Likewise, we recently captured an American spy with war weapons and documents related to our oil and electric industry. It is a daily siege that we have been facing, dismantling, denouncing, unveiling one by one.

And I ask myself: How can a terrorist action be qualified in the midst of an extraordinary humanitarian circumstance such as the one we are living with the COVID-19 pandemic? Can humanity qualify it? The least we can say is that the excess has been imposed, which is the most terrible sin that seems to have taken over completely the North American elites.

That is why the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates the need to vindicate the principles of respect for sovereignty, for the self-determination of the peoples, expressed in the United Nations Charter, which unite us all, whose illegal violation by some Member States of this Organization, motivated by ignoble reasons, is endangering the stability of our country and the Latin-Caribbean region.

It is necessary that the countries that defend peace activate themselves and make the Government of the United States understand that, in the midst of a pandemic, no one understands nor explain that there is an upsurge of criminal prosecution, of the blockade against noble countries such as Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, Syria, Iran and other brotherly countries of the world. For this reason, we must demand the cessation of all unilateral coercive measures, of all the alleged sanctions, and that they allow our peoples exercise their own rights, the right to development and peace. The United States and its Government must abandon the old practice of criminalizing those of us who do not subordinate to their orders in this world and maintain, as we do it, a policy of independence and sovereignty. The United States — we must say this — in the course history, has become the most serious threat to peace in this world.

We wish to endorse the words of the United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres, on the ceasefire and cessation of conflicts in the world, reiterating unrestricted respect and full adherence to the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter and international law, in particular, respect to sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States, dialogue among nations, the peaceful resolution of disputes and the prohibition of the threats or use of force as such.

Mr. President,

Venezuela has traditionally been a host country of refugees and migrants. However, as a direct consequence of the criminal unilateral coercive measures and the economic aggressions imposed by the government of the United States on our people, a process of migration of citizens has taken place, fundamentally for economic reasons.

Nevertheless, at present, our country is facing and experiencing a wave of voluntary, massive returns of thousands of Venezuelan migrants, from the countries with very high levels of COVID-19 infections, such as Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, Chile, Brazil, motivated by different reasons, the most important being the failure of COVID-19 management in those countries. Secondly, the systematic violation of the human rights of Venezuelan migrants, anachronistic and xenophobic policies against migrants of our country, including from high levels of government in those countries; discrimination, mistreatment, lack of socio-economic conditions, a situation of semi-slavery, human trafficking, calamities that our migrants have suffered in clear violation of their human dignity. What has been the reaction of the world – we wonder – that says to be concerned for Venezuela in the face of these reprehensible facts: complicit silence.

As we said, the COVID-19 pandemic has catalysed the already unsustainable living conditions of thousands of migrants in the so-called host countries, who have reported the worsening of abandonment and the lack of response and attention from the authorities in those countries. The fragility of the social protection systems of these countries has become evident, and they are sometimes presented as social and economic models. And we wonder once again, how is it possible, despite the great amount of dollars that have been given to these governments through extravagant donor recruitment conferences for Venezuelan migrants? What did they do with that money? Did these governments steal it? We believe that we must certainly review, with institutional and scientific rigour the role that some United Nations Agencies, or some people from some Agencies, have been playing in these processes, such as UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

Mr. President,

For the sake of the reconciliation and complying with the agreements reached in the National Dialogue Table between the Venezuelan political forces, in September 2019, a series of measures have been adopted to benefit and guarantee democracy in Venezuela. Recently, 110 citizens belonging to right-wing opposition groups were pardoned and prosecuted for several crimes related to aggression against our country. With this decision, we seek to continue building the path towards national reconciliation, understanding that peace deserves all efforts and we will not cease, Mr. President, in our commitment to this task.

In faithful compliance with the provisions established in our National Constitution, approved in a referendum by the Venezuelan People in December 1999, the 25th democratic election in 20 years will be held next Sunday, December 6th, 2020. This time, to renew the Legislative Power, with the participation of more than 14,400 candidates, from more than 107 political organizations from the entire national ideological spectrum.

In Venezuela, I can tell you, there are all the necessary guarantees to hold the parliamentary elections and that is why we have invited the world to join us, to be witnesses of a living democracy, nothing and nobody will be able to take away from

the Venezuelan people the right to elect the new Legislative Power, since this is a fundamental tool for collective existence and will be an expression of the will of the original power. No one decides for us Venezuelans; we do not intervene nor do we intend to do so in any case — ever — before any other nation, we are respectful and thus we demand respect.

Even so, the Government of Washington, which has led its own people to the collapse of the pandemic — which, by the way, will hold presidential elections next November, in blatant violation of international law, illegally imposed new unilateral coercive measures against the Venezuelan democratic institutions, in this case, the Electoral Power, to try to interfere with the conduct of the parliamentary election provided for in our Constitution. This is why, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela reiterates the need to vindicate the principles of respect to sovereignty and self determination of the peoples, expressed in the United Nations Charter, whose illegal violation by some Member States of this Organization is intended to lead Venezuela to violence and conflict. We will not allow it. We demand respect. The Venezuelan path is of peace, democracy, freedom, vote, participation and protagonism of the people. That is how it has been, and that is how it will be.

Mr. President,

Authorities of the world,

Heads of State, Heads of Government,

Here is Venezuela standing. With its historical dignity, in peace. Ready for new challenges; ready for new victories. I bid you farewell, wishing for union, peace and cooperation of the whole world.

Thank you very much.

Panama (see A/75/PV.7, annex XIII)**Address by Mr. Laurentino Cortizo Cohen, President of the Republic of Panama**

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

[Original: Spanish]

His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkir, President of the seventy-fifth session of the United Nations General Assembly

His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations
Heads of State and Government

Distinguished delegates,

History has taught us that decisions made in times of crisis define and leave their mark on the world for decades.

In other words, the great trials of humankind, such as pandemics, have forced us to break with the past, to imagine a new world.

This pandemic is no different. It is a portal — the bridge between one world and the next.

World leaders today face a number of extraordinary and monumental challenges.

In the short, medium and long term, COVID-19 has put the paradigms of today's society to the test and challenges us to actively build the future we want.

This implies changes in our economic systems, leadership and governance, transparency, protection and restoration of biodiversity, human rights and social inclusion.

Ladies and gentlemen,

COVID-19 has highlighted contradictions in public policy, throughout the world, and reveals that a post-pandemic world must be sustainable and better.

The decisions we make today will have long-term consequences. Doing more of the same is simply unsustainable. That would mean disregarding the scale of human suffering that the pandemic has unleashed.

This crisis is unnerving — in part because it has new and unfamiliar characteristics. It is a global health emergency.

However, the most worrisome part of the pandemic is not new. COVID-19 has highlighted deep inequalities that already exist.

Although the pandemic affects us all, not all of us are affected equally. We must all focus on poverty and inequality.

If in the past some chose to ignore them, it is now impossible not to acknowledge their harsh reality.

Let us be clear. The post-pandemic world will continue with the same problems we face now, but under increasingly extreme conditions.

The post-pandemic world will be different only if, going forward, even amid this battle, we take mitigation measures and focus on laying the foundations to resolve these issues and bring about deep structural change.

If we learn the right lessons from this crisis, we will be able to achieve the social consensus that will allow us to accelerate the reforms needed to achieve a society that is prosperous, and above all, just and more united.

Ladies and gentlemen,

One of the main lessons learned from the pandemic is the importance of trusting science, technology and innovation to provide solutions that allow us to close existing social gaps.

The circumstances created by the pandemic enabled the rapid implementation of innovative systems. Learning processes have been accelerated as never before, leading to greater return on the State's investment in innovation.

This is particularly true in the digital economy, reflected in the shift to methods, such as telecommuting or the consumption of services and products ordered and delivered online and by courier.

It is also seen in the application of first-world digital educational platforms, which we now use in some of our public schools or in the practice of telemedicine, which allows citizens in remote areas to receive medical care from specialists hundreds of kilometres away.

Ladies and gentlemen,

An increase in unemployment is a serious consequence of the health crisis. Here, too, there is an important opportunity for our economies, which are based primarily on informal work, as the groundwork is laid and the necessary changes are made in public policies to build the future we want — one focused on entrepreneurship and the formalization of employment.

In a post-COVID-19 world, shared prosperity can be the result of a common vision of global solidarity.

The most important lesson from the pandemic is that of working together on problems that affect humankind. Without a doubt, we are stronger together than apart.

Let us remember that after the Second World War, it was the need to survive, rebuild economies and prevent the scourge of a new war that brought countries together to create a new international order.

The pandemic has again produced that de facto solidarity. We have seen how international cooperation has been mobilized through concrete actions by countries. For example, scientists from Asia, Europe and the Americas share information and experiences.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As the country with the best maritime and air connectivity in Latin America and the Caribbean, Panama has done the same in its position as hub of the Americas, by allowing its infrastructure to be used by the world — maintaining the 144 maritime routes and 1,700 ports served by its Canal. We have kept our port and airport open,

thereby ensuring the continuity of logistics chains for global supplies, in particular of food and medicine.

We demonstrated our solidarity by providing humanitarian assistance and allowing the *Zandaam* and *Rotterdam* cruise ships, which were affected by COVID-19, to transit the Panama Canal so that their passengers could be treated in time, thereby preventing a greater tragedy.

We allowed our infrastructure to be used by the region, thereby making it possible for humanitarian assistance in the form of supplies, medicines and medical equipment to be distributed to more than 30 countries through the Regional Logistics Center, the United Nations World Food Programme and the International Red Cross.

Only together, with solidarity and cooperation, can we move forward.

If the international community fails to respond now, in a decisive manner, the United Nations 2030 Agenda could be derailed.

A new multilateral order requires genuine commitment from each of our countries to taking concrete action to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. And what is agreed here in this forum is delivered upon at home.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our planet has been extremely badly hurt.

The pandemic has plunged millions of people into grief. We are engaged in a relentless daily battle, facing the unseen and the uncertain, head-on, refusing to surrender.

We have lost grandparents, parents and children in the deadly duel against the virus. Nurses, doctors, health workers have fallen victim. We believe that a vaccine is near and that we can stop an evil no one ever wanted.

We will recover. Governments and world leaders must acknowledge mistakes and be prepared going forward so that our health systems can face crises, such as the one we now face.

We can and must help each other, but we must learn from this frightful situation that beyond recovery, we must build a new society — one that is more supportive, equitable and just.

Together, as nations united, we will build the future we want. Let us make no mistake — multilateral action is the right path.

Thank you very much.

Mongolia (see A/75/PV.7, annex XIV)**Address by Mr. Battulga Khaltmaa, President of Mongolia**

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

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

Mr. President,
Secretary-General,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I wish to convey my heartfelt congratulations to you, Mr. President, upon your election as the President of the current session of the General Assembly. I pledge my delegation's full support and cooperation in the discharge of your onerous responsibilities.

This year the member States are proudly celebrating the 75th anniversary of the United Nations. The UN is the optimal structure of multilateral cooperation. It was, indeed, a tremendous achievement when the world's nations united under the spirit of the UN Charter, set out to resolve their differences and hurdles through negotiations and cooperation.

Along with progress and development came complex and formidable challenges. Our responsibility to address and overcome them has equally increased. The most glaring example is the current 75th session of the UN General Assembly, which is taking place amid a worldwide fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

In today's interdependent world, infectious diseases are spreading exponentially, adversely affecting the economy, social welfare, humanitarian causes, security and human rights.

It is a huge lesson and warning that humankind has been caught off guard and swept by the pandemic in the 21st century with its highly developed medical science. In this time of hardship, multilateralism has taken on an even more significant role. There is a critical need for networked, inclusive and well-timed responses based on unity and cooperation.

We have no doubt that upon release of a safe and effective COVID-19 vaccine, the United Nations and its system organizations will play a major role in ensuring equal access to the vaccine for developing and least developed countries, as well as vulnerable groups, such as children, women, the elderly and indigenous peoples.

We call on international financial organizations and developed countries to continue their support and assistance to developing countries with limited resources and weak social protection systems in their economic recovery and fight against the deadly pandemic.

Mr. President,

This year ushered in the Decade of Action to deliver the SDGs. However, it is also the year where COVID-19 restrictions and quarantine are in place worldwide,

and the pandemic has not only aggravated the existing challenges, but also reversed some of the hard-won gains made since 2015. Thus, all Governments need to act decisively to fight the pandemic, step up their efforts to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals and fulfill their responsibilities in a more innovative and flexible way.

As a result of a timely containment strategy, mobilization of all possible resources while taking into account the lessons learnt from others, Mongolia has so far no local transmission and no pandemic-related death.

The pandemic, climate change and other threats that have raised alarm worldwide keep reminding humankind of the overriding need to cherish the Earth and live in harmony with nature. The tradition of treasuring, cherishing and protecting the Earth is deeply embedded in the nomadic way of life and the national identity of Mongols.

Interdependence between humans and the natural world is at the root of human existence. To this day we have done everything not to bend down under the overwhelming forces of nature. However, our struggle was not to adapt to nature, but rather to defeat it. Day by day we realize that the fight to win is what is causing defeat, while the fight to seek harmony is the foundation of our existence.

The fact that Mongolia is one of the few countries with zero local transmission of COVID-19 can be traced to our centuries-long tradition of living in harmony with nature. We need to unite our minds and forces to live in concord with nature, rather than dominate it with the help of technological progress.

In fact, nations around the world owe a duty to future generations to protect the Earth and ensure that every individual leads an eco-friendly life.

Mr. President,

For the past 75 years, the United Nations has been fulfilling its responsibility of uniting the world's nations under one roof and steering them towards growth and development. However, the need for the UN to be more in sync with changing environment, enhance its work and change its working methods is nothing but compelling, if it is to rise to the emerging challenges of international relations. It must take even more innovative and bold action to that end.

Let us joint efforts to build a reinvigorated United Nations and grow together for the sake of Mother Earth and peace and prosperity of all humankind!

I thank you for attention.

Marshall Islands (see A/75/PV.7, annex XV)**Address by Mr. David Kabua, President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands**

Delivered on Wednesday, 23 September 2020, at the 7th meeting of the General Assembly

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, Excellencies,

I have the honor to bring you the warm greetings of Iakwe from the Republic of the Marshall Islands. We find the world in an unprecedented crisis - bearing witness not only to a frightening pandemic and its accompanying economic fallout, but also to deep fractures in fundamental international cooperation.

As we all reflect on the 75th anniversary of the United Nations, we must realize that continuing with a “business as usual” approach risks further inaction at the very moment where the world needs the opposite.

Without increased leadership, the consequences for shared responsibility will be catastrophic - be the issue the financial crisis, public health, security tensions, or climate change. As a small island developing state, we can often see threats earlier or more sharply than our larger partner nations - and in the Pacific we can readily recall the deeper history of the Second World War, and the very reasons why the UN was founded. But to rise to meet contemporary challenges, the UN must improve its political relevance and be truly “fit for purpose” in both messaging and delivery.

Mr. President,

The Republic of the Marshall Islands remains one of the very few nations in the world without a single confirmed case of Covid-19. Like some of our neighbors, we undertook early measures which avoided exposure to our vulnerable population - but which have left us in a deep isolation. Our substantial populations living abroad have been exposed to serious outbreaks. And as our borders remain largely closed, we have struggled to see friends and relatives in danger and pain. Not just in our own population, but around the world, communities are all facing serious challenges - and it is an essential point of humanity that none of us is spared in our suffering.

The Pacific Islands Forum, and many multilateral and key bilateral partners have already delivered important assistance to bolster our medical capacity to address outbreaks. Yet we remain in a sharp and growing economic crisis - as one of the busiest tuna ports in the world, our economy is closely - and uniquely - dependent upon fisheries. And the very Covid measures which keep our population safe are also having an adverse impact on our revenue streams. We are fragile, and cutbacks are throwing us backwards in our basic development, at the very time we must be moving forward. It is vital that the international system strengthen approaches which recognize targeted island-tailored economic recovery strategies. We join many others in seeking to “build back better” with green resilience through a range of sustainable approaches to benefit key social sectors and the environment, actions we are already taking - but I am also increasingly concerned that without a sharp rise in leadership and multilateral cooperation, we place in doubt the prospect of building back at all.

Mr. President,

In these trying moments, the International community cannot forsake core human rights which, regardless of development status, remain universal. As a new member of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva, we feel frustrated by the gap between ideals and realities. While there remains a growing list of bad actors who may be far beyond facilitative approaches, the Council must also continue to strengthen its ability to listen closely to vulnerable nations seeking good faith reform and progress. We know from our own history and experience the tragic results which can occur when the voices of the most vulnerable are unheard, or when politics clouds clear reality. The Marshall Islands is particularly concerned that not all are held to full account for human rights obligations - and systematic violations, including those of the largest powers.

While UN efforts to effectively address human rights need continual strengthening, we find unacceptable the persistent efforts to rewrite basic human dignity into an alleged “win win” language which devalues individual rights. Even if we are in a minority, we will not be silent on this matter.

Mr. President,

We reaffirm the 2019 BOE Declaration of the Pacific Islands Forum which establishes a contemporary pathway for regional security. It is vital that, as Small Island developing states, we work with democratic partners to maintain and strengthen our security as truly independent nations not subject to the forceful influence of larger powers. The Marshall Islands underscores the complex security environment in our Pacific region, and the need for a stronger focus on emerging and cross-cutting security drivers within fragile states, including climate change. We want to underscore the urgent need for tangible and text-based efforts towards UN Security Council reform.

Mr. President,

The wider Marshall Islands is a nation which is over 99 per cent ocean. We join our fellow Pacific nations in building upon our traditional cultural roles as stewards of the ocean. While small island developing states have a unique role in oceans discussions, a wider global response is needed to ensure that our youngest and future generations will benefit from healthy oceans. The Pacific islands have taken a leading role in working towards more sustainable tuna fishing which also ensures human rights, and a key source of global food security. Yet here too stronger international leadership and political commitment is needed. The economic lifeline in the Pacific is truly fisheries, and we urge for stronger and targeted fisheries development strategies from global finance sources - as a means towards a sustainable and truly secure future economy. This is what we intend as a “blue Pacific.” In this context, we also call on and urge the international community for a more coordinated front, through a UN platform, to combat Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) fishing and related activities.

We look forward to realizing a rescheduled UN Oceans Summit in Portugal, as well as the Our Oceans conference in Palau later this year.

Mr. President,

Climate change is the single greatest threat to the peoples of the Pacific, including in low-lying atoll nations like the Marshall Islands. Curbing emissions now

is at the core of the Paris Agreement. But binding words are not enough – change will not come from words alone.

Change relies on my fellow UN members, major emitters especially, delivering ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions this year. It relies on us all seizing the opportunity posed by the unprecedented scale of economic recovery to create a zero-carbon future. It relies on solidarity, and the resources for us all to build a better future. Change relies on protecting the most vulnerable, because those on the frontline — whether healthcare workers battling the pandemic or small island nations sounding the alarm on climate change — are critical to the survival of us all.

Small island and atoll nations like mine do not have time for paper promises. Adaptation to climate change will hold off the worst impacts if the world lives up to its promise of 1.5C. But adaptation is also a complex goal at a time when we often struggle to deliver the basics, and requires finances just as our economy is reeling from COVID-19's effects. There are two things we need to secure our future: for the world to help us adapt to the changes that will come with a 1.5-degree temperature rise, and to make sure that that is the limit.

Mr. President,

As a former strategic UN Trusteeship, the Marshall Islands knows all too well the consequences of inaction by the international system. Between 1946 and 1958, 67 large-scale nuclear weapons were tested in the Marshall Islands including many authorized by two UN resolutions. This remains a lasting legacy which is also a contemporary challenge passed down through generations as a significant human rights challenge. No other people should ever have to bear the burdens which we know from nuclear exposure.

We remain a beacon for stronger international effort to reduce and eliminate nuclear risk. Real results, not symbolic lip service, is needed to unpack and address the often complex situations which often accompany nuclear risk. In particular, we remain alarmed over recent events in North Korea, and call for full implementation of UN Security Council resolutions.

Mr. President,

As small island developing states, the Marshall Islands and our neighbors are forever reminding the UN system and partner nations of the need for island-based strategies which fit our truly unique character. Implementation of the SAMOA Pathway for SIDS remains uneven throughout the UN system, and too often we are left with one-size fits all approaches. Next year we will present our Voluntary National Review of progress towards the UN Sustainable Development Goals. We expect to see strong steps forward, including the recent adoption of our national strategic development plan. Yet despite our ambition, so much still remains to be done in further developing an effective UN system which is truly “fit for island purpose”.

Mr. President,

The world cannot simply ignore Taiwan, as I can assure it in fact exists, and we must have open minds to ensure the 23 million people of Taiwan are not left behind, nor their humanitarian contributions taken for granted. Taiwan should be allowed to participate in an equal and dignified manner within the UN system, including the WHO, ICAO and the UNFCCC, as well as activities related to the SDGs. The vital

civic space of UN premises should be opened for visits and attendance of meetings as well as for the media, regardless of origin.

Mr. President,

These are indeed difficult and trying times for international cooperation. Small and vulnerable nations cannot alone move the world. But as small nations, we often have a unique role in realizing creative and dynamic approaches. The UN setting is vital, and as member states we cannot let it further risk irrelevance at the hour when it is most needed. Optimism remains, and the truest test of character is under adversity. Urgent action by all is needed to better act with conviction- and compassion. No nation — large or small — can afford the consequences of a fragmented world.
