



# General Assembly

Seventy-seventh session

**4**<sup>th</sup> plenary meeting  
Tuesday, 20 September 2022, 9 a.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Kőrösi ..... (Hungary)

*The meeting was called to order at 9 a.m.*

## Agenda item 113

### Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/77/1)

**The President:** Before proceeding to the general debate, as announced in the Journal of the United Nations, the General Assembly will hear a presentation by the Secretary-General of his annual report (A/77/1) on the work of the Organization, under agenda item 113, in accordance with the resolution 51/241 and notwithstanding the provisions set forth in decision 77/504.

I now give the floor to His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres.

**The Secretary-General:** Our world is in big trouble. Divides are growing deeper, inequalities are growing wider, and challenges are spreading farther. But as we come together in a world teeming with turmoil, an image of promise and hope comes to my mind.

This ship on the screen is the Brave Commander. It sailed the Black Sea with the United Nations flag flying high and proud. On the one hand, what one sees in this image is a vessel like any other plying the seas. But if we look closer, we will see that, at its essence, this ship is a symbol of what we can accomplish when we act together.

It is loaded with Ukrainian grain destined for the people of the Horn of Africa, millions of whom are on the edge of famine. It navigated its way through a

war zone, guided by the very parties to the conflict, as part of an unprecedented comprehensive initiative to get more food and fertilizer out of Ukraine and Russia, bring desperately needed relief to those in need, calm commodity markets, secure future harvests and lower prices for consumers everywhere.

Ukraine and the Russian Federation, with the support of Türkiye, came together to make it happen, despite the enormous complexities, the naysayers and even the hell of war. Some might call it a miracle on the sea. In truth, it is multilateral diplomacy in action.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative has opened the pathway for the safe navigation of dozens of ships filled with much-needed food supplies. But each ship is also carrying one of today's rarest commodities: hope. We need hope, and more, we need action.

To ease the global food crisis, we now must urgently address the global fertilizer-market crunch. This year, the world has enough food; the problem is distribution. But if the fertilizer market is not stabilized, next year's problem might be the food supply itself. We already have reports of farmers in West Africa and beyond cultivating fewer crops because of the price and reduced availability of fertilizers.

It is essential to continue removing all remaining obstacles to the export of Russian fertilizers and their ingredients, including ammonia. These products are not subject to sanctions, and we will keep up our efforts to eliminate indirect effects.

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Another major concern is the impact of high gas prices on the production of nitrogen fertilizers, and this must also be addressed seriously. Without action now, the global fertilizer shortage will quickly morph into a global food shortage.

We need action across the board. Let us have no illusions. We are in rough seas. A winter of global discontent is on the horizon. A cost-of-living crisis is raging. Trust is crumbling. Inequalities are exploding. And our planet is burning. People are hurting — with the most vulnerable suffering the most.

The United Nations Charter and the ideals it represents are in jeopardy. We have a duty to act. And yet we are gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction. The international community is not ready or willing to tackle the big dramatic challenges of our age. These crises threaten the very future of humankind and the fate of our planet: crises such as the war in Ukraine and the multiplication of conflicts around the globe; crises such as the climate emergency and biodiversity loss; crises such as the dire financial situation of developing countries and the fate of the Sustainable Development Goals; and crises such as the lack of guardrails around promising new technologies to heal disease, connect people and expand opportunity.

In just the time since I became Secretary-General, a tool has been developed to edit genes. Neurotechnology, connecting technology with the human nervous system, has progressed from idea to proof of concept. Cryptocurrencies and other blockchain technologies are widespread. But across a host of new technologies, there is a forest of red flags.

Social-media platforms based on a business model that monetizes outrage, anger and negativity are causing untold damage to communities and societies. Hate speech, misinformation and abuse — targeted especially at women and vulnerable groups — are proliferating. Our data is being bought and sold to influence our behaviour, while spyware and surveillance are out of control, all with no regard for privacy.

Artificial intelligence can compromise the integrity of information systems, the media and indeed democracy itself. Quantum computing could destroy cybersecurity and increase the risk of malfunctions to complex systems. We do not have the beginnings of a global architecture to deal with any of that.

Progress on all these issues and more is being held hostage to geopolitical tensions. Our world is in peril, and it is paralysed. Geopolitical divides are undermining the work of the Security Council, international law, trust and people's faith in democratic institutions and all forms of international cooperation. We cannot go on like that.

Even the various groupings set up outside the multilateral system by some members of the international community have fallen into the trap of geopolitical divides, such as in the Group of 20 (G-20). At one stage, international relations seemed to be moving towards a Group of Two world; now we risk ending up with a Group of nothing world: no cooperation, no dialogue, no collective problem-solving.

But the reality is that we live in a world where the logic of cooperation and dialogue is the only path forward. No Power or group alone can call the shots. No major global challenge can be solved by a coalition of the willing. We need a coalition of the world.

*(spoke in French)*

Today I want to outline three areas where this coalition of the world must urgently overcome divisions and act together. It starts with the core mission of the United Nations: achieving and sustaining peace.

Much of the world's attention remains focused on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. The war has unleashed destruction with massive violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. The latest reports on the discovery of burial sites in Izyum are extremely disturbing.

Thousands of civilians have been killed. Millions have been displaced. Billions of individuals across the world are affected.

We are seeing the threat of dangerous divisions between West and South. The risks to global peace and security are immense. We must keep working for peace in line with the United Nations Charter and international law.

At the same time, conflicts and humanitarian crises are spreading, often far from the spotlight. The funding gap for our global humanitarian appeal stands at \$32 billion — the widest gap ever recorded. Alas, we have even stopped counting the number of crises.

In Afghanistan, the economy is in ruins, with over half of the population facing extreme levels of hunger,

while human rights, particularly the rights of women and girls, are being disregarded. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, armed groups in the east are terrorizing civilians and inflaming regional tensions. In the Horn of Africa, an unprecedented drought is threatening the lives and livelihoods of 22 million people. In Ethiopia, fighting has resumed, underscoring the need for the parties to immediately cease hostilities and return to the peace table under the auspices of the African Union. In Haiti, gangs are destroying the very building blocks of society. In Libya, divisions continue to jeopardize the country. In Iraq, ongoing tensions threaten stability. In Israel and Palestine, cycles of violence under the occupation continue, as prospects for peace based on a two-State solution grow ever more distant. In Myanmar, the appalling humanitarian, human rights and security situation is deteriorating by the day. In the Sahel, alarming levels of insecurity and terrorist activity amid rising humanitarian needs continues to grow. In Syria, violence and hardship still prevail. And the list remains long.

Meanwhile, nuclear sabre-rattling and threats to the safety of nuclear plants are adding to global instability. The parties at the review conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty failed to reach consensus, and the nuclear deal with Iran still seems elusive.

But there are some glimmers of hope. In Yemen, the nationwide truce is fragile but still holding. In Colombia, the peace process is taking root.

We need much more concerted action everywhere anchored in respect for international law and the protection of human rights. In a world that is being torn apart, we need to create mechanisms for dialogue to heal divides.

That is why I outlined elements of a new Agenda for Peace in my report, "Our Common Agenda" (A/75/982). As set out in the United Nations Charter, we are committed to making the most of every diplomatic tool available to us for the pacific settlement of disputes: negotiation, investigation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and judicial settlement.

*(spoke in Spanish)*

Women's leadership and participation must be front and centre, and we must also prioritize prevention and peacebuilding. That means strengthening strategic foresight, anticipating flashpoints that could erupt into violence, and tackling emerging threats posed

by cyberwarfare and lethal autonomous weapons. Similarly, it means expanding the role of regional groups, strengthening peacekeeping, intensifying disarmament and non-proliferation, preventing and countering terrorism and ensuring accountability. And it means recognizing human rights as pivotal for prevention.

My Call to Action on Human Rights highlights the centrality of human rights, as well as refugee and humanitarian law. In all we do, we must recognize that human rights are the path to resolving tensions, ending conflict and forging a lasting peace.

*(spoke in English)*

There is another battle we must end: our suicidal war against nature. The climate crisis is the defining issue of our time, and it must be the first priority of every Government and multilateral organization. And despite overwhelming public support around the world, climate action is being put on the back burner. Global greenhouse-gas emissions need to be slashed by 45 per cent by 2030 to have any hope of reaching net-zero emissions by 2050. And yet emissions are going up at record levels, on course to a 14 per cent increase this decade. We have a rendezvous with climate disaster.

I recently saw it with my own eyes in Pakistan, where one third of the country is submerged by a monsoon on steroids. We see it everywhere. Planet Earth is a victim of scorched-earth policies.

The past year has brought us Europe's worst heatwave since the Middle Ages and megadrought in China, the United States and beyond. Famine is stalking the Horn of Africa. One million species are at risk of extinction.

No region is untouched. And, as the saying goes, we ain't seen nothing yet. The hottest summers of today may be the coolest summers of tomorrow. Once-in-a-lifetime climate shocks may soon become once-a-year events. And with every climate disaster, we know that women and girls are the most affected.

The climate crisis is a case study in moral and economic injustice. The G-20 emits 80 per cent of all greenhouse-gas emissions. But the poorest and most vulnerable — those who contributed least to this crisis — are bearing its most brutal impacts. Meanwhile, the fossil-fuel industry is feasting on hundreds of billions of dollars in subsidies and windfall profits while household budgets shrink and our planet burns.

Let us tell it like it is. Our world is addicted to fossil fuels, and it is time for an intervention. We need to hold fossil-fuel companies and their enablers to account. That includes the banks, private equity, asset managers and other financial institutions that continue to invest and underwrite carbon pollution. And it includes the massive public-relations machine raking in billions to shield the fossil-fuel industry from scrutiny.

Just as they did for the tobacco industry decades ago, lobbyists and spin doctors have spewed harmful misinformation. Fossil-fuel interests need to spend less time averting a public-relations disaster and more time averting a planetary one.

Of course, fossil fuels cannot be shut down overnight. A just transition means leaving no person or country behind. But it is high time to put fossil-fuel producers, investors and enablers on notice. Polluters must pay.

Today I am calling on all developed economies to tax the windfall profits of fossil-fuel companies. Those funds should be redirected in two ways: to countries suffering loss and damage caused by the climate crisis, and to people struggling with rising food and energy prices.

As we head to the twenty-seventh session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 27) in Egypt, I appeal to all leaders to realize the goals of the Paris Agreement. They must raise their climate ambitions, listen to their peoples' calls for change and invest in solutions that lead to sustainable economic growth.

Let me point to three solutions. First, renewable energy generates three times more jobs, is already cheaper than fossil fuels and is the pathway to energy security, stable prices and new industries. But developing countries need help to make the shift towards renewables, including through international coalitions to support just energy transitions in key emerging economies.

Secondly, countries must adapt to worsening climate shocks. Resilience-building in developing countries is a smart investment — in reliable supply chains, regional stability and orderly migration. Last year in Glasgow, developed countries agreed to double adaptation funding by 2025. This must be delivered in full as a starting point. At a minimum, adaptation must

make up half of all climate finance. And multilateral development banks must step up and deliver. Major economies are their shareholders and must make it happen.

Thirdly, loss and damage from disasters must be addressed. It is high time to move beyond endless discussions. Vulnerable countries need meaningful action. Loss and damage are happening now, hurting people and economies now, and must be addressed now — starting at COP 27. This is a fundamental question of climate justice, international solidarity and trust.

At the same time, we must make sure that every person, community and nation has access to effective early-warning systems within the next five years. We also must address the biodiversity crisis by making the United Nations Biodiversity Conference in December a success. The world must agree on a post-2020 global biodiversity framework that sets ambitious targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, provides adequate financing and eliminates harmful subsidies that destroy the ecosystems on which we all depend. I also urge the General Assembly to intensify efforts to finalize an international legally binding agreement to conserve and sustainably use marine biological diversity. We must protect the ocean now and for the future.

The climate crisis is coming on top of other heavy weather. A once-in-a-generation global cost-of-living crisis is unfolding, turbocharged by the war in Ukraine. Some 94 countries — home to 1.6 billion people, many of them in Africa — face a perfect storm: economic and social fallout from the pandemic, soaring food and energy prices, crushing debt burdens, spiralling inflation and a lack of access to financing. These cascading crises are feeding on each other, compounding inequalities, creating devastating hardship, delaying the energy transition and threatening global financial meltdown.

Social unrest is inevitable, with conflict not far behind. But it does not have to be this way. A world without extreme poverty, want or hunger is not an impossible dream. It is within reach. That is the world envisaged by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

But it is not the world we seem to have chosen. Because of our decisions, sustainable development everywhere is at risk. The SDGs are issuing an SOS. Even the most fundamental goals — on poverty,



hunger and education — are going into reverse. More people are poor. More people are hungry. More people are being denied health care and education. Gender equality is going backwards, and women's lives are getting worse — from poverty to choices around sexual and reproductive health, to their personal security.

Developing countries are getting hit from all sides, and we need concerted action. Today, I am calling for the launch of an SDG stimulus — led by the G-20 — to massively boost sustainable development for developing countries. The upcoming G-20 Summit in Bali is the place to start.

This SDG stimulus has four components. First, multilateral development banks — the World Bank and its regional counterparts — must increase concessional funding to developing countries linked to investments in the Sustainable Development Goals, and the banks themselves need more financing, immediately. They then need to lift their borrowing conditions and increase their appetite for risk, so the funds reach all countries in need. Developing countries, particularly small island developing States, face too many obstacles in accessing the financing they need to invest in their people and their future.

Secondly, in terms of debt relief, the Debt Service Suspension Initiative should be extended and enhanced. But we also need an effective debt-relief mechanism for developing countries, including middle-income countries, in debt distress. Creditors should consider such debt-reduction mechanisms as debt-climate-adaptation swaps. These could have saved lives and livelihoods in Pakistan, which is drowning not only in floodwater, but in debt. Lending criteria should go beyond gross domestic product and include all the dimensions of vulnerability that affect developing countries.

Thirdly, for an expansion of liquidity, I urge the International Monetary Fund and major central banks to expand their liquidity facilities and currency lines immediately and significantly. Special drawing rights play an important role in enabling developing countries to invest in recovery and the SDGs. But they were distributed according to existing quotas, benefiting those who need them least. We have been waiting for a reallocation for 19 months, and the amounts we hear about are minimal. A new allocation of special drawing rights must be handled differently, based on justice and solidarity with developing countries.

Fourthly, I call on Governments to empower specialized funds such as the Gavi Alliance, the Global Fund and the Green Climate Fund. G-20 economies should underwrite an expansion of these funds as additional financing for the SDGs.

Let me be clear: the SDG stimulus I am proposing is essential, but it is only an interim measure. Today's global financial system was created by rich countries to serve their interests many decades ago. It expands and entrenches inequalities. It requires deep structural reform. My report on Our Common Agenda proposes a new global deal to rebalance power and resources between developed and developing countries. African countries, in particular, are underrepresented in global institutions. I hope Member States will seize the opportunity to turn these ideas into concrete solutions, including at the Summit of the Future in 2024.

The divergence between developed and developing countries — between North and South, between the privileged and the rest — is becoming more dangerous by the day. It is at the root of the geopolitical tensions and lack of trust that poison every area of global cooperation, from vaccines to sanctions to trade.

But by acting as one, we can nurture fragile shoots of hope — the hope found in climate and peace activists around the world calling out for change and demanding better of their leaders; the hope found in young people, working every day for a better, more peaceful future; the hope found in the women and girls leading and fighting for those still being denied their basic human rights; the hope found throughout civil society seeking ways to build more just and equal communities and countries; the hope found in science and academia, racing to stay ahead of deadly diseases and end the coronavirus disease pandemic; and the hope found in humanitarian heroes rushing to deliver life-saving aid around the world. The United Nations stands with them all.

We know lofty ideals must be made real in people's lives, so let us develop common solutions to common problems, grounding them in goodwill, trust and the rights shared by every human being. Let us work as one, as a coalition of the world, as united nations.

**The President:** I thank the Secretary-General for his presentation.

## Agenda item 8

### General debate

**The President:** The world needs solutions through solidarity, sustainability and science. We need solutions because we have drafted many treaties and set lofty goals, yet we have taken too little action. We need solidarity because inequalities have reached record heights. We need sustainability because we owe it to our children to leave them a liveable world. We need science because it offers us neutral evidence for our actions. My sincere gratitude goes to all Member States, especially Hungary and the Group of Eastern European States, for giving me the mandate to turn this motto into reality.

We gather today at the most consequential moment of the last four decades.

*(spoke in French)*

From extreme heat to devastating floods, climate change is shattering our communities. Our consumption and production methods are lacerating our planet from the ground to the skies. We live in a state of permanent humanitarian crisis.

*(spoke in Arabic)*

More than 300 million people urgently need humanitarian assistance and protection, which is a 10 per cent increase since January. The world food crisis has reached an alarming level because of climate change, conflicts and the coronavirus disease pandemic. In the last six months, the food and energy prices have pushed at least 70 million people into poverty.

*(spoke in Russian)*

At the same time, inflation is at the highest level in over 40 years. One fourth of the entire population of the planet is living in conflict areas, in areas where armed hostilities take place or where there is political instability. Before now, violence had rarely been as harsh throughout the world as it is today.

*(spoke in English)*

Who would have imagined that war would return to Europe, or that the nuclear threat would be back in political discourse to settle a dispute with a neighbour? It has been 203 days since the General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning the military aggression against Ukraine (resolution ES-11/1). Unfortunately, the bloodshed and the suffering have not yet stopped.

During that time, as we heard, the United Nations and its partners have offered food and shelter to millions of refugees from that country. A landmark agreement on commercial grain exports from the world's greatest breadbasket offers hope. Diplomacy is at work to release fertilizers so that the shortages we see today do not become next year's famines. United Nations nuclear inspectors are at one of Europe's key nuclear sites preventing a possible catastrophe.

The theme of our seventy-seventh general debate is "A watershed moment: transformative solutions to interlocking challenges".

I stand in solidarity with the people of Pakistan, where devastating floods washed away hundreds of villages. We have seen the heart-wrenching scenes of devastation. That can be a window into our future. However, in tackling climate change, we have the solutions, which are rooted in the progress we have made in science cooperation and climate diplomacy. But we have to want to put them into practice.

The International Panel on Climate Change has proved to be an invaluable tool for supporting political decisions to combat climate change and adapt to its consequences. We should consider replicating its success in the areas of water, energy, food and biodiversity. That would give us a universally accepted scientific foundation for action. Once this high-level week is over, I plan to launch a series of consultations with the scientific community, asking its members to help us, bringing their knowledge from microscopes to microphones.

The seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly will be key to preparing the Sustainable Development Goals Summit in 2023 and the Summit of the Future in 2024. Next year, we will assess Sustainable Development Goal 6 at the United Nations Water Conference, the first since 1977. That Goal could not be more urgent, as water is set to be the next major driver of conflict worldwide.

The problem of water is threefold: too much, not enough and unsafe. We have the chance to make a difference in the lives of 2.1 billion people who lack access to clean water. Let us cooperate to make the water action agenda as transformational, practical and actionable as possible.

During this session, we will also assess the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and

come to conclusions to improve resilience against disasters. It is vital that those opportunities lead to substantive outcomes.

The building blocks for transformation are at our disposal. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Peace, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982) all point in the same direction. They describe the world we want and offer us the avenues to get there.

I am encouraged that the Secretary-General's proposals and the important initiatives by Member States mutually support each other. The challenges are great, and they are interconnected, but they are not insurmountable.

Without universal respect for the rule of law, it is all too easy to rapidly slide into treacherous territory. As we all know, in times of crisis, human rights are the first to be compromised. When human rights come under threat, it is our smoke signal, our call to action.

It would be remiss to speak of human rights without addressing a fundamental issue found to be lacking in most societies around the world — women's rights. It is simply unacceptable that one out of three women experience violence in their lifetimes. As we speak, half of humankind is all too often excluded from decision-making and leadership. We need every man and woman to live their lives to their fullest potential. It is only by ensuring the inclusion of all and valuing the knowledge of all that we will find solutions to the challenges we face.

This afternoon's General Assembly Global Platform of Women Leaders, organized in collaboration with UN-Women, may be an answer to that call. Women Heads of State and Government will offer their solutions to society's complex problems. Data shows that crisis response is more effective when women take the lead. I encourage members to engage substantively with that issue. It has to do with equity and equality, but above all, human dignity.

In all those issues and in all our endeavours, I look forward to working closely with the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and other key relevant institutions of the United Nations. I stand ready to support Member States in identifying transformative, impact-oriented, systemic and sustainable solutions. I promise to cooperate with

all stakeholders — civil society, young people, women and the scientific community, to name but a few.

United Nations agencies, funds and programmes are critical to bringing our efforts out of this Hall and into our communities. In order to deliver on the agenda requested by Member States, I count on members' constructive engagement, cooperation and mutual respect for each other. I emphasize that the revitalization of both the United Nations and the General Assembly must continue. Our ability to competently improve our Organization will determine its relevance in the eyes of people around the world.

I want to advance negotiations on Security Council reform. It is high time that the Council represent the world's population more equally and that it reflect twenty-first century realities. This is a matter of credibility for our entire Organization and our multilateral order.

Crisis management and transformation will require our consistent efforts way beyond one session of the General Assembly. In that spirit, let me finish with some timeless words of wisdom about chances and the risk of letting them pass us by:

“Things get better when we make them better. Things go wrong when we fail to seize the opportunities before us.”

Our opportunity is here and now. Let us act.

Before giving the floor to the first speaker for this morning, I would like to remind members that the list of speakers for the general debate has been established on the agreed basis that statements should be no longer than 15 minutes in order to enable all the speakers in a given meeting to be heard. Within that time frame, I would like to appeal to speakers to deliver their statements at a reasonable pace so that interpretation into the other official United Nations languages may be provided properly.

I would also like to draw the attention of members to the decision taken by the General Assembly at previous sessions, namely, that the practice of expressing congratulations in the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered is strongly discouraged.

After delivering their statements from the rostrum, speakers are invited to exit the General Assembly Hall through Room GA-200, located behind the rostrum, before returning to their seats.

May I take it that the General Assembly agrees to proceed accordingly during the general debate of the seventy-seventh session?

*It was so decided.*

**The President:** Finally, I should like to inform members that, during the general debate, official photographs of all of the speakers will be taken by the Department of Global Communications. Members interested in obtaining those photographs are requested to contact the United Nations Photo Library.

**Address by Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil**

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil.

*Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Bolsonaro** (*spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like to greet the Secretary-General, whom I have the renewed pleasure of addressing in our common language.

I begin by congratulating you, Ambassador Csaba Kőrösi, on your election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session. You can count on the support of Brazil.

The theme chosen for this general debate revolves around a concept that perfectly applies to the moment we live in: a watershed. Our collective responsibility in the General Assembly is to understand the scope of the challenges that make up this watershed moment and, from there, to build responses that pull their strength from the objectives shared by us all. The task is not simple. But strictly speaking, we have no alternative. The effort must begin within each of our countries. First of all, it is what we do at the domestic level that gives the measure of the authority with which we act at the international level.

Allow me to speak from my country's perspective. When Brazil expresses its positions on the public health agenda, we do so with the authority of a Government that, during the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, spared no effort to save lives and preserve jobs. Like many other countries, we focused our attention from the very beginning on ensuring emergency financial assistance to those most in need. Our goal was to protect families' income so that they could face the economic hardships resulting from the pandemic. We helped more than 68 million people, the equivalent of one third of our population. In tandem, we launched a broad vaccination programme, including the domestic production of vaccines. We are a nation of more than 210 million people, and already more than 80 per cent of the population has been vaccinated against COVID-19. All were vaccinated voluntarily, in full respect of each person's freedom of choice.

Likewise, economically Brazil has the authority of a country that, for the sake of sustainable and inclusive growth, has been implementing reforms to attract investment and improve the living conditions of its population.

During my Administration, we uprooted the systemic corruption that existed in the country. Between 2003 and 2015 alone, the period in which the left presided in Brazil, the debt level of Petrobras due to poor management, politically driven appointments and favours, as well as the diversion of funds, reached \$170 billion. The person responsible was convicted unanimously in three court cases. Whistle-blowers returned \$1 billion, and we paid the United States stock market another \$1 billion due to losses incurred by shareholders. But that is the Brazil of the past.

We upgraded public services by reducing costs and investing in science and technology. Nowadays, for instance, Brazil is the seventh most digitally advanced country in the world, with 135 million people accessing 4,900 services provided by my Administration. Brazil was a pioneer in the deployment of 5G in Latin America.

We implemented a comprehensive agenda of privatizations and concessions, with an emphasis on infrastructure. We have concluded the Transfer of the São Francisco River project, bringing water to the Brazilian north-east. We adopted new regulatory frameworks, such as in basic sanitation, railroads and natural gas. Moreover, we improved the business environment, with the economic freedom law and the



start-up law. As a result, we created opportunities for young people to be entrepreneurs and have quality jobs. Crowning all those efforts to modernize the Brazilian economy, we are making great strides towards Brazil's entry as a full member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Despite the global crisis, Brazil is reaching the end of 2022 with an economy in full recovery. We have high employment and a low inflation rate. The economy is growing again. Poverty increased across the world as a result of the pandemic. In Brazil, it has already begun to fall sharply.

The figures speak for themselves. It is estimated that, by the end of 2022, 4 per cent of Brazilian families will be living below the extreme poverty line. In 2019, it was 5.1 per cent. That represents a drop of more than 20 per cent. Auxílio Brasil, the minimum-income programme established by my Administration during the pandemic, which reaches 20 million families, pays them almost \$4 a day.

Unemployment fell by 5 percentage points, reaching 9 per cent — a rate not seen for seven years. We reduced inflation to an estimated 6 per cent this year. I am pleased to announce that we had unprecedented deflation in Brazil in the months of July and August. Since June, the price of gasoline has dropped by more than 30 per cent. Today a litre of gasoline in Brazil costs about \$0.90. The price of electricity also fell by more than 15 per cent. Let me stress that the cost of energy did not drop because of price-fixing or any other type of State intervention. It was the result of a tax-rationalization policy formulated and implemented with the support of the National Congress of Brazil.

In 2021, Brazil was the fourth-largest destination for foreign direct investment in the world. Our foreign trade reached the historic milestone of 39 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), even after reducing taxes or lowering them to zero on thousands of products. Domestically, we are also breaking records in three areas — tax collection, State-owned company profits and the public debt-to-GDP ratio. In fact, in 2021 we had a surplus in the consolidated result of national accounts. Brazilian GDP increased by 1.2 per cent in the second quarter. The forecast for 2022 is 3 per cent growth.

We have the peace of mind of being on the right path — the path to prosperity shared among Brazilians

and, beyond that, with our neighbours and other partners around the world.

That is what we see, for example, in food production. Four decades ago, Brazil used to import food. Today we are one of the world's largest exporters. That was only possible thanks to heavy investments in science and innovation, with a view to increasing productivity and sustainability. I pay tribute to Alysson Paolinelli, Brazilian candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize, for his role in expanding the Brazilian agricultural frontier through the use of new technologies. This year the country has already started the largest grain harvest in our history. We estimate it to be at least 270 million tons. In a few years, Brazil will also make the transition from importer to exporter of wheat.

For the period 2022 to 2023, total production is expected to exceed 300 million tons. On a recent visit to Brazil, the Director-General of the World Trade Organization stated that if it were not for Brazilian agribusiness, the planet would go hungry, as we feed more than 1 billion people worldwide. Our agribusiness is a source of national pride. I also note that, in the area of sustainable development, Brazil's achievements lend credibility to our country's international action.

With regard to the environment and sustainable development, Brazil is part of the solution and a reference for the world. Two thirds of Brazilian territory is host to native vegetation, which is exactly as it was when Brazil was discovered in 1500. In the Brazilian Amazon, an area equivalent to all of Western Europe, more than 80 per cent of the forest remains untouched, contrary to what is reported by the mainstream national and international media.

It is essential that, when taking care of the environment, we do not overlook people. The Amazon region is home to more than 20 million inhabitants, including indigenous and riverside dwellers, whose livelihoods depend on economic use of the forest. We brought the Internet to more than 11,000 rural schools and more than 500 indigenous communities.

Brazil began its energy transition almost half a century ago, in reaction to the oil crises at that time. Today we have a modern and sustainable biofuel industry. That industry contributes to the cleanest energy mix among the Group of 20 countries. About 84 per cent of our electricity matrix is currently renewable — a goal that many developed countries hope to achieve only by 2040 or 2050.

Last year, Brazil was chosen by the United Nations as the global champion of energy transition. We have the potential to become a major global exporter of clean energy. We have a surplus, already under construction, that can reach more than 100 gigawatts between biomass, onshore wind and solar, in addition to the unexplored opportunity of 700-gigawatt offshore wind farms, with one of the lowest production costs in the world. Those sources will produce green hydrogen for export. Part of this 100 per cent clean energy opens up the possibility for us to become suppliers of highly competitive industrial products, especially in the Brazilian north-east, with one of the smallest carbon footprints in the world.

The sustainable development agenda is impacted in many ways by threats to international peace and security. We built the United Nations from the ruins of the Second World War. What motivated us back then was the determination to avoid repeating the cycle of destruction that marked the first half of the twentieth century. To some extent, we can say that we were successful.

But today the conflict in Ukraine serves as a warning.

A reform of the United Nations is essential if we are to find world peace. In the specific case of the Security Council, after 25 years of debates, it is clear that we need to look for innovative solutions. Brazil delves into this topic based on experience that goes back to the beginnings of the United Nations. This is the eleventh time that we have held a non-permanent seat at the Council. We have tried to do our best to achieve peaceful and negotiated solutions to international conflicts, always led by the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Brazil also has an extensive history of participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations. From Suez to Angola, from Haiti to Lebanon, we have always supported peacekeeping.

We also contributed to peace by opening our borders to those seeking a chance to restart their lives in our country. Since 2018, over 6 million Venezuelan brothers have been forced to leave their country. Many of them came to Brazil. Our response to that challenge was “Operation Welcome”, which has become an international benchmark. More than 350,000 Venezuelans have found in Brazilian territory emergency assistance, protection, documentation and

the possibility of a fresh start. All of them have access to the labour market, to public services and social benefits. In recent months, around 600 Venezuelans have been arriving in Brazil every day on foot, the vast majority of them being women and children weighing on average 15 kilos less than before and running away from violence and hunger.

The Brazilian humanitarian reception policy goes beyond Venezuela. We have also received Haitians, Syrians, Afghans and Ukrainians.

It has been seven months since the conflict began in Ukraine. It is a source of great concern — not only in Europe but throughout the world. I would like, first, to reiterate Brazil’s gratitude to the countries that helped with the evacuation of Brazilian citizens who were in Ukraine when the conflict started. I refer especially to Slovakia, Hungary, Poland, Romania and the Czech Republic. The operation was successful. We left no one behind, not even their pets.

With regard to the conflict itself, Brazil has been guided by the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter. Those principles are also enshrined in our Constitution. We call for an immediate ceasefire, the protection of civilians and non-combatants, the preservation of critical infrastructure in order to assist the population and the maintenance of all channels of dialogue between the parties in conflict. Those are the first steps to achieving a lasting and sustainable solution. We have been working towards that goal. At the United Nations and elsewhere, we have tried to avoid the hampering of dialogue channels caused by the polarization around the conflict. In that regard, we are against diplomatic and economic isolation.

The fallout of the conflict can already be felt in world prices for foodstuffs, fuel and other raw materials. This situation distances us all from the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals. Countries that once presented themselves as leaders of the low-carbon economy have now turned to dirty sources of energy. That is a serious setback for the environment.

We support all efforts to reduce the economic impact of this crisis, but we do not believe that the best way is to adopt unilateral and selective sanctions that are inconsistent with international law. Those measures have hampered the economic recovery and undermined the human rights of vulnerable populations, including in European countries.

The conflict in Ukraine can be resolved only through negotiation and dialogue. I make a plea to the parties, as well as to the entire international community, to not pass up any opportunity to end the conflict and ensure peace. The stability, security and prosperity of humankind are at serious risk if the conflict continues.

I have been an unconditional supporter of the freedom of speech. Moreover, under my Administration, Brazil has made an effort to bring the right to the freedom of religion to the core of the international human rights agenda. It is essential to ensure that everyone has the right to freely worship and practice their religious orientation without discrimination. I would like to state here that Brazil is ready to welcome the Catholic priests and nuns who have suffered cruel persecution by the dictatorial regime in Nicaragua. Brazil repudiates religious persecution wherever it occurs in the world.

Other fundamental values for Brazilian society with implications for the human rights agenda are the defence of the family, the right to life after conception, the right to self-defence and the rejection of gender ideology. I would also like to stress our commitment to women's rights. Our effort to enact over 70 legal norms on the subject since the beginning of my Administration, in 2019, is proof of that commitment.

We resolutely combat violence against women. That is part of our broader priority of ensuring public security for all Brazilians. The results can be seen in our Government — a 7.7 per cent drop in the number of femicides and a decrease in the general number of deaths by homicide. In 2017, there were 30 deaths per 100,000 inhabitants; now there are only 19. Violence in rural areas has also plummeted, and land tenure by the most in need has increased. Under my Administration, we delivered 400,000 rural property deeds, 80 per cent to women.

We are making efforts in Brazil to have strong and independent women so they can reach their goals. Since 2019, First Lady Michelle Bolsonaro has brought new meaning to volunteer work, with special attention to people with disabilities and rare diseases.

On 7 September, Brazil celebrated 200 years of history as an independent nation. Millions of Brazilians took to the streets, called upon by their Government, wearing the colours of their flag. It was the largest civic demonstration in the history of our country, a people that believes in God, nation, family and freedom.

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

*Mr. Jair Messias Bolsonaro, President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

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

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

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

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

**President Sall (spoke in French):** On behalf of the African Union, I would like to express my thanks to your predecessor, Mr. President, and to wish you every success in presiding over this session. I reiterate our support to Secretary-General António Guterres in carrying out his delicate mission in the service of Member States.

Since the previous session, the world has become more dangerous and uncertain, under the combined grip of global warming, security and health perils and the war in Ukraine. The theme of this session reflects the urgent need to act together to ease tensions, heal our planet, reduce persistent North-South inequalities and reinstate the importance of multilateralism.

The Security Council is called upon, first and foremost, to address all threats to international peace and security, including in Africa, in the same way. Terrorism, which is gaining ground on the continent, is not just an African matter. It is a global threat that falls under the primary responsibility of the Council, as guarantor of the collective security mechanism under the Charter of the United Nations. We therefore urge the Council to engage more with us in the fight against terrorism in Africa, with more appropriate mandates and more substantial resources.

Furthermore, the African Union once again calls for the lifting of foreign sanctions against Zimbabwe. Those harsh measures continue to fuel a sense of

injustice against an entire people and to aggravate their suffering in these times of deep crisis.

In the Middle East, we reiterate the right of the Palestinian people to a viable State, living side by side in peace with the State of Israel, each within secure and internationally recognized borders.

We call for de-escalation and a cessation of hostilities in Ukraine with a view to achieving a negotiated solution in order to avoid the catastrophic risk of a potentially global conflict. Negotiation and discussion are our most effective weapons in the promotion of peace. I call for a high-level mediation mission, to which the African Union stands ready to contribute.

Nearly 80 years after the birth of the United Nations system and the Bretton Woods institutions, it is time for a fairer, and more inclusive global governance that is better adapted to the realities of our time. It is time to overcome reluctance and deconstruct the narratives that persist in confining Africa to the margins of decision-making circles. It is time to do justice to Africa's just and legitimate demand for Security Council reform, as reflected in the Ezulwini Consensus.

In the same vein, I recall our request for the African Union to be granted a seat in the Group of 20 (G-20) so that Africa can finally be represented where decisions that affect 1.4 billion Africans are being taken. I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to the partners who have already expressed their support and invite others to give favourable consideration to our candidacy.

With respect to economic and financial governance, I draw the attention of the General Assembly to the *Financing for Sustainable Development Report 2022*, produced by some 60 multilateral institutions, including the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Basel Committee on Banking Supervision, the International Association of Insurance Supervisors and the Financial Stability Board. The report highlights shortcomings in the assessment processes of credit-rating agencies and underlines the importance of transparent methodologies so as not to undermine confidence in ratings.

We are concerned that the perception of risk in Africa continues to be higher than the actual risk, which increases the cost of insurance premiums and undermines the competitiveness of our economies. That is why Africa is renewing its proposal to the

Global Crisis Response Group on Food, Energy and Finance to engage, in conjunction with the G-20, the IMF and the World Bank, in a constructive dialogue with the rating agencies on improving their working and assessment methods.

In the same spirit, in view of the unprecedented scale of the global economic crisis, the African Union reiterates its call for the partial reallocation of special drawing rights, which are critical for developing countries, and the implementation of the G-20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative. This unprecedented shock further destabilizes the weakest economies and makes their need for liquidity even more pressing in order to mitigate the effects of widespread inflation and to support the most vulnerable households and social strata, especially young people and women.

In addition, there is the need to address new and old health emergencies, including cancer, a silent killer that continues to claim millions of lives across the world. I call for general mobilization for the Rays of Hope campaign of the International Atomic Energy Agency in order to strengthen the capacities of Member States, particularly in Africa, in the fight against cancer using nuclear technologies, such as medical imaging, nuclear medicine and radiotherapy.

With the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Sharm El-Sheikh only a few weeks away, Africa reiterates its commitment to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

At the same time, we hope to reach a consensus for a fair and equitable energy transition, as called for at the African Union-European Union Summit in February at the expanded session of the Group of Seven Summit in June and, recently, at the Africa Adaptation Finance Forum, in Rotterdam.

It is legitimate, fair and equitable that Africa, the continent that is the furthest behind in the industrialization process and is the least polluting, should exploit its available resources to provide basic energy, improve the competitiveness of its economy and achieve universal access to electricity. I recall that today more than 600 million Africans still live without electricity.

Let us also work towards the goal of mobilizing \$100 billion per year to support developing countries' adaptation efforts and to finance the African Adaptation



Acceleration Programme under the auspices of the African Development Bank and the Global Center on Adaptation. Moreover, we see adaptation funding not as aid but as a contribution by industrialized countries to a global partnership of solidarity in return for efforts by developing countries to avoid the polluting patterns that have plunged the planet into the current climate emergency.

Beyond the current emergencies, I have come to convey the message of a continent that is committed to working with all its partners in a spirit of trusting dialogue and mutual respect. I have come to say that Africa has suffered enough from the burden of history and that it does not want to be the breeding ground for a new Cold War, but rather a centre of stability and opportunity open to all its partners on a mutually beneficial basis. I have come to say that we are not blind to an Africa faced with challenges where it is necessary to bring about peace and stability.

But I have also come to say that we also see Africa as a provider of solutions, with its 30 million square kilometres, its human resources, more than 60 per cent of the world's arable land and its mineral, forest, water and energy wealth. We have an Africa of solutions, with Governments daily on the job, a dynamic youth who innovate, take the initiative and succeed and millions of men and women who work hard to feed, educate and care for their families and who invest, create wealth and generate jobs. This Africa of solutions wants to engage with all its partners in a reinvented relationship that transcends the prejudice that whoever is not with me is against me. We want a multilateralism that is open and respectful of our differences, because the United Nations system, born out of the ashes of war, can win the support of all only on the basis of shared ideals, not home-grown values established as universal norms. It is by working together, while respecting our differences, that we will restore strength and vitality to the *raison d'être* of the United Nations, namely, to save present and future generations from the scourge of war, to advance the peaceful coexistence of peoples and to foster progress by creating better living conditions for all. I wish the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly every success.

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

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

#### **Address by Mr. Gabriel Boric Font, President of the Republic of Chile**

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

*Mr. Gabriel Boric Font, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Gabriel Boric Font, President of the Republic of Chile, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Boric Font (spoke in Spanish):** It is an honour for me to be here among Member States at the General Assembly for the first time. I come from Chile, which is a beautiful country located in the extreme south of Latin America between the Andes Mountains, the backbone of our continent, and the majestic and imposing Pacific Ocean. It is a country that has a varied geography and stirring landscapes, where the clearest skies coexist with the stormiest seas and the driest desert with cities carved by rain.

As some of those present perhaps know, the Chilean people are hard-working and supportive. Thanks to their efforts, in just over two centuries we have gone from being Spain's poorest colony in Latin America to being an independent, free, sovereign and thriving country, which today, with its tremendous opportunities, is on the threshold of comprehensive development, and we are working to ensure that this is for everyone and not just for a few. Chile has copper and lithium for electromobility and is a developing innovative corridor country, promoting clean energy to the world, with long coasts and protected marine areas to safeguard the environment and with top-level universities to foster and share knowledge.

I have come to tell colleagues that Chile needs the world, and that the world also needs Chile. But as Member States know and as has been clear in the addresses before mine, we live in a time of deep uncertainty and upheavals, in which it is clear that there is no nation among all those represented here that is isolated from, or immune to, shocks and what is happening globally. Our country is certainly no exception. The unfair war of aggression that Russia unleashed on Ukraine,

with whose people we express our solidarity, pushed up fuel prices and caused shortages of grains and fertilizers, with a strong impact on our economy and that of many States. In addition, while it is harder to talk about, the trade war between the United States and China, unleashed under the Trump Administration in 2018, as well as the pandemic destabilized the global economy, affecting our economy as well as that of other Member States.

At another level, the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, as a result of its already prolonged political crisis, has generated an unprecedented migratory flow in our region and our country, putting tremendous pressure on our institutions and society.

Finally, as many Member States are clearly experiencing, the climate crisis has a particularly strong impact on our Latin American continent, and especially the Caribbean, as well as the livelihoods of our people. In Chile, we meet seven of the nine vulnerability criteria established by the United Nations: low-level coastal areas, arid and semi-arid areas, forests, propensity to natural disasters, droughts, polluted urban areas and fragile mountain ecosystems. However, our country, no doubt like many Member States present and a large part of the global South, produces and is responsible for a tiny share — in our case 0.24 per cent — of global greenhouse-gas emissions, while the countries with the biggest economies, the Group of 20, as the Secretary-General recalled, produce 80 per cent of greenhouse-gas emissions. As is evident, these days no country, whether big or small, weak or powerful, can expect to save itself on its own.

While we were preparing this speech, I was thinking about how, among so many clearly interesting statements regarding the specific reality of each country, we could contribute a grain of sand to the building of the fairest possible world. Aware of the fact I am not the one to give lessons on each of the problems of the turbulent world in which we live, I thought that relating our recent experience as a country could help those who want to listen to learn from it.

Chile is currently undergoing an intense political process. Almost three years ago, we faced a serious political and social crisis. During those days, a great majority of Chileans expressed their unease about the inequality and mistreatment, their indignation at the long waits for public health care, their disgust at the millions of dollars in student debts and their rejection

of meagre pensions after long years of work. That is perhaps a familiar story for many of those here.

In a few months, it will be 50 years since President Salvador Allende, from this very rostrum where I have the honour to be today, gave an account of the important social and political changes that our country was undergoing (see A/PV.2096). We are a country that has long been searching for its own path to dignity. While poverty has been significantly reduced and there has been significant progress on social issues during the democratic Governments of the past 30 years, it is undeniable that the development model adopted in Chile has preserved a high degree of wealth, making us one of the most unequal countries in the world, which grieves us.

As clearly also happens in many developing countries, that inequality has not only hindered our path to development but is also a potential threat to democracy, since the fracture in society destroys social cohesion, thereby hampering our understanding of each other and our building together a freer and fairer future.

The social upheaval that Chile experienced in 2019 perplexed many observers, including some represented here, who were asking what had happened in the country, as well as actors in national life. Many were struck by the fact that a country that had achieved significant levels of economic growth and human development, showing significant improvements in the quality of life of its population, was at the same time faced with such a profound crisis.

Unfortunately, what happened in my homeland was not accidental, but the consequence of countless stories of pain and procrastination that were brewing and affecting the very heart of our society. I want to say that, even if it is not expected, that can also happen in the countries of other Member States. That is why I ask that we, together, be proactive in the pursuit of greater social justice. A better distribution of wealth and power must go hand in hand with sustainable growth. I am deeply convinced that, with the participation of Member States, it is possible, and it is an urgent need.

Regrettably, I must say this today because each of us cannot come and just talk about good things. That discontent also expressed itself in serious incidents of violence, such as fires in metro stations and the vandalization of civic buildings.

Meanwhile, we witnessed uncontrolled repression, which resulted in deaths, injuries and more than 400 people suffering eye injuries as a result of the State's action, which, in the view of our Government and various international organizations, represents a serious human rights violation that must be redressed, and it will be.

It was that long history of injustice that manifested itself in our country from October to December 2019. But — and this is the good news — history lasts longer than those of us who today hold these positions and the long history of citizen mobilization and social struggles, which enabled the return to democracy and the reunion of democrats, as President Aylwin said at the end of the previous century, and which at the dawn of the twentieth century allowed progress in workers' rights. In the peaceful protests of 2019, there were also women from the previous century who, despite everything, advanced women's right to vote. The memories of the workers who achieved the right to rest and the settlers who fought, and continue to fight, for decent housing accompanied us. All those memories and social struggles were present.

The values behind that deep discontent — equality, justice and freedom — are not unrelated to a demand that we see increasingly frequently around the world and from this rostrum. The protection and promotion of human rights everywhere and by every Government, decent work, universal social protection and the fight against the climate crisis are today universal demands that are the focus of *Our Common Agenda* (A/75/982), led by our Secretary-General, Mr. António Guterres, and the Sustainable Development Goals.

The way forward for a peaceful and democratic solution to the crisis in our country was an important agreement between the main political forces that developed a path towards the drafting of a new constitution, capable of laying the foundations of a new social contract. That path, driven by Chilean society from protest and social struggle and politically channelled by various institutions, was endorsed by a plebiscite, where 80 per cent of voters supported a new constitution, to be written by a specifically elected body.

The challenge is not a small one. It consists of achieving, as never before in our history, a democratic constitution, drafted with the participation of citizens and indigenous peoples and gender parity — a constitution for all, but also made by all.

A few weeks ago, the work accomplished by the Constitutional Convention between 2021 and 2022 was submitted to citizen consultation by means of a plebiscite, in which Chileans participated on a massive scale, with 85 per cent participation. In that electoral event, we citizens clearly rejected the proposal by 62 per cent versus 38 per cent. Today, as a country, we are therefore looking for new formulas to build this meeting place for all Chileans.

My personal decision in the plebiscite was to vote for the proposal for a new constitution, but the result was the opposite. Some saw the result of the plebiscite as a defeat for the Government. In all humility, I wish to say to them today at the United Nations that a Government can never feel defeated when the people speak out. In a democracy, the people's word is sovereign and is the guide at all times.

Why am I talking about this? Because, unlike in the past, when differences in Chile were resolved by blood and fire, today we Chileans agree to overcome our challenges democratically.

I am talking about this because I am sure that one of the main challenges for humankind today is building democracies that truly speak and listen to the people and achieve the desired results. Those of us attending this Assembly have the duty to improve our democracies.

*Ms. Kamina Johnson Smith (Jamaica), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

During the many days of mobilization, the word dignity resounded. The Chilean people expressed themselves, giving us a lesson in democracy, which we are learning. Chile has called on its democracy and its political actors to rise to their demands and the challenges of today, which we too must meet.

As a Government, we received the results of the recent plebiscite with our eyes and hearts wide open. We want to hear what the people are telling us because we trust in their judgment and their will. There are things that we understood very clearly, which I want to briefly share. The results are the expression of a citizenry that demands changes without jeopardizing its current achievements and that wants a better future, built seriously and without succumbing to new insecurities — a future of change with stability.

As a young person who not long ago was protesting on the street, I can say that representing unrest is much easier than providing solutions for it. Those of us

devoted to the demanding work of politics often easily confuse our successes as spokespeople for citizen annoyance with our real capacity to be builders of better futures. The outcome of our country's plebiscite has taught us to be humbler — democracy should be humble — and to realize that, in building the Chile of which we dream, no given sector has the recipe. Rather, it is a mixture, combining the best that each of us can contribute. In the twenty-first century, we govern by mobilizing the capacities and wisdom of our societies, not by trying to replace them.

As President of Chile, I am convinced that very soon Chile will have a constitution that satisfies us and makes us proud, built on democracy that brings together the contributions of all sectors of society and is able to reflect our aspirations for justice and liberty.

From the humble history of my country, I can say with deep conviction that the path to overcoming the problems that afflict our societies is paved with more democracy, not with less, encouraging, and not limiting, participation, fostering dialogue, never censoring it, and, above all, respecting those who think differently, including their points of view and understanding that having different opinions does not make us enemies. I rebel against the chasm that some try to dig around legitimately diverse views. We in Chile declare our will to be builders of bridges across such gaps, which prevent us from seeing ourselves as diverse societies.

That is the experience and learning that, from our small country, we want to share with the nations of the world. Deepening democracy is an ongoing exercise, in which we can only persevere and each learn from the experience of others.

In conclusion, I therefore call on Member States to work together to strengthen democracy in all spaces, in every country and in relations among us. In Latin America, we need a united voice and more common work by the global South. We need a modernized United Nations, where we all have the same goals,

Based on multilateralism, justice and peace at all times and in all places, we must commit to taking the necessary actions, not just making statements, so as to stop Russia's unjust war on Ukraine and put an end to all abuses by the powerful everywhere in the world. We must commit to mobilizing our efforts to stop violence against women, be it in Iran in memory of Mahsa Amini, who died at the hands of the police this week, or anywhere in the world. We must

commit to not normalizing the ongoing human rights violations against the Palestinian people by upholding international law and the resolutions adopted by this very Assembly that support their inalienable right to establish their own free, sovereign State, as well as to ensuring Israel's legitimate right to live within secure and internationally recognized borders. We must commit to continuing to work for the release of political prisoners in Nicaragua and to ensure that nowhere in the world can having ideas that differ from those of the Government in power end in persecution or human rights violations.

The whole world is calling for change and, like those before us, we, as part of the new generations, have the right and responsibility to think about and realize a different future. Citizens who suffer the most from the consequences of societies built on segregation and abuse demand rights and a safe life. We can achieve that world of greater well-being only through increased democracy. That is the call that today we must all heed. In Chile, we are ready to collaborate in every part of the world to that end.

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

*Mr. Gabriel Boric Font, President of the Republic of Chile, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**Address by His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

*His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**King Abdullah:** We meet today, in this General Assembly, as the alarm bells ring all around us. Numerous crises batter our world, crises that are increasingly interlocked — regional conflicts with an international impact, devastating climate change,



pandemic disruptions, extremist violence, spiralling inflation, looming recession and, for all too many around the world, the growing reality of hunger. Developing countries have been the hardest hit. Is this the future that we will leave to the generations yet to come?

We must deliver a different world, one of expanded horizons, a more equitable world, sustainable economic growth, exciting new opportunities, more and better jobs and the inclusive peace for prosperity, in which all people can thrive.

To reach those goals, our countries must unite behind effective collaborative action. The question now is whether we will have the vision and determination to get the job done.

Let us consider the climate crisis. No country can heal our injured Earth alone. We need global partnerships that can create real change. Jordan is part of those efforts. We have been building strong partnerships to manage and sustain vital water resources, and we see more opportunities to work with partners to preserve precious world heritage sites and natural wonders — the unique Dead Sea, the sacred Jordan River and the resilient coral reefs of the Gulf of Aqaba, all of which are threatened by climate change.

Food security is another global priority. Hundreds of millions of people go to bed hungry, and the numbers are rising. How can parents raise healthy children? How can students learn? How can workers do their best when they are hungry and without hope?

Since the beginning of the pandemic, and now with the crisis in Ukraine, global supply chains have been disrupted. Many well-off countries experienced empty food shelves for the first time in living memory. They are discovering a truth that people in developing countries have known for a long time — for countries to thrive, affordable food must reach every family's table.

At the global level, that demands collective measures to ensure fair access to affordable food and expedite the movement of staples to countries in need. Sustainable, inclusive economic growth has too often been a victim of global crises, but it can also be a defence that strengthens us to endure the storms. In my region, we expect to build integrated partnerships that tap the capabilities and resources of each of our countries for the benefit of all. We see regional resilience packs coming together to stimulate fresh opportunities and growth. Jordan has established multilateral partnerships with

Egypt, Iraq, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and other countries in the region to capitalize on those opportunities. Our country is a bridge for regional partnerships and cooperation, international crisis response and humanitarian action.

Jordan has always been a source of regional stability, as well as a refuge for those in need. In that context, let me say a word about refugees and the communities that host them. In 2012, I stood before the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session and spoke for the first time about the Syrian refugee flow and its pressure on Jordan's scarce resources (see A/67/PV.7). At that point, 200,000 Syrians had sought refuge in our small country. Today, 10 years later, we host more than 1.3 million. Meeting the needs of those and other refugees is an international responsibility, and host countries look to the international community to honour its commitments.

For decades, the Middle East has been synonymous with conflict and crisis. But we are hopeful that a new-found spirit of collaboration can make our region an exemplar of resilience and integration. While politics may sometimes fail our world, one absolute remains — always put people first. To keep hope alive for all peoples means rising above politics to ensure every individual's prosperity. Such efforts will be fruitless if they are exclusionary. Inclusion of the Palestinian people in regional economic projects should be an integral part of our efforts.

In the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, peace continues to be elusive. Neither war nor diplomacy has held the answer to that historic tragedy. It is the people themselves, not politics and politicians, who will have to come together and push their leaders to resolve it. What would our world look like now if the conflict had been settled long ago, if walls had never gone up and if people had been allowed to build bridges of cooperation instead? What if extremists had never been able to exploit the injustices of occupation? How many generations of young people could have grown up in the optimism of peace and progress?

As we continue our efforts to achieve peace, we must not abandon refugees. This year, the General Assembly will vote on renewing the mandate of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East. The international community should send a strong message of support for the rights of Palestinian refugees, ensuring that Palestinian refugee

children have schools to go to and access to appropriate medical care.

A founding principle of the United Nations is the right to self-determination for all peoples. The Palestinian people, with their resilient national identity, cannot be denied that right. The road forward is the two-State solution, in accordance with United Nations resolutions — a sovereign, viable and independent Palestinian State based on the 4 June 1967 lines, with East Jerusalem as its capital, living side by side with Israel in peace, security and prosperity.

Today the future of Jerusalem is an urgent concern. The city is holy to billions of Muslims, Christians and Jews around the world. Undermining Jerusalem's legal and historical status quo triggers global tensions and deepens religious divides. The holy city must not be a place for hatred and division.

As custodians of Jerusalem's Muslim and Christian holy sites, we are committed to protecting their historical and legal status quo and to their safety and future. As a Muslim leader, let me clearly say that we are committed to defending the rights, the precious heritage and the historic identity of the Christian people of our region. Nowhere is that more important than in Jerusalem.

Today Christianity in the holy city is under fire. The rights of churches in Jerusalem are threatened. That cannot continue. Christianity is vital to the past and present of our region and the holy land. It must remain an integral part of our future.

We can weather the most serious crises if we join together. Let us here in this General Assembly honour our shared interest in a brighter future, a future of dignity and hope, that brings new opportunities for all our peoples. But let us not ignore the alarm bells ringing around us. We must act.

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank His Majesty the King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan for the statement he has just made.

*His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

## **Address by Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego, President of the Republic of Colombia**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego, President of the Republic of Colombia.

*Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego, President of the Republic of Colombia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego, President of the Republic of Colombia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Petro Urrego (spoke in Spanish):** I come from one of the three most beautiful countries on Earth. There is an explosion of life there — thousands of multicoloured species in the seas, skies and lands. I come from the land of yellow butterflies and magic. Water cascades down the lush green mountains and valleys — but so do torrents of blood. I come from a country of blood-soaked beauty.

My country is both beautiful and violent. How can beauty co-exist with death? How can the biodiversity of life flourish alongside the dance of death and horror? Who is to blame for breaking the spell with terror? Who or what is responsible for burying our daily lives in routine decisions about wealth and interest? Who is leading us to destruction as a nation and a people?

My country is beautiful because it has the Amazon forest, the Chocó Forest, the waters, the Andes Mountain range and the oceans. There, in those forests, planetary oxygen is generated and atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) is absorbed. One of those CO<sub>2</sub>-absorbing plants, among millions of species, is one of the most persecuted on Earth. Its destruction is being sought at any cost — it is an Amazonian plant, the coca plant, the sacred plant of the Incas.

As if at a paradoxical crossroads, the forest we are trying to save is at the same time being destroyed. To destroy the coca plant, they throw vast quantities of poisons and glyphosate into the water, they arrest the growers and imprison them. People who grow the coca plant are arrested and imprisoned. One million Latin Americans have been killed, and 2 million African-Americans are imprisoned in North America for destroying or possessing the coca leaf.

“Destroy the plant that kills”, they shout from the North, but the plant is only one of the millions that perish when they set the jungle on fire. Destroying the forest, the Amazon, has become the watchword of States and businesses. Never mind the scientists’ warning that the rainforest is one of the great pillars of the climate. For the global power networks, the forest and its inhabitants are to blame for the problems that beset them. The global power networks are at the mercy of their addiction to money, remaining in power, oil, cocaine and the hardest drugs available to numb themselves more.

There is nothing more hypocritical than the debate about saving the forest. The forest is burning, while the members of the General Assembly make war and play with it. The forest — the pillar of our global climate — is disappearing with all its life. The great sponge that absorbs planetary CO<sub>2</sub> is evaporating. This life-saving forest is seen in my country as an enemy to be defeated, a weed to be eradicated. The space where peasants live and grow coca because they have nothing else to grow is being demonized.

The members of the General Assembly are interested in my country only if they can throw poison into its forests, put its men into prison and exile its women. They have no interest in our children’s education, they want to destroy our forest and extract coal and oil from its bowels. Our poison-absorbing sponge is of no use, they prefer to spread more poison into the atmosphere.

For the members of the General Assembly, we provide an excuse for the emptiness and loneliness of their own societies, which leads them to live in a drug bubble. We hide them from their problems, which they refuse to reform. It is better to declare war on the forests, on its plants, on its people. While they let the forest burn, while hypocrites pursue the plants with poison in order to hide the disasters of their own societies, they ask us for more and more coal, more and more oil in order to satisfy their other addiction — to consumption, to power, to money.

Which is more toxic to humankind — cocaine, coal or oil? The judgement of power has decreed that cocaine is a poison and must be persecuted, even if it only causes minimal deaths by overdose — more deaths are caused by contamination of the drug during its illicit trade. Meanwhile, they have declared that coal and oil must be protected, with the result that their use could lead to humankind’s extinction. That is the

state of world power, of injustice and of irrationality, because world power has become irrational. They see in the forest’s exuberance and vitality a lustfulness and sinfulness — the root cause of the sadness in their societies, which are steeped in the insatiable compulsion to have and to consume.

How can they hide the loneliness in people’s hearts, the emptiness of societies devoid of affection and competitive to the point of trapping people’s souls in loneliness, if not by blaming the plant, the people who grow it and the liberal secrets of the jungle? According to the irrational world Powers, it is not the market that is to blame for shortening humankind’s existence, but the forest and those who live in it.

The bank accounts have become unlimited, the savings of the most powerful people on Earth could not even be spent in centuries. The sadness of existence created by that artificial call for competition is filled with noise and drugs. The addiction to money and possessions has another side to it — addiction to drugs in people who lose the contest, in the artificial race into which they have transformed humankind.

The disease of loneliness will not be cured by spreading glyphosate in the forest. It is not the forest that is to blame. Those to blame are the societies trained to engage in endless consumption and into stupidly mistaking consumption for happiness, while filling the pockets of the powerful with money. The forest is not to blame for drug addiction — it is the irrational behaviour of the world Powers. Give them a dose of light, of reason. Turn the century’s lights back on.

The war on drugs has lasted 40 years. If we do not change course and it continues for another 40 years, the United States will see 2,800,000 young people die of overdose from fentanyl, a drug that Latin America does not produce. It will see millions of African-Americans incarcerated in private prisons. African-American prisoners will become a business venture for prison companies. One million more Latin Americans will be murdered, our waters and green fields will be filled with blood and the dream of democracy will die, both in my America and in Anglo-Saxon America. Democracy will die where it was born, in the great Athens of the European West.

If we hide the truth, we will see the forest and our democracies die. The war on drugs has failed. The fight against the climate crisis has failed.

Deadly drug use has increased, progressing from soft drugs to harder drugs. Genocide has been perpetrated on my continent, and in my country millions of people have been sent to prison — and they have blamed the forest and its plants in order to hide their own social guilt. They have filled their speeches and their policies with nonsense.

On behalf of my wounded Latin America, I call for an end to the irrational war on drugs. Reducing drug consumption does not require wars or weapons. It requires us all to build better societies — more caring, affectionate societies, in which the intensity of life protects us from addictions and new forms of slavery. Do the members of the General Assembly want fewer drugs? Let them think about less money, more love. Let them think about the rational exercise of power.

Let them not taint the beauty of my homeland with their poisons. Let them help us, without hypocrisy, to save the Amazon forest in order to ensure humankind's existence on the planet. They brought the scientists together, who spoke with reason. Their mathematics and climatological models demonstrated that the end of the human species is near and that we no longer have millennia — or even centuries — left. Science set the alarm bells ringing, and we stopped listening to them. War has served as an excuse for not taking the necessary measures.

When action was most needed, when speeches were no longer useful, when it was indispensable to deposit money into funds to save humankind, when it was necessary to move away as soon as possible from coal and oil — they invented one war after another. They invaded Ukraine, but also Iraq, Libya and Syria. They invaded in the name of oil and gas. In the twenty-first century, they discovered the worst of their addictions: money and oil. Wars have served for them as an excuse to not take action to combat the climate crisis and shown them how dependent they are on what will finish off the human species.

When the members of the General Assembly see starving and thirsty people migrating north by the millions, to where the water is, they enclose them, build walls, deploy machine guns and shoot at them. They expel them as if they were not human beings, five times worse than the mentality of those whose policies created the gas chambers and concentration camps. They have brought us back on a global scale to 1933 — the day of the great triumph of the assault on reason. Do they not

see that the solution to the great exodus unleashed on their countries is to bring back the flow of nutrients into the water that fills the rivers and fields?

The climate disaster fills us with viruses that spread devastation, but they do business with medicines and turn vaccines into commodities. They say that the market will save us from what the market itself created. Humankind, like Frankenstein, lets the market — and greed — act without planning, abandoning logic and reason. It subordinates human reason to greed. What is the point of war when what we need to do is save the human species? What is the point of NATO and empires when the end of intelligence is near?

The climate disaster will kill hundreds of millions of people, and the members of the General Assembly may be assured that it is not the planet but capital that will be to blame. The cause of the climate disaster is capital. The logic of relationships geared to consuming more and more and producing more and more so that some of us earn more and more is the cause of the climate disaster. They harnessed the logic of the expanded accumulation of capital to the use of coal- and petrol-fired engines, and they unleashed a hurricane: the chemical changes in our atmosphere will be more and more widespread and deadly. Now in a parallel word, the expanded accumulation of capital is the expanded accumulation of death.

From the land of forests and beauty — where they decided to make the Amazon forest the enemy and to extradite and imprison its farmers — I urge the members of the General Assembly to stop the war and put an end to the climate disaster. Here in the Amazon forest, humankind has failed. Behind the conflagrations burning there, behind the poisoning, lies the failure of humankind as a civilization. Behind the addiction to cocaine and drugs, behind the addiction to oil and coal, lies the real addiction of this current phase of human history: the addiction to irrational power, to profit and to money. That is the massive deadly machinery that could wipe out humankind.

As President of one of the most beautiful — and blood-drenched and exploited — countries on Earth, I call for an end to the war on drugs and for our people to be allowed to live in peace. I call on all of Latin America to come together with one voice in order to defeat the irrational behaviour that is making martyrs of our physical bodies. I call on the members of the General Assembly to save the entirety of the Amazon



forest using resources that can be allocated worldwide to ensuring life.

For those members that do not have the capacity to finance the funding of the revitalization of the forests or for which it is harder to allocate money to life than to weapons, I call on them to reduce foreign debt in order to release our own budget spaces, through which the work of saving humankind and life on the planet can be undertaken. We can do it if they do not want to. Just exchange debt for life, for nature.

I call on all members of the General Assembly, and in particular I call on all Latin America, to engage in dialogue to end the war. Do not pressure us to take a side in the war. It is time for peace. Let the Slavic peoples talk to each other. Let the peoples of the world talk to each other.

War is only a trap that brings us all closer to the end of time in our great orgy of irrationality. On behalf of Latin America, we call on Ukraine and Russia to make peace.

Only in peace can we save lives on this Earth of ours. There can be no total peace without social, economic and environmental justice. We are also at war with the planet. If there is no peace with the planet, there will be no peace among nations. And without social justice, there is no social peace.

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

*Mr. Gustavo Petro Urrego, President of the Republic of Colombia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye**

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

*Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Erdoğan** (*spoke in Turkish; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I would like to wholeheartedly greet everyone on behalf of myself and my nation. I hope and pray that the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly will yield the best possible results for us, our countries and the entire human race. I would also like to congratulate Mr. Csaba Kőrösi for having assumed the presidency of the General Assembly and for his theme for this year's session of the General Assembly, "A watershed moment: transformative solutions to interlocking challenges", which appears to be very appropriate.

We meet at a time when we are trying to sort out many challenges on a global scale. One of the biggest lessons of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic was how to build international solidarity in resolving global threats. During the pandemic, Türkiye managed to provide humanitarian aid, without any discrimination, to more than 161 countries and 12 international organizations. We also contributed to the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility, as well as national and local vaccine efforts, in the service of the entire human race. Last year, we ratified the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in order to demonstrate the extent of our resolve in the fight against climate change and our aim of becoming a zero-emission country by 2053. We also convened the sixteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Istanbul, which showed our willingness to become pioneers in the fight against climate change.

The global economy was impacted heavily by the supply-chain problems caused by the pandemic, and with the addition of the Russia-Ukraine crisis we are experiencing a new wave of shock. Energy, food and raw materials prices are increasing, creating the enormous pressure of inflation, which has significant ramifications for the world's economies and social welfare systems. Those developments have proved once again the high importance of energy supply security. Since the shock began, Türkiye has focused on energy not as an issue of competition but as an area for cooperation. Taking into account our own needs, we have revived many projects to support energy security, not only in our region but also on a global scale. In the light of recent developments, our approach has proved to be effective.

The situation we are facing has also jeopardized food supply security. This is the twenty-first century — we have never had as many financial and

technological opportunities as we do now. Yet one fifth of the world's population still currently faces crippling rates of poverty and hunger. The world was aiming to reach zero poverty and hunger by the year 2030 under the Sustainable Development Goals, but given recent developments it seems like we are moving away from our projected achievements. It is time for us to shed light on our path, and that can be done only through international cooperation and solidarity and by taking just and fair approaches to our dealings with one another. We need to take action together to combat the challenges of our common fate. Türkiye is willing to demonstrate its willingness to do that, as we have done with the pandemic and the climate change crisis.

We have also demonstrated our stance in combating the crisis caused by the Russia-Ukraine conflict. The Ukrainian conflict has surpassed the seven-month threshold, and we believe that while there will never be a winner in this war, a fair peace process should not have any losers. That is important to us, as we have consistently underlined the importance of using diplomacy, through dialogue, in order to settle disputes once and for all. That is why we brought together the parties at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, and then in Istanbul, in order to facilitate the reconciliation process.

As a result of our significant efforts together with the Secretary-General, we have managed to export Ukrainian grain through the Black Sea, and it has found its way to other global markets. The agreement reached in Istanbul to enable those exports, the Black Sea Grain Initiative, is still critical, and those exports will increase over time. That agreement, undertaken jointly with the United Nations, is one of our Organization's greatest accomplishments in recent decades. I think that the international community has revived its confidence in the United Nations as a result of the agreement in Istanbul, because it proved once again that negotiations can yield results, especially on issues that are vital to all the parties involved.

We have taken a similar approach to the issue of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, which is threatening the security of the entire globe. The conflict is escalating, and we are investing tremendous efforts in order to ensure an end to the war by definitively protecting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We urge all the international organizations and countries of the world to support Türkiye's peaceful initiatives to settle the dispute once and for all. We need a dignified way

out of this crisis, which can be found only through a rational, fair and appropriate diplomatic solution.

On the other hand, all the disasters affecting millions of people have shown once again that the United Nations will have to be much more effective and influential and that it has a responsibility to invest further efforts in resolving problems on a global scale. The United Nations will have to be much more inclusive and be capable of creating effective solutions for a fairer world. The United Nations must become an international organization in which the common will of the entire human race can be advanced. The Security Council in particular must be more effective, democratic, transparent, accountable and functional in order to help the entire human race in its search for peace, justice and welfare. That is going to be a turning point for us all. In order to remember our collective responsibility, we have been reiterating that one world is better than five and that a fairer world is still possible. We have repeated those remarks on every platform at every opportunity. We are committed and determined in our fight, and we expect the entire world to support us. I therefore once again call on the Assembly for its support.

Our foreign policy vision has been always peace-oriented. We have worked tirelessly, beginning in our region, to ensure that peace prevails in the entire world. In our "Mediation for peace" initiative, which we conduct under the auspices of the United Nations, we have worked tirelessly to resolve conflicts in Europe, Latin America, Africa and other areas. We seek to act as a mediator or facilitator in order to settle disputes once and for all. Our country is located in the heart of a region surrounded by conflict, but we seek to be a part of the solution rather than a part of the problem, which is possible only through the initiatives that we choose to undertake.

In that regard, we have always stressed that a peaceful, permanent reliable settlement must be found for the Syrian conflict in the framework of Security Council resolution 2254 (2015). I believe that, if that conflict continues, it will threaten Syria's territorial security and welfare and that of our region. Our country has hosted 4 million civilians of Syrian descent to date.

I think that the Security Council must shoulder its responsibility to extend resolution 2642 (2022), enabling the humanitarian aid mechanism that was established in Syria's north-west. There, we are fighting

terrorist organizations such as the Kurdistan Workers' Party and its offshoots, which pose a significant and clear threat to Türkiye and its security forces. That terrorist organization changes its name on a continuous basis and tries to legitimize itself. We must urge global forces to stop weaponizing those terrorist organizations and stop making the same mistakes of the past.

We are powerful enough to take every necessary measure against terrorism, and I want to remind everyone of that again. We will never shy away from combating terrorism and will always be very resolved to take the necessary measures to combat it. We seek to do everything in our capacity and with the utmost sincerity to ensure that our Syrian brothers and sisters are able to return to their country in a dignified, safe and secure manner.

We seek to create conditions that are conducive to returning civilians who fled the war to their motherland and ensuring that they lead dignified lives. We are building 100,000 brick homes in several parts of Syria so that they can seek refuge there. The vast majority of those homes have already been completed and handed over to their owners. We have also started preparations to build an additional 200,000 housing units so that 1 million Syrians will be able to go back to their homeland. Those projects will be completed in safe zones in a total of 13 different centres and rural areas, and we need the support of the international community in order for that to be possible. We need all the stakeholders in that project to demonstrate serious solidarity and commitment.

Irregular migration — the refugee crisis — cannot be solved by leaving people to their demise, building border walls and placing them in refugee camps. We can solve that problem only through efforts focused on humankind and human life. That approach is being taken in Greece, and we can clearly see that the Greeks are becoming much more tolerant towards the refugees around the Aegean Sea and the eastern Mediterranean.

Türkiye does not want to see the bodies of babies such as Aylan being washed ashore. But at the same time, Greece is unfortunately pushing back those refugees in an illegal and deliberate manner, turning the Aegean into a graveyard for refugees. Last week, a 9-month-old baby named Assam and a 4-year-old, Abdul Wahab, died because the Hellenic Coast Guard forces sank their boats. I think that it is high time for Europe, as well as the United Nations and other international

organizations, to say “stop” and “that is enough” to such crimes, which are crimes against humanity.

In another of our neighbouring countries, Iraq, we seek to invest significant efforts in order to ensure that peace and prosperity can be established there as well. We want political reconciliation to be established and political unity to be formed within the framework of an Iraqi identity. We must work together in order to sustainably establish prosperity in Iraq and stop the abuses being committed by terrorist organizations there. Nevertheless, there are terrorist organizations that continue to abuse Iraq's instability, and we will never stop fighting the Iraq-based terrorist organizations that have taken violent action against Türkiye.

As I have said in this Hall many times, we will fight terrorism without any discrimination, and our commitment to genuine solidarity will help us achieve our goals. We will fight back against terrorism in all its forms, regardless of the names of its groups, and we want our allies — our friends — to provide us with the solidarity and commitment we need. It is natural for us to expect others to cooperate with us rather than terrorist organizations and tyrant regimes. We want our neighbours to forge solidarity with us in order to contribute to the stability, peace and welfare of our entire region and the world, and we are ready to work with them.

From a global security perspective, we need to focus on North Africa and the eastern Mediterranean. In that framework, it is critical to establish stability and welfare in Libya, not only for the world but also for the entire region. Türkiye strongly supports the efforts of the United Nations in that regard. We want to protect the sovereignty, unity and integrity of the Libyan people and ensure that they attain their much-desired level of prosperity. Fair and universal elections should be held in Libya, and a strong Government with the legitimacy of the will of the people must be established there, which is something that we all have to work towards.

In order to ensure peace and prosperity throughout the Middle East, we need to put an end to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict once and for all by establishing a two-State solution, which is something we strongly support. We must preserve the historical and cultural identity of Jerusalem and respect Haram Al-Sharif, and we must stop the illegal settlements in the occupied regions by establishing security guarantees for Palestinians and their property. We must establish a

permanent and fair solution for the region, with East Jerusalem as the capital and through the establishment of a free and sovereign Palestinian State. That is the only solution. It is in the best interests of the Palestinian people, the Israeli people, the region and the entire world. We will contribute efforts to making that possible.

It is also the international community's responsibility to increase the institutional and financial capacity of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East.

We are also concerned about the problems in Iran. We have always supported the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We need diplomacy and dialogue to settle the disputes regarding Iran's nuclear programme once and for all.

With regard to Azerbaijan, the liberation of its occupied territories has offered a historic opportunity for a permanent peace and stability in the South Caucasus. Türkiye has been supportive of the process between Azerbaijan and Armenia. We have taken significant steps to make the best use of that opportunity. Recent clashes have cast a dark shadow on those positive developments, but we believe that it is still possible to achieve sustainable peace between those two countries. We will always stand by our Azerbaijani brothers in building their homes and their future in a legitimate and justified manner.

The opening, without delay, of the transportation routes in the region, which is an issue that also concerns our country closely, will contribute tremendously to the welfare the entire region.

At the same time, Afghanistan has struggled with conflicts, terrorism and poverty for almost half a century and is currently experiencing a challenging period. The interim Government must take the necessary steps to protect fundamental human rights, which could pave the way for some promising developments. Türkiye will continue supporting its Afghan brothers and sisters during that process.

India and Pakistan, following the establishment of their sovereignty and independence 75 years ago, still have not established peace and solidarity between one another, which is unfortunate. We hope and pray that fair and permanent peace and prosperity will be established in Kashmir.

We would like to extend our sincere condolences to the people of Pakistan with regard to the catastrophic

floods that they recently experienced. In response to the flood, we launched a humanitarian aid campaign, which is ongoing. We call on the international community to support the Pakistani people during this regrettable and painful period.

We support the safe, voluntary and dignified return of the Rohingya Muslims to their homeland.

We are very sensitive to the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of the Muslim Uyghur Turks in such a way that it will not threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of China.

In the Balkans, we are investing tremendous efforts on multiple platforms to strengthen peace and stability and to settle disputes through dialogue. At the beginning of September, we conducted an official visit to the region, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Croatia. I think that the finalization of elections in Bosnia and Herzegovina will contribute tremendously to the Belgrade-Pristina dialogue process and the stability of the region.

As a country, Türkiye wants all the issues in the Aegean Sea and in the eastern Mediterranean to be resolved within the framework of good-neighbourly relations and in conformity with international law. Those countries that pursue a show of force in our region seem foolish and are no match for us. In the eastern Mediterranean, peace and stability depends on respect for the rights of all the parties. We expect Greece to set aside its provocative policies and to heed our calls for cooperation and solidarity.

We believe that the eastern Mediterranean conference, which we have recommended previously, will serve that purpose. The fact that our interlocutors have not made even the slightest effort to respond to that call shows who supports peace and dialogue and who supports conflict. Türkiye will always defend its rights in the Aegean and the eastern Mediterranean and will never yield to the escalation strategies led by other countries.

With regard to the Cyprus issue, we have always sought to reach a just, lasting and sustainable resolution, and we are working together with the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus to that end. There are two States and two different peoples on that island, and that should be universally accepted. The acceptance of the equal sovereignty and the international status of the Turkish Cypriots is key to a settlement on the island. We hereby



call on the international community to put an end to the oppression of the Turkish Cypriots and to the sanctions imposed on them.

Greece, a member of the European Union, is inhumanely pushing back refugees in the Aegean Sea and is imposing policies against the Turkish Muslim minority in violation of its legal obligations. We hope that Greece will bring an end to all those wrongful practices and that the European Union will stop turning a blind eye to those inhumane and unlawful actions.

The value of Türkiye's cooperation with the European Union is important in addressing regional and global challenges. As a strong ally of NATO, Türkiye is celebrating its seventieth anniversary as a member of the organization. We have diplomatic initiatives and military capabilities that are contributing to the security of the Euro-Atlantic region. We seek to contribute to the security, stability and prosperity of the European continent. And as a part of Asia on the Western coast of Europe, we are also leading initiatives on the Asian continent, such as the Asia Anew initiative, with a view to assuming a more proactive role.

We are trying to establish closer contacts and solidarity with African countries through the recent global initiatives that we have undertaken. In that context, in Istanbul from 16 to 18 December 2021, we held the third Türkiye-Africa Partnership Summit, which was widely attended by our African friends. Türkiye has always shown its commitment, as an equal partner, to Africa's journey towards stability, development and prosperity.

Our cooperation with Latin America is also getting stronger, on the basis of mutual respect, and we are going to invest efforts institutionally to become more proactive in Latin America.

The international community is being shaken by several challenges. The biggest threat we are currently facing is the loss of the will to live together.

We are deeply concerned by the rise of racism, discrimination, xenophobia and Islamophobia in recent years. We have repeatedly called for 15 March, the date on which the terrorist attack against Muslims in New Zealand took place, to be declared the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, and we reiterate that appeal once again. We have taken action, first within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and subsequently within the General Assembly, to ensure that that date is

declared the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, and hope that wish will be realized.

*The President returned to the Chair.*

As I have emphasized many times before, we consider Islamophobia along the same lines as antisemitism. We also consider it a crime against humanity. With that in mind, I hope that the General Assembly, at its seventy-seventh session, will be able to accomplish the goals that will respond to the expectations and aspirations of the entire human race. I extend my wishes for health and peace to all States. Once again, I wish to express to all Member States, on my behalf and on behalf of my nation, my appreciation and respect.

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

*Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** Before proceeding, I wish to recall that national interventions are limited to 15 minutes. I kindly request delegations to observe the time limit.

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

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

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

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

**President Zhaparov** (*spoke in Kyrgyz; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I wish to congratulate the brotherly nation of Hungary on the election of its representative, Mr. Csaba Kőrösi, as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session. I wish you every success in this important international position, Mr. President, and the Kyrgyz Republic stands ready to support you. At the same time, I wish to thank Mr. Abdulla Shahid, the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session, for his hard work during difficult times

for the world community, as well as for supporting the international initiatives of my country.

The United Nations was established 77 years ago after the worst world war in the history of humankind. Perhaps the founding States of the United Nations, which signed the international agreement to establish the Organization in San Francisco in 1945, naively believed that wars, destruction, hunger and suffering would end forever. I do not think so. Success can always be achieved if there is a mutual understanding that disputes and disagreements must be resolved in a spirit of good faith and compromise.

In the history of the United Nations, there have been many important victories and successes. Although conflicts occur with varying degrees of severity in different regions of the world, the United Nations has played an important unifying role as a moral authority in maintaining peace and security and providing for people's wants and needs.

Now, with an unprecedented complication in the global geopolitical environment that has created alarming expectations in the international community due to the threat of the destruction of the fundamental foundations of peaceful coexistence and the inevitability of a major war, it is important for all of us to remember the high goals and objectives set down in the Charter of the United Nations, namely, to maintain international peace and security. To that end, we must take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace, and for the suppression of acts of aggression or other breaches of the peace; bring about by peaceful means, and in conformity with the principles of justice and international law, the adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations that might lead to a breach of the peace; and develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of the equal rights and self-determination of peoples.

Ever since our country became a State, we have consistently and strictly followed the United Nations Charter and have been fulfilling our duties in good faith. This March marked exactly 30 years since our country joined the United Nations, and recently, on 31 August, we celebrated the thirty-first anniversary of the independence of the Kyrgyz Republic.

We always strive to resolve our international disputes by peaceful means. In international relations, we always refrain from the threat or use of force against

the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. Looking back at the thorny path walked by our country, we highly appreciate the multifaceted contribution of the United Nations to the formation of Kyrgyzstan as an independent and sovereign State, and an equal and responsible member of the international community. Our people will never forget the support and assistance of the United Nations family in the formation of political, public and civil institutions, the strengthening of democracy and the development of a market economy. On behalf of our generous people and on my own behalf, I express my gratitude to all the leaders and staff of the United Nations system, who sincerely and selflessly helped us to realize the centuries-old dream of the Kyrgyz people to create their own independent State. To them, we extend our gratitude.

I take this opportunity to present to the international community from this rostrum the latest developments at the southern borders of our country, in relation to the aggravation of the situation at the Kyrgyz-Tajik border.

First, let me briefly touch on the history. The collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991 paved the way for territorial disputes and border problems, some of which have not been regulated to this day. While there were more than 20 disputed areas along the entire perimeter of the Soviet-Chinese border, five of them were in Kyrgyzstan.

I want to proudly remind the international community that we have successfully finalized border-regulation issues, first with the People's Republic of China in 1996 and jointly with the Republic of Kazakhstan at the point of intersection of the State borders of the three countries in 1999, and subsequently with the Republic of Kazakhstan in 2017. We have now practically completed our joint work and are about to sign an agreement on the State border with the Republic of Uzbekistan. I am pleased to note that the State borders with these three neighbouring countries have become borders of peace, good-neighbourliness, friendship and mutually beneficial cooperation.

With regard to relations with the Republic of Tajikistan, I would like to note the following. Our two close, neighbouring peoples have been living side by side for a long time. We are united by common values, culture, traditions and customs. We share the same faith. Our peoples are connected by family ties.

Our legendary father Manas was married to the Tajik princess Kanykey.

I also recall that, legally, the collapse of the Soviet Union occurred on 21 December 1991 in the city of Alma-Ata, Republic of Kazakhstan, when the heads of 11 newly independent States adopted the Alma-Ata Declaration on the creation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The declaration stated that our independent States recognize and respect each other's territorial integrity and the inviolability of existing borders. They indicate that the strengthening of relations of friendship, good-neighbourliness and mutually beneficial cooperation, which have deep historical roots, meets the fundamental interests of the people and serves the cause of peace and security. It is written that the countries recognize their responsibility to maintain civil peace and international harmony. That legal document was signed by all 11 Presidents of the CIS member States, including the Republic of Tajikistan.

The aforementioned principle was confirmed by the President of Tajikistan, Mr. Emomali Rahmon, in the declaration on respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and immunity of borders of the State Parties of the Commonwealth of Independent States, dated 15 April 1994. He signed and agreed. It is a pity that he is deviating from that principle now. He made his first official visit to the Kyrgyz Republic in 1998 after the end of the bloody civil war in Tajikistan. Later, two bilateral inter-State agreements were concluded between the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Tajikistan: the Agreement on bases of the inter-State relations between the Kyrgyz Republic and Republic of Tajikistan of 12 July 1996 and the Agreement on Good Neighbourly and Partnership Relations of 26 May 2004. I want to note that both agreements were signed in Dushanbe.

From the very beginning of work on the settlement of border issues between our two States, the Kyrgyz side has always acted in full compliance with its international obligations, including bilateral ones, and conducted negotiations in a constructive manner, offering mutually beneficial compromises. I note that in April 2021, the armed forces of Tajikistan launched an unjustified and unprovoked large-scale aggression on our territory, killing 36 citizens and causing serious material damage. Although my decision to meet with the President of the Republic of Tajikistan in Dushanbe was heavily criticized by the Kyrgyz people —who

demanded that we meet at a neutral location — I flew to Dushanbe and met with President Rahmon in June 2021 to try and find mutually beneficial solutions to the border issues. For the sake of my people, I am ready to spend not only 10 hours on negotiations, as I did that day, but as much time as possible to resolve this issue once and for all.

Of course, whatever the solution is, it should be mutually beneficial. It is all the more painful for me to report that on 14, 15 and 16 September, large-scale military clashes took place in the south of Kyrgyzstan. Despite all previously negotiated agreements, the Tajik side, with ill intention, attacked border and civilian objects along the entire perimeter of the Kyrgyz-Tajik State border. About 140,000 of our civilians have been evacuated from border settlements. They are now being provided with the necessary assistance. In that regard, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the United Nations system, our friends and partners for their solidarity and support. Great material damage was caused to civilian and military facilities, including houses, administrative buildings, schools and frontier posts.

Any material damage can be restored. However, we cannot restore the lives of our citizens who were fired upon or those of the brave defenders who sacrificed their lives and died fighting for their homeland. We will never forget the bravery of our courageous soldiers.

We are deeply saddened by the unjustified armed aggressions by Tajikistan, despite international agreements and obligations established between our countries. *Pacta sunt servanda* is the Latin for “agreements must be kept”. We are ready to continue the negotiation process in a civilized and legal manner, in any format, with our Tajik neighbours. Considering that our trust has been weakened by the recent lawless actions of our neighbour, we are ready to continue negotiations and welcome the mediation efforts of international organizations, including the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization.

We have documented evidence of both yesterday's and last year's illegal and ill-intentioned actions of the Tajik side. We are never the first to start and never will be. We always try to avoid using weapons, and even more so, we never shoot at unarmed civilians. We are always forced to respond accordingly and adequately

to the aggression of the Tajik side. In that regard, I emphasize that the Kyrgyz side does not claim foreign lands and does not intend to cede a centimetre of its land to anyone. We are convinced that all border and internal issues should be resolved at the negotiation table, and we are willing and ready in this regard. The most important issue today is the adoption of urgent measures to ensure security and stability in the border areas, to stop any actions aimed at increasing tensions among the local population, and to strengthen the trust between our two States. We are always ready for negotiations and clarification of our borders.

Regarding general United Nations issues, I would like to note the following.

This year, with half of the implementation period of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) having passed, we can now objectively look at the real situation at hand. The adoption of the SDGs in 2015, under the motto “leave no one behind”, was a bright example of the constructive negotiation capacity of the world community in the interests of all of us and subsequent generations. Meanwhile, it has already become obvious that owing to objective circumstances, including the coronavirus pandemic, the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals in developing countries, including our own, has slowed. Without adequate international funding, many may not even achieve the critical indicators of the SDGs.

I wish to reiterate the firm commitment of the Kyrgyz Republic to the SDGs and to their gradual implementation, taking into account our national capacities. I believe that our country’s own potential should be the main source and engine of sustainable development. For those purposes, our efforts are aimed at achieving the accelerated and qualitative growth of the economy, including through mutually beneficial regional and international trade and investment cooperation. For example, Kyrgyzstan actively participates in integration and cooperation processes, including the Eurasian Economic Union and the One Belt, One Road initiative of the People’s Republic of China.

The country is actively developing the locomotive of the “green economy”. With respect to the hydropower industry, small and medium-sized hydropower plants are being put into operation. Our esteemed neighbours Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan will participate in the construction of the largest hydroelectric power

station — Kambarata — which will strengthen the energy security and optimize the use of water resources in the region.

In general, I want to note the spirit of unity, mutual understanding, trust and support that was demonstrated in the city of Cholpon-Ata two months ago, when the fourth consultative meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia was held under the chairmanship of Kyrgyzstan. I hope that the signing by all parties of the Cholpon-Ata Treaty of Friendship, Good-Neighbourliness and Cooperation for the Development of Central Asia in the Twenty-First Century will open a new page in our inter-State relations. We are committed to continuing work in that format.

In conclusion, I want to assure the Assembly that Kyrgyzstan fully supports the United Nations as the only universal structure authorized by all of the States Members of the United Nations to meet the challenges faced by humankind. I hope that the United Nations will continue to properly perform all its functions and assist Member States in overcoming challenges and solving urgent global problems. I urge all Member States to provide unconditional political support and solidarity to the Organization in this difficult international time.

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

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

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

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

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

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

**President Tokayev:** First of all, I congratulate Mr. Kőrösi on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session.



We meet here at United Nations Headquarters at a critical time for humankind. The world of today appears to have entered a new, increasingly bitter period of geopolitical confrontation. The long-standing international system, based on order and responsibility, is giving way to a new, more chaotic and unpredictable one. The global system of checks and balances has failed to maintain peace and stability. The security architecture is eroding. Mutual distrust among global Powers is dangerously deepening. The world is falling prey to a new set of military conflicts. For the first time in two generations, we face the prospect of the use of nuclear weapons, and not even as a last resort. New fault lines are creating artificial barriers and economic isolation. Economic and political sanctions have become a new norm that erodes the supply chains that ensure food security, threatening millions, especially in vulnerable communities. These problems contribute to the mounting challenges of soaring inflation, job loss and fears of a worldwide recession, especially for developing nations. Finally, these crises severely hamper the urgent action we all agreed to take to combat climate change and enhance sustainable development.

Some 77 years ago, the founding Members placed within the Charter of the United Nations the principles and norms of international law that have successfully guided us ever since. There is nothing more important now than to return to the foundational principles that lie at the root of this universal Organization. In particular, we must rethink the linkages between three primordial principles: the sovereign equality of States, the territorial integrity of States and peaceful coexistence among States. These three principles are interdependent. To respect one is to respect the other two. To undermine one is to undermine the other two. When the global disarmament regime — both conventional and nuclear — is weakened, those three principles are threatened.

Conversely, as those three principles are respected, they grow in strength. Together, they become the basis for greater inter-State cooperation at every level: subregional, regional and global. This is the global prosperity dividend. That system of values, embodied in the United Nations, remains a beacon of hope for millions of people in different parts of our planet. We must staunchly defend these values, the United Nations as its core and the spirit of cooperation that underpins it. In other words, we cannot simply shrug our shoulders and agree to polarization and division.

We cannot afford indecision or narrow interests, which are detrimental to that common heritage and our collective good. Too much is at stake. Therefore, Kazakhstan stands ready to cooperate with all relevant actors in a spirit of inclusiveness, multilateralism and goodwill. I am convinced that the challenges of our time can be overcome only by countries acting together. To achieve our shared goals, we must go forward in the following directions.

The multiple and often interconnected crises of recent years have exposed significant gaps in global governance. They have highlighted the need to modernize and reform the United Nations. The United Nations must be better prepared for future challenges and opportunities. In that respect, Kazakhstan welcomed the proposals in the report of the Secretary-General on Our Common Agenda (A/75/982). This is an important opportunity to reaffirm the Charter of the United Nations, reinvigorate multilateralism, boost implementation of existing commitments, agree on concrete solutions to new challenges, and restore trust among Member States. We look forward to contributing to the consultations at the ministerial meeting next year and to the holding of the 2024 Summit of the Future.

We must move from simply responding to global challenges and crises to preventing and better predicting emerging trends and integrating our assessments into strategic planning and policymaking. For that very purpose, Kazakhstan proposed 30 years ago the idea of convening the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia. In the context of new challenges and threats, we hope to transform the Conference into a full-fledged international organization at the upcoming summit in October, in Astana, to contribute to global mediation and peacemaking.

With only eight years until 2030, the Sustainable Development Goals are hampered by the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, a triple planetary crisis — climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution — and conflicts around the world. We need to get back on track before it is too late. Our top priority must be to build resilience against future turmoil and to ensure a sustainable, equitable and inclusive recovery. To that end, we need a frank dialogue between East and West and a new global security paradigm based on the principles of mutual trust and multifaceted cooperation. Given the current crisis and increased geopolitical tensions, there is an acute need for a process under the

auspices of the United Nations that can lead to détente and conflict prevention.

Kazakhstan has suffered terribly from past nuclear weapons testing, so we understand very clearly the dangers of escalating tensions among nuclear Powers. For that reason, nuclear disarmament has become a key part of Kazakh foreign policy and we will be continuously struggling for a world free of nuclear arsenals.

Despite some progress in this area, unfortunately, the whole record is not that positive. We are alarmed by the increased rivalry and rhetoric of nuclear States. We are also concerned at the lack of progress made by the Review Conferences of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Elaborating new mechanisms to ensure disarmament and non-proliferation is a daunting task ahead.

Similarly, the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the urgent need to manage and reduce biological risks and dangers. It should be of universal concern that we still rely on the Biological Weapons Convention — now 50 years old — without any effort to create an agency or body for international cooperation. In that context, I would like to reiterate my earlier proposal to establish an international agency for biological safety.

Along with threats to international security, climate change requires greater international cooperation and solidarity as well. Around the world, people are facing existential threats from weather and environmental change. If we are to turn this tide, we need more action, and we need it fast. Many of us have taken bold steps already. In Kazakhstan, we have pledged the total transformation of the oil- and coal-dependent energy sector into a net zero economy by 2060. To save our planet, we need investment at greater levels than we have ever seen.

However, climate action cannot come at the expense of development or modernization. Therefore, at the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change later this year, Member States, as well as the global business community, must once again scale up their commitment to greater climate finance.

That agenda relates directly to the global food security crisis. My country, the world's seventh-largest grain producer, is the breadbasket of Central Asia. We are committed to utilizing this agricultural potential to fight global food insecurity. Kazakhstan

will continue to act as a reliable supplier of grain and other food staples, first of all to the poorest countries. It also intends to grow its cooperation with the Islamic Organization for Food Security, located in Kazakhstan, as well as with United Nations agencies. It is imperative in that connection to exclude food and fertilizers from any sanctions and restrictions whatsoever.

Once again, current economic and social upheavals require a collective effort. Commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development remains an integral part of our national and global agenda. In addition, fair trade regimes are crucial to global economic recovery. In that context, I would like to commend the constructive decisions coming out of the twelfth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization, chaired by Kazakhstan.

The current geopolitical situation also highlights the importance of a reliable and diversified global transit and transport infrastructure. We are seeing this in our own region. Kazakhstan, the largest landlocked developing country, is becoming a vital Asian land corridor to Europe. The Trans-Caspian International Transport Route, or Middle Corridor, has received new impetus. We expect cargo volume through Kazakhstan to increase significantly in the years ahead. We must ensure that the Caspian Sea becomes a sea of peace and new opportunities. In the months ahead, Kazakhstan will help mitigate the most immediate impacts of limited access to energy and critical raw materials caused by trade and supply chain disruptions. In the long term, we aim to diversify our sources of energy, with a particular focus on green hydrogen and renewables.

Speaking about Central Asia, we should bear in mind that it has already become a region of vast opportunities for international cooperation. Together with our Central Asian partners, we are committed to strengthening political interaction and deepening economic ties to move our region forward. We have agreed to coexist as good neighbours and diversify our cooperation. This credo is based on our significant natural and agricultural resources, human capital, and transport and transit potential. We are a buffer market between East and West, South and North. We intend to work together with all stakeholders to address a pressing regional agenda that includes climate change, the Aral Sea, the rational use of water resources, border delimitation, combating extremism and expanding intraregional trade.

That is why we consider it important to establish a United Nations regional centre for the Sustainable Development Goals for Central Asia and Afghanistan in Almaty. Kazakhstan sees the future Afghanistan as a truly independent, neutral, united, prosperous State, living in peace with its neighbours. Therefore, we support the difficult process of nation-building in that country, including life-saving humanitarian assistance.

As President of Kazakhstan, I am absolutely committed to building a just Kazakhstan, one in which every citizen has the same opportunities, rights and protections. Justice in my country must prevail. Law and order will become pillars of our society. The most important part of this path is transformative political reform. Presidential and parliamentary elections will be held in Kazakhstan over the coming months. According to my proposal, the presidential mandate has been limited to one seven-year term. This is a real breakthrough in developing democracy in Kazakhstan. At the same time, we will be firmly adhering to my formula of “Strong President, Authoritative Parliament, Accountable Government”. I am convinced this formula excellently serves the national interests of Kazakhstan.

We also aim to de-monopolize the economy. We are taking steps to ensure that the wealthiest in our society play their part in our quest for a just Kazakhstan, along with diversifying our economy and increasing investments in human capital. Recently, I initiated the creation of a National Fund for Children. Starting in 2024, 50 per cent of the investment income from the National Welfare Fund will be allocated to special savings accounts for children until their adulthood. These funds could be used for education or housing purposes. A special private charity fund, known as “For the people of Kazakhstan”, also now provides assistance to ordinary citizens for health care, education and social security aims.

We aim to further expand the empowerment and participation of women in economic and public life. Comprehensive national transformation is not a simple process, and there will certainly be pitfalls and bumps in the road. But if we are firmly to meet the expectations of Kazakh citizens, we cannot deviate from this strategic path.

Over the past three years, we have carried out substantial transformations through four packages of political reforms. For example, new laws passed by Parliament have simplified political parties’

registration and reduced the threshold for parties to enter Parliament from 7 per cent to 5 per cent. To promote the wider involvement of citizens in governance, there is now a mandatory 30 per cent quota for women and young people in electoral party lists. To make local administration more accountable, local mayors are now elected directly. To foster a more open culture between society and Government, we have changed the law on peaceful assembly; Government authorization is no longer required. Following its international commitments on the fundamental right to life and human dignity, Kazakhstan abolished the death penalty.

A just Kazakhstan depends on our multi-ethnic and multi-confessional solidarity. The “unity in diversity” principle will be preserved at all costs. Last week, the seventh Congress of Leaders of World and Traditional Religions was successfully held in Kazakhstan. The Congress once again highlighted the importance of religious tolerance, dialogue and mediation. We are ready to build bridges and provide platforms for dialogue wherever needed.

This year marks 30 years of Kazakhstan–United Nations partnership. The Organization has contributed strongly to the formation and strengthening of an independent Kazakhstan. Over that period, we have worked for the aims of the Charter in all major United Nations organs, from the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council to the Security Council. Kazakhstan will remain at the forefront of advancing a more modern, efficient, transparent and accountable Organization.

Never in history have we had such a need for responsible leadership for the next generations. Remembering our past makes us responsible for our future. Together with other Member States, we will spare no effort towards building a safer, more sustainable and prosperous global community.

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

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

**The President:** Before proceeding, may I kindly remind delegations that the agreed time limit for the

national interventions is 15 minutes. Delegations are kindly requested to adhere to that agreement.

**Address by His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar**

**The President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the Amir of the State of Qatar.

*His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**Sheikh Al Thani** (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, it is my pleasure to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Csaba Kőrösi on assuming the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session. I wish him every success. I express our appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Abdulla Shahid, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session, for his efforts. We also highly value the efforts of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, to enhance the role of the United Nations and achieve its goals.

Our world has become a global village. Our issues and concerns are intertwined, and our world is changing at an accelerated pace. The effects of any environmental incident, economic crisis or military confrontation reverberate globally. However, our approaches and methods have not developed at the same pace to keep abreast of those revolutionary changes. Whether one believes that our world is unipolar or multipolar, global policy is still being managed according to the logic of the uneven capacities and different interests and priorities of States, and not according to the logic of one world and one humankind. I mean specifically that global crises are being managed on the basis of narrow and short-term interests, the marginalization of international law and the management of differences according to balances of power rather than the Charter of the United Nations and respect for State sovereignty. We lack mechanisms sufficient to deter and punish those who violate State sovereignty. The international community is unable to impose the settlements of conflicts when the stronger parties reject such settlements. In such circumstances, the behaviour of world leaders and their wisdom and

commitment to justice in dealing with relations among countries are important.

We are fully aware of the complexities of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine and its international dimension. However, we call for a ceasefire and a peaceful settlement because that is what ultimately will happen, regardless of how long this war goes on. Perpetuating the conflict will not change this result. It will only increase the number of casualties and double its disastrous repercussions on Europe, Russia and the global economy.

On a different note, I do not think that the representatives of the countries represented here need to be reminded that the Palestinian question remains without solution. Given the failure to implement the resolutions of international legitimacy and the continuous change of the situation on the ground, the occupation, with its settlement activities, is pursuing a policy of *fait accompli*. That may change the rules of the conflict and the format of global solidarity in the future. In this regard, I stress once again that we stand in full solidarity with the brotherly Palestinian people in their aspiration to achieve justice. The Security Council must shoulder its responsibility and compel Israel to end the occupation of Palestinian territories and to establish a Palestinian State within the borders of 1967, with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Moreover, in our region, the international community has not been able to hold war criminals in Syria to account. Even more disappointing is the fact that some are trying to turn the page on the suffering of the Syrian people, ignoring the significant sacrifices made by those blighted people and failing to fulfil their aspirations to the unity, peace and security of Syria.

The United Nations should not accept the restriction of the political track to the so-called Constitutional Committee under its auspices. The Syrian crisis has taught us an important lesson about what can happen when the international community lacks a long-term vision for addressing the suffering of peoples from unlimited injustice, destitution and civil wars. Soon enough, accompanying phenomena, such as the refugee issue, become another problem that requires a solution. We highly value the role played by countries that have hosted Syrian refugees. However, we must recall the importance of addressing the root causes of the problems before having to deal with their repercussions on our countries.



In Libya, we call for immediate measures to be taken at the international level to continue the political process. We also call for a constitution-based agreement on elections and the unification of State institutions. We all are aware that it is impossible to restore the State without unifying military forces and rehabilitating armed factions into one national army. Any party that rejects this solution must be denounced and held accountable.

In Yemen, there is a glimmer of hope as parties have agreed to a temporary truce. We look forward to a comprehensive, lasting ceasefire to pave the way for negotiations among the Yemeni parties, based on the outcomes of the national dialogue and the Gulf Cooperation Council initiative, in addition to relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015).

We hope that national consensus will be achieved in Iraq, Lebanon and the Sudan. The political elites must be up to the task of ensuring that citizens are able to achieve their aspirations. That would ensure the unity of the people, the unity of the nation and diversity all at the same time. Not only is that possible; it is actually extremely realistic, provided that there is willingness to make concessions to reach settlements and abandon the sectarian, partisan quota approach that has been rejected by the younger generations.

We in Qatar believe in the need to achieve a just agreement on Iran's nuclear programme that takes into account the concerns of all parties and establishes a region free of nuclear weapons. Such a solution should also recognize the right of the Iranian people to benefit from nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. There is no alternative to such an agreement, which would contribute to the stability and security of the region and open the door to further dialogue and the achievement of regional security.

In Afghanistan, we call on all parties to maintain and build on the gains of the Doha Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan. That includes ensuring that Afghanistan does not become a safe haven for extremist and terrorist groups. Only then will the Afghan people be able to enjoy long-awaited prosperity and stability. We have stressed time and again the importance of protecting civilians in Afghanistan and of respecting human rights, including women's rights and the right of girls to education. We have also stressed the importance of achieving national reconciliation

among all segments of Afghani society and warned against isolating and besieging Afghanistan, which would be counterproductive.

Due to lack of global coordination and the rational and balanced planning of energy policies over many decades, we are now all facing an unprecedented energy crisis. Some 1 billion people around the world are living without a main reliable energy source. While the crisis of the war in Ukraine might be new, a political crisis turning into an energy crisis is not. This situation has been silently deteriorating since before the war in Ukraine. Decades of pressure to stop investing in fossil fuels before securing the environmentally friendly and sustainable alternatives that we must develop have led to significant shortages in energy supplies.

Undoubtedly, climate change and the protection of the environment in general compel us to diversify energy sources as soon as possible. However, we must continue to supply energy in the meantime. We must be realistic and recognize that the future of energy will include a combination of sustainable energy sources, such as solar energy, hydrogen, wind energy and also hydrocarbons. As Qatar has continued to invest in liquefied natural gas for decades, we are now able to expand our northern gas field. That will play a pivotal role in alleviating the crisis of energy shortages in many important parts of the world.

When it comes to basic commodities, such as energy, food and medication, exporters bear a special responsibility that exceeds commercial responsibility. They must be reliable, and they must respect agreements. Banning the transit, export and import of those commodities in times of political crisis and imposing blockades on affected countries is not acceptable. Neither is it acceptable to use those commodities as tools of conflict. They are not weapons. It is equally unacceptable to use water sources as if they were political tools.

While the world situation today paints a bleak picture of the future of humankind, we believe in dialogue and joint action. We believe in all parties attempting to understand each other — in putting themselves in one another's shoes in order to see things from the perspective of others. Medium-sized and small countries are most in need of fixed rules that govern international relations. Relying on major Powers should not be a reason to abandon communication with one another. We all have a role to play. What appears today

to be impossible will be a reality if we have the vision, the will and the good intentions.

Qatar's approach focuses on national and human development. Our foreign policy is based on achieving a balance between principles and interests. We have also focused on mediation to settle disputes by using peaceful means. We are aware of our responsibility as a source of energy, and we have proved to be a reliable partner at the international level.

Qatar will welcome the world when we host the Football World Cup in November. This challenge, which started 12 years ago, required genuine determination and resolve, considerable planning and hard work. Today we are ready to receive teams and spectators from all over the world. We are opening our doors in Doha to them without discrimination so that they can all enthusiastically enjoy the football championship and witness the economic and cultural development in our country. The Football World Cup is being organized for the first time in a Muslim Arab country and in the Middle East in general. The world will witness that one of the small and medium-sized countries is able to host global events with exceptional success and to create an environment conducive to diversity and constructive interaction among the peoples of the world.

This event has already a positive effect in our region. Sisterly Arab nations have welcomed the so-called Hayya Card, which offers a visa to enter Qatar and other Arab countries. The Hayya Card has been welcomed by the public as well and incentivized Arab nations to look forward to a future where there are no barriers among peoples.

The Qatari people will open their arms to welcome football fans from all over the world. To quote the Holy Qur'an,

“We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other” (*The Holy Qur'an, XLIX:13*).

Regardless of our different nationalities, religions and ideologies, our duty is to overcome barriers and extend the hand of friendship to build bridges of understanding and value our common humanity. On behalf of my people and myself, I invite everyone here to come to Qatar and to enjoy this unique Football World Cup. I welcome you all. May peace, mercy and blessings of God be upon you.

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Amir of the State of Qatar for the statement he has just made.

*His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, Amir of the State of Qatar, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea**

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

*Mr. Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Yoon Suk Yeol** (*spoke in Korean; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): I offer my sincere congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Csaba Kőrösi on assuming the presidency of the General Assembly. I hope that under your leadership, Sir, the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly will bring together the wisdom of each Member State so as to shape a better world. I also express my deepest respect to Secretary-General António Guterres for his tireless devotion as he embarks on his second term.

Under the Charter of the United Nations, we are called upon to endeavour to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom and to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security. When the freedom of any individual in a nation comes under threat, members of the community must join hands to remove the threat and defend freedom. Likewise, when the freedom of any citizen or nation in the global community is in peril, it is the community of nations that must stand together in solidarity to defend that freedom.

Our modern history testifies to the process of our solidarity and unity in safeguarding freedom and pushing our civilization forward. Today, plagued by attempts to alter the status quo by force, nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction and systemic violations of human rights, the global community is yet again witnessing the freedom and peace of its citizens put in jeopardy. Such threats to freedom and peace must be overcome through solidarity and fearless

commitment to the framework of universal global norms consolidated over the years within the United Nations system.

The theme of the General Assembly session this year, “A watershed moment: transformative solutions to interlocking challenges”, encapsulates the gravity of the global crisis confronting us, which in turn underscores the solemn role of the United Nations. The first step in our journey to seek answers that will help us through these turbulent times begins with solidarity and deference to the universally accepted global norms, as well as the United Nations system established over past decades.

As humankind strives to defend freedom and build lasting peace, the role of the United Nations is indispensable. Genuine freedom is not just being free from shackles but having opportunities to live life to the fullest with dignity. Genuine peace is not an absence of war but the elimination of the conflict and enmity that hold back the shared progress of humankind. Genuine peace also entails building the foundation for greater prosperity. Genuine freedom and peace can turn into reality when we are free from disease and hunger, free from illiteracy and free from want of energy and culture. In that regard, the United Nations has been making great efforts through the Economic and Social Council and UNESCO, among others. However, the Organization is now urged to take on a broader role and responsibility. To tackle the challenges brought on by the pandemic, the United Nations must play a central role in bringing the community of nations together to decisively step up their support for countries with limited fiscal space and technical expertise. In pursuit of the global agenda for decarbonization, countries with leading green technologies must work to unsparingly share new and renewable energy technologies with other countries.

In the era of digital sophistication, one of the most urgent tasks for the global community and the United Nations is promoting global cooperation to narrow the digital divide, which exacerbates polarization among nations. Countries at the forefront of digital innovation must offer broader assistance for digital education, technology transfer and investment while the United Nations must redouble its efforts to mobilize support to that end.

The Republic of Korea, notwithstanding the recent fiscal consolidation, has scaled up support for those who

are in need with resources secured through expenditure restructuring. At home, we are offering more assistance to socially vulnerable groups. Abroad, we have increased our official development assistance budget. Just as broadening support for socially disadvantaged groups lays the groundwork for sustainable prosperity, support for nations of the world that are facing challenges will make global freedom and peace more sustainable.

As a responsible member of the international community, Korea is committed to shouldering its due responsibility and playing its role for the freedom of global citizens and the prosperity of the global community. Korea has accelerated research and development for coronavirus disease (COVID-19) therapeutics and vaccines, pledging \$300 million toward the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator initiative and \$30 million to the Financial Intermediary Funds of the World Bank, among others, thereby expanding its contributions to building a more robust global health architecture. We are also taking part in negotiations to reach a pandemic accord under the World Health Organization. To ensure a more effective response to future infectious disease outbreaks, Korea will host a ministerial meeting of the Global Health Security Agenda in Seoul this November. In addition, Korea will significantly increase its contribution to the Global Fund, joining forces with our partners in our fight against infectious diseases, including AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria.

Turning to the issue of climate change, Korea will scale up its green official development assistance, help developing countries transition to a low-carbon future and share its innovative green technologies with all humankind. Over the years, Korea has been transferring and sharing its e-Government digital technology with developing countries and many others. The Korean Government is pushing forward with its plan to transform itself into a digital-platform Government. This is an ambitious initiative to substantially upgrade our democracy, public service and welfare through digital technology. We will continue to more widely share our advanced digital technology and data and will spare no effort in providing support and investing in education.

As we seek answers to the global crisis we are facing, the viability of the United Nations system and the universal global norms architecture is now being tested. The crisis confronting us will be resolved only when we stand firmly in solidarity to share the

universal value of freedom and work together to uphold and spread our freedom.

In that vein, we must more firmly support the system of the United Nations, anchored in a spirit of freedom and solidarity, as well as the normative frameworks that have been universally recognized by the international community. Any attempt to turn away from the United Nations system and universal norms will divide the global community into blocs, further compounding the crisis and turmoil. We must more rigorously identify the nature and roots of the problems that lie before us. The international community must vigorously endeavour to share responsibility and join forces whenever necessary to resolve the challenges we face. Once again, I call on the citizens and leaders of the world to demonstrate resolute and enduring support for the United Nations system and universal global norms as we seek answers in this watershed moment.

*Mr. Dang Hoang Giang (Viet Nam), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The very first mission of the United Nations, after its founding, was to approve the Republic of Korea as the sole, legitimate Government on the Korean peninsula, and to defend the freedom of my country by sending over United Nations forces during the Korean war. Thanks to such efforts by the United Nations, Korea was able to become what it is today. As such, the Republic of Korea will protect and expand the freedom of global citizens and, together with the United Nations, we will fulfil our responsibilities to promote peace and prosperity around the world.

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

*Mr. Yoon Suk Yeol, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Mario Abdo Benítez, President of the Republic of Paraguay**

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

*Mr. Mario Abdo Benítez, President of the Republic of Paraguay, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

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

**President Benítez (spoke in Spanish):** We come together for this annual meeting, bearing the enormous responsibility of exchanging ideas and making commitments to strengthen the intergovernmental public sphere that is vital to respond to the shared needs of our nations.

In my final speech as Head of State in this Hall, I wish to highlight the commitment of the Republic of Paraguay, as a member of the international community, to continuing to contribute to the building of a world that accords full respect to fundamental freedoms, the peaceful resolution of conflicts, decent living conditions for all humankind and the uncompromising fight against organized crime, all of which have an international component. The economic and social consequences of the pandemic were still being felt when we began to feel the impact of war at the international level. Our peoples consequently found themselves in the difficult situation of observing the failure of national and international institutions to deal with emergencies.

In these circumstances, our first big challenge is to contain demagogic and despotic attempts to manipulate the genuine frustration of citizens. We cannot accept discourse that seeks to sacrifice our sacred freedoms using deceit. More than ever, the world needs temperance, dialogue and moderation. We live in times that demand concrete political commitments, not generic platitudes. That is even more true for the post-pandemic years, which promise to be difficult and will require complex reforms that must be shielded from false promises.

Latin America, one of the regions most affected by the situation, must be prepared once more to adopt positions of principle that are aligned with the concern for the full validity of human rights and collective self-government. Those positions must be part of broad-based cooperation efforts in which the best-positioned countries have a comprehensive understanding of worldwide imbalances. We must bring stability to the world with a common voice. We cannot ignore what is happening in other territories and leave our fellow nations to their fate.



For that reason, Paraguay is a supportive country that acts in alignment with its principles. We have always supported the brotherly Venezuelan people and their struggle for democracy, which is why Paraguay will be taking the lead, together with other countries, on a draft resolution in the Human Rights Council that will allow further in-depth investigation of the violation of human rights in Venezuela.

We need to rebuild a moral conscience with respect to the relevance of human rights and democracy. The legal instruments and institutions that we have created to protect them are of undeniable value. However, to protect peoples, it is fundamental that we strengthen the notion of the greater value of human dignity and autonomy, and the inviolability of the person.

The current difficult situation requires us to address global problems jointly, without exclusion. Therefore, my country emphatically reiterates its support for the request of the Republic of China on Taiwan to be an integral part of the United Nations system. We are convinced that it would make a valuable contribution to the multilateral system. I take this opportunity to express my solidarity with the Taiwanese people with respect to the recent earthquake, as well as with the peoples of Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico for similar tragedies affecting them.

Paraguay joins the vast majority of countries that advocate peace, the rule of international law and the primacy of diplomacy. We are concerned about the situation in Ukraine and the humanitarian and economic consequences of the conflict. We strongly call for the cessation of hostilities and the resumption of negotiations. It is essential that our Organization, and the international community in general, participate intensively in this process. In that regard, we note the scrutiny of the role of the Security Council in this sensitive international context. It is imperative to rethink how the Council operates so as to guide it towards effective performance, and to strengthen the role of the General Assembly as a space for channelling the views of all States.

Another issue that brings us together in terms of cooperation is the health of the international financial system. We cannot continue talking about global initiatives to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable development when our economies are contaminated by the distribution of profits from illicit activities.

Recently, Paraguay received satisfactory news from the Financial Action Task Force of Latin America, having passed its evaluation as a result of a joint effort to modernize our institutional structure to combat money-laundering and the financing of terrorism. We are a country committed to cooperation and we understand the importance of adopting preventive and punitive measures. That is a task that no State should shirk or be complacent about. The rule of law is a global objective that goes beyond political beliefs, and anyone who sees it otherwise conspires against community life.

Under my administration, Paraguay aligned in a heretofore unseen way the efforts of security institutions and put them to work in the largest operation in history against organized crime. That success was due not only to the work of our public forces, but also to the coordinated work that was carried out with friendly foreign agencies, with whom we verified once again the importance of joining forces if we want to achieve results against criminal groups. Similarly, in collaboration with intelligence agencies, we determine and provide information about the route of an airplane and its crew when a link to international terrorism is indicated.

Another area of cooperation is the field of sustainable development. Paraguay, as part of the global food-production machine, has been making progress in transforming its production matrix and implementing sustainable practices in agricultural and livestock production, as well as exploiting its 100-per cent clean and renewable energy.

If all our efforts are to really make sense, we need the countries that, due to their nature, bear the greatest responsibility to act accordingly. We inhabit the same planet and are obligated to take care of nature and future generations. That is the responsibility of each State in fair measure. That is why Paraguay, along with other countries, promoted the creation of a Special Rapporteur on climate change in the Human Rights Council, which will help make the true impact of this crisis visible worldwide.

Paraguay's commitment continues to grow every day. In addition to being among the five countries of the region that managed to increase foreign direct investment during the pandemic, we were able to double private investment in the last four years. A few months ago, we saw an improvement in our credit outlook, according to Moody's — a fact that corresponds to

the historical, sensible and stable management of our economy. We are part of the most important logistics and economic corridor in South America. At the same time, we continue to roll out an unprecedented infrastructure plan that will allow for greater connectivity and access to markets. As can be seen, despite the challenges we have experienced, we enjoy conditions that make us look to the future with hope.

Finally, I would like to talk about the vision underpinning the Republic of Paraguay's approach to the world. Beyond our legitimate differences, we must find common paths. We have common challenges that we cannot face independently. My country is committed to the Organization and hopes that its purposes will be achieved. As Pope Francis says, we are all in the same boat and called on to make the commitment to dismantling the walls that separate us. May God bless all our nations.

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

*Mr. Mario Abdo Benítez, President of the Republic of Paraguay, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland**

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

*Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Niinistö:** I would like to start by congratulating Mr. Csaba Kőrösi on his election as the President of the General Assembly at its seventy-seventh session. I also want to thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his determined and skilful leadership of the United Nations. They can both count on Finland's steadfast support for their important work during these exceptional times.

As the theme of this session states, the challenges we are facing are intertwined. Russia is waging a

brutal war in Ukraine. The ripple effects of that war are already far-reaching and severe. They are compounding the pre-existing problems faced by the international community. A triple crisis concerning energy, food security and finance is weighing heavily on vulnerable countries, countries that are already suffering the most from the climate crisis and the coronavirus disease pandemic.

This truly is a watershed moment. As we gather here, we have an important opportunity to engage in dialogue, to find solutions and to understand the concerns of those most in need. As difficult as it may seem, now is the time to show global solidarity and strengthen multilateral cooperation. The international community can and should emerge stronger from these crises.

Russia's cruel and unprovoked war on Ukraine has now been raging for seven months. It has brought immense sorrow and destruction to the sovereign lands of Ukraine. Russia's use of force is in blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. It is an act of aggression, as determined by this very Assembly. Ukraine is exercising its inherent right to self-defence and, judging by the recent reports from the battlefields, it is doing so with admirable courage, strength and efficiency.

We, the international community, members of the General Assembly, might not always see eye to eye. We have our differing views, but it is our common obligation to uphold the international rules-based order. We cannot accept, condone or normalize grave violations of international law and human rights. A world where impunity prevails is unjust, unstable and dangerous for all of us.

There was a global food crisis even before the Russian invasion of Ukraine. More than 800 million people in the world were chronically hungry. The war has further worsened this calamity. I would like to commend the Secretary-General and the President of Türkiye for their tireless efforts to reach an agreement to secure Ukrainian grain transports. If implemented as foreseen, it will have a major impact on the lives of tens of millions of people in need.

In order to respond to the wider challenges of global food security, we need collective action. The goal must be sustainable, inclusive and fair food systems. We also have to accelerate the implementation of other

Sustainable Development Goals. We cannot afford to leave anyone behind.

Last year in this Hall, I noted that it is not an exaggeration to say that we are facing a global climate emergency (A/76/PV.4). This summer has proven it. We have seen extreme drought and heat waves across the globe, from the Horn of Africa to Europe, from China to the United States of America. The magnitude of the catastrophe caused by the floods in Pakistan is not yet fully visible, but the destruction is already tremendous.

Those are not isolated or local events. They are another reminder that climate change is an existential threat to humankind. We are on the verge of very dangerous tipping points. That calls for urgent action on two fronts. First, we must change our course before it is too late. Secondly, we urgently need to help those suffering and support those with fewer resources to deal with this threat.

Besides mitigating climate change, we must adapt to it. In particular, we must honour the commitment of doubling adaptation finance made at the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow. I want to underline this — fighting climate change and taking care of the economy are not contradictory. Green transition has a tremendous potential to create jobs, innovations and economic growth, but it has to be done fairly. The alarming loss of the variety of life on our planet should also be a cause for grave concern to all of us. We are on the brink of mass extinction, or perhaps are already there. Again, we need to change course urgently. We humans can thrive and survive only if we learn to coexist with all the other species. We need to halt and reverse biodiversity loss by 2030. To that end, the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal in December will be essential.

Defending human dignity is a fundamental task of the United Nations. It is up to us, the Member States, to live up to that task. Despite our failures, we also have accomplishments to build on. The Human Rights Council has shown determination. It has worked to ensure accountability for the horrendous acts committed against civilians in Ukraine and Syria. It has raised its voice in support of women and girls in Afghanistan.

I want to thank those who supported Finland's membership of the Human Rights Council. As a member, Finland acts to bring justice to the victims

of human rights violations. Finland remains a staunch supporter of the work of the International Criminal Court in investigating all grave violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

The number of conflicts in the world is the highest since the Second World War. One-quarter of humankind lives in conflict-affected countries. We must not ignore or forget Afghanistan, Myanmar, Syria, Yemen and other countries where human rights or the conditions for living a decent life are under threat. Increasing geopolitical tensions, as well as the impacts of climate change and the pandemic, are making conflicts more complex and prolonged. Ordinary people bear the brunt. For the first time in its history, the United Nations Development Programme Human Development Index has declined for two consecutive years. We simply cannot let that continue.

In this turbulent world, those who stoke the flames of conflict bear a special responsibility. But we all must ask ourselves: Have we done all we can to avert violence? Have we done what we can to make a positive change? Difficult times call for more diplomacy, not less. We must build and strengthen peace and prevent conflict wherever possible. That is the very core of the United Nations. We also have to be able to respond to emerging threats to peace and security and to move from hindsight to foresight. The report of the Secretary-General on Our Common Agenda (A/75/982) provides us with a blueprint for more effective multilateralism, paving a way to solutions to current and future global problems and strengthening peace. It really is our common agenda, and Finland wholeheartedly supports its implementation.

In the current security environment, the international arms control architecture is increasingly challenged. On the one hand, political tensions erode the functioning of the existing architecture. On the other hand, new technologies create new risks. But we cannot let arms control fail. On the contrary, it needs to be strengthened. For decades, arms control has provided stability and predictability in great power relationships and international relations. To quote Dag Hammarskjöld, "disarmament is never the result only of the political situation; it is also partly instrumental in creating the political situation".

The two biggest nuclear-weapon States have a unique responsibility to advance nuclear arms control and disarmament. The others need to follow suit. It

is in the interest of all of us that progress in nuclear arms control and disarmament continue beyond the New START Treaty. We call on the United States and the Russian Federation to continue their dialogue on strategic stability with a view to achieving further cuts in their nuclear arsenals.

The interlocking global challenges demonstrate that, more than ever, we need a renewed commitment to multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core. We must not become indifferent or apathetic in the face of these multiple crises. We must not get used to violations of international law and human rights. We must not close our eyes to the growing needs of the vulnerable. We must not sleepwalk into a climate and biodiversity catastrophe. Nor should we lose sight of hope. There is still time to act.

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

*Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Ignazio Cassis, President of the Swiss Confederation**

**The Acting President:** The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Swiss Confederation.

*Mr. Ignazio Cassis, President of the Swiss Confederation, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Ignazio Cassis, President of the Swiss Confederation, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Cassis (spoke in French):** Twenty years ago, Switzerland spoke for the first time from this rostrum as a full Member of the United Nations (see A/57/PV.1). Switzerland's joining the United Nations in 2002 was a special event. It was not solely a question of timing. Indeed, at the time Switzerland had already long been the host State of the European headquarters of the United Nations in Geneva. Switzerland was also active in various specialized agencies of the United Nations. No, the specificity of this event was quite different. Switzerland is the only country to have joined the Organization following a popular vote by its

people. That decision reflected the alignment between the values and goals of the United Nations and those anchored in the Swiss Constitution. That is why we feel so closely bound to the Charter of the United Nations. The principles enshrined in the Charter are more important than ever. Our world has rarely faced so many challenges as it does today. We are living in a pivotal moment, for ourselves, for the United Nations Charter and for the entire planet.

I was shocked by the military aggression launched by Russia, a great Power, against its neighbour Ukraine. Allow me to clarify that this military aggression violates the most basic principles of the Charter, which was adopted in the aftermath of the Second World War precisely with the aim of preventing wars. Switzerland reiterates its call on Russia to put an end to the war in Ukraine without further delay and to respect the latter's territorial integrity. The consequences of this war affect the entire world, adding to the many other global crises that we must, of course, not forget.

Almost no continent today is spared by armed conflict. Tensions are growing among great Powers, among neighbouring States and even within certain countries. Every day, international humanitarian law and human rights are violated. That is intolerable and should alarm us. Serious human rights violations are indeed harbingers of possible escalations of violence and instability. If we examine a map of ongoing conflicts today, it becomes clear that a direct link almost always exists with other issues that destabilize our world, including: growing food insecurity; high energy prices and the issue of energy security; climate change, biodiversity loss and environmental pollution; even global health challenges, such as the coronavirus pandemic, which we have just experienced and not yet overcome, and whose heavy economic and social consequences we continue to feel.

Strengthened by its qualities and the experiences accumulated over the course of its history, Switzerland is determined to contribute its stone to the building in order to collectively find "transformative solutions to interlocking challenges", to quote the theme of this seventy-seventh session. My country, Switzerland, is distinguished not only by its system of direct democracy, its federalism, the stability that characterizes its politics and its economy, but also by its diversity and ability to derive innovative solutions therefrom. Those characteristics shape the way we manage conflicts and solve complex problems in our country. The Swiss



culture of compromise and consensus is an appropriate one. Problems are tackled and resolved through dialogue that is sometimes difficult and slow, but that is peaceful. That certainly takes time, but it allows a broad consensus to be reached, leading to a final result more slowly than elsewhere. We have been a Member of the United Nations since 2002. We were not among the first. It was not a speedy process; however, it provides stability and durability to our situation.

That is precisely what happened when Switzerland joined the United Nations. I believe that our experience is also relevant to a world that, undoubtedly, is facing a new era due to the upheaval in Europe. Allow me therefore, in all modesty, to outline four elements that are of great value to Switzerland and that also seem to me to be decisive in meeting the many global challenges. The first is the importance of fundamental norms and values. The second is the inseparability of independence and cooperation. The third is the commitment to peace and security. The fourth is the courage to stay the course.

Let us take things in order. Starting with the importance of fundamental norms and values, public international law is essential. It is all the more essential the smaller a country is. We cannot allow the power of the strong to prevail over the rights of the weak. That is why Switzerland is committed to respecting public international law, which includes international humanitarian law and human rights. That is also why Switzerland is committed to the fight against impunity. We must all ensure that serious breaches of international law are punished. Those responsible must be held accountable for their actions, as for example in the case of the mass grave in the city of Izyum. In that context, values provide direction for our action.

We consider solidarity with the international community and sustainable development to be vital. In that regard, our common road map is the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which must enable our societies to be more resilient, more sustainable and more inclusive in the future. Some global circumstances have significantly slowed the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Switzerland is proud, however, to have presented its second national report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda this year. That report reveals the progress made, even if additional efforts must be made to achieve all the Goals. I therefore invite Member States to return to the fundamental

values of the 2030 Agenda and to redouble their collective efforts towards its implementation.

The second point concerns the inseparable nature of independence and cooperation, which are not mutually contradictory. Under the Charter of the United Nations, each country is sovereign and thus independent. Like any country, Switzerland values its independence. That allows us to give the diversity of our culture and our population the attention it deserves. Switzerland has four national languages and great cultural diversity. It is made up of 26 distinct cantons, all of which were politically active long before the federal State. Given those characteristics, we have learned that cooperation, mutual respect and continuous dialogue are the only way to deal with difficulties. Independence and cooperation are actually two closely related concepts. Without cooperation, independence would mean isolation, and without independence, cooperation would be a constraint. An open dialogue between equals, a climate of trust and collaboration are also of paramount importance for international cooperation. Thanks to the international character of Geneva, Switzerland contributes to that dialogue. Geneva is the centre of multilateral diplomacy for matters relating to global governance, peace, human rights, disarmament, the environment and health. More recently, Geneva has become significant in terms of anticipating technological challenges. For all of us, the United Nations is a unique and universal platform for dialogue and cooperation. We must take full advantage of it.

My third point concerns the commitment to peace and security. Switzerland is a neutral country. That means that we strictly respect the right of neutrality anchored in public international law. We do not involve ourselves in conflicts or provide military support to either side of a conflict. Nothing can call that into question. However, neutrality does not mean indifference or the absence of solidarity. We are committed to safeguarding the principles of freedom, democracy and the rule of law — all values also anchored in the Swiss Constitution.

Switzerland was elected to the Security Council in this Hall on 9 June with 187 votes (see A/76/PV.79). We thank Member States for the strong mandate they have entrusted to us and for the trust they have shown in us. In submitting its application, Switzerland demonstrated that it, too, is ready to assume its responsibilities for safeguarding peace and security in the world. We will work tirelessly to live up to the trust Member States

have placed in us and to embody our slogan, “A Plus for Peace”.

With that in mind, we have four priorities.

The first is to promote lasting peace. We want to make available our long-standing experience in the field of peace promotion and conflict prevention. In that context, we place special emphasis on the participation of women in peace processes.

Our second priority is to protect the civilian population. It is they who pay the heaviest price in conflicts. We will commit to the protection of civilians and to respect for international humanitarian law and human rights.

Our third priority is to strengthen the effectiveness of the Security Council. We have long been committed to the improved effectiveness of that fundamental organ of the United Nations, greater transparency in its work and the involvement of all actors concerned. We will pursue that path within the framework of our mandate.

Our fourth priority is to act for climate security. Climate change, one of the greatest challenges we face, also threatens peace and security. Therefore, we will mobilize to ensure that this issue is also dealt with within the Security Council.

Of course, our commitment to a more peaceful world is not limited to the Security Council. Switzerland hosted, alongside its Ukrainian partners, the conference on the reconstruction of Ukraine in the canton of Ticino, my birthplace. The resulting Lugano principles set widely accepted criteria for reconstruction and reform in Ukraine. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the involvement of our partners, the United Kingdom and Germany, in pursuing this process in 2023 and 2024, respectively. If the parties concerned so wish, Switzerland is always ready to provide its long and extensive experience of good offices.

The fourth element of great value to Switzerland is the courage to stay the course. We face complex challenges, yet we have limited resources. It is therefore essential to prioritize our action. What does that mean for multilateralism? It means that we must focus on the essential question of the peaceful and lasting coexistence of peoples and States. It means that we need a strong and effective United Nations, and it can be effective only if it is concentrated and focused. It means that a clear division of labour and better connectedness

of United Nations agencies is needed. It will then be possible to harness all the existing synergies.

It also means we need to further leverage science. I greatly appreciated the fact that the President of Assembly mentioned that collaboration with science in his statement this morning. We call it science diplomacy. The momentum offered by this new branch of diplomacy paves the way for new approaches and advances that can lead to concrete solutions.

*Mr. Aidid (Malaysia), Vice-President, took the Chair.*

The Swiss Government, with the canton of Geneva, is proud to have created in that spirit the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator (GESDA) Foundation. GESDA aims to anticipate the challenges posed by new technologies so as to maximize the benefits and minimize the risks for human beings, and to guarantee a sustainable future on our planet. Or, if I may put it another way, the targeted strengthening of multilateralism and the refocusing on core tasks are precisely the instrument that will allow us to jointly find a way out of these troubled times in which we live and to move towards a better future.

The United Nations offers a unique framework — the only current framework at the global level — to give concrete expression to the resolution enshrined in the preamble of its Charter, namely, to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security. That is our focus — we are partners, not adversaries.

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

*Mr. Ignazio Cassis, President of the Swiss Confederation, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic**

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

*Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations Her Excellency Ms. Zuzana Čaputová,

President of the Slovak Republic, and to invite her to address the Assembly.

**President Čaputová:** The Organization has a clear purpose, as spelled out in Article 1 of the Charter of the United Nations, to maintain international peace and security, to develop friendly relations among nations, and to achieve international cooperation. Today, most Member States would probably agree that we are still far from achieving that goal. But that does not mean we should not try.

Each and every Member of the United Nations has a responsibility to protect peace. In this, the permanent members of the Security Council have a special duty. Instead, today we see one of the five permanent members openly denying the right of another United Nations Member, Ukraine, to exist as an independent State. Those who break the rules themselves have no authority to set rules for others through the power of veto. The wrongs of Russia's aggression could not be clearer. One hundred forty-one countries deplored Moscow's war against Ukraine in General Assembly resolution ES-11/1. No veto in the Security Council can change the fundamental truth that today, rather than protecting global peace, Russia is doing everything to undo it.

Moscow's aggression has inflicted harm on the entire world. Thousands of innocent Ukrainian civilians have been killed. Millions have had to leave their homes, triggering one of the largest refugee crises in Europe's history. Fifty million people are on the brink of starvation in Africa and Asia. Russia's blockage of Ukraine's ports and confiscation of its harvest have made the already grave global food crisis even worse.

We welcome the deal mediated by Secretary-General Guterres and Türkiye and we call on Russia to fully unblock all Ukraine's ports. Otherwise, the world will continue to suffer. The democratic world and all of us must be a voice for Ukraine — the voice that will not be silent and that will continue to testify about Russia's crimes in Ukraine. We must be the voice that will remember and that will act so that no one is ever allowed to commit such atrocities again.

Vladimir Putin hoped to conquer Ukraine and scare the rest of us. In that goal he has failed, as Ukraine's recent successes on the battlefield demonstrate. We will rebuild peace. To do so, we must learn from our past mistakes. This is not the first time we have seen aggression in Europe. Russia has occupied parts of

Georgia since 2008 and parts of Ukraine since 2014. Our response to those actions was incomplete. Concerns about our own comfort weakened our resolve. The tepid sanctions we imposed failed to discourage Russia from trying again. Our weakness encouraged more aggression. We must not repeat the same mistake again. The flouting of rules is poisoning global security, and it must not be allowed to stand.

More than 50 countries, including all members of the European Union, have already imposed tough sanctions on Russia. Slovakia is Ukraine's direct neighbour. Our own security is impacted by this war. We are neither the biggest nor the richest country in the world. We have long been dependent on Russia's energy supplies. But we chose the protection of our fundamental rights. We have imposed sanctions on Russia and are supporting Ukraine, including through military aid, because Ukraine's fight is just and defensive, and in line with international law. I invite all Member States to join. We should all help Ukraine politically, militarily and financially because that is the only way we can restore peace.

The war in Ukraine is not the only crisis exposing the gap between the rules and commitments we have agreed on and their practical realization. In November, we will hold the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) in Egypt. But our actions lag dangerously behind our words. Our greenhouse gas emissions are not falling fast enough. How much more scorched Earth, how many millions more climate refugees, how many flood victims will it take to convince us that ignoring our commitments is no longer an option? We are desperately behind in cutting our emissions. Worse, we hear voices arguing that the climate crisis must wait because of increasing energy prices. That would be a grave mistake. Yes, the price increases are painful, and we must help those who risk losing access to energy, but we must not lose sight of the bigger picture.

We are talking about the rising prices of commodities that we must phase out anyway to stop the planet's warming. Rather than bring back subsidies for coal or gas, we must transition away from them. Renewable energy is less dependent on those who are trying to use gas or oil as an energy weapon. And it is cheaper. Despite the current energy crisis, Slovakia will stop using coal as a source of energy next year. We are investing in renewables and launching a retrofitting

programme for buildings to boost energy efficiency because the cheapest energy is the one you do not use. We can only do this together, globally and in solidarity with each other. We need all big economies to join and help those who need it. At this year's COP27, we will need a significant increase of funds for lower- and middle-income countries. Many of them contribute very little to our planet's heating but suffer the most from its consequences.

As the world community, we have put short-term comfort over lasting solutions when it comes to two crises: that of international peace and order, and that of our climate. But there is a third crisis of relativization of values, facts and expertise, as well as a decrease of trust in democratic institutions. We are facing an epidemic of lies, propaganda and disinformation. It is hardly new, but thanks to the rise of social media, it is more powerful. If algorithms favour hatred over truth or nonsense over science, and if they appeal to our instincts rather than the greater good, what hope is there for global understanding or for the sort of cooperation that the United Nations was created to advance? Democracies are tolerant by default, but they die if they start tolerating intolerance.

Along with the rest of the European Union, Slovakia leads the way for an effective and democratic regulation of major social platforms and online media. Online space should be guided by the same democratic rules that apply offline. We welcome United Nations initiatives for rules for State behaviour in cyberspace. The efforts towards a so-called Digital Geneva Convention are justified and needed.

The crises I mention have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. That plays out in higher rates of gender-based and domestic violence, greater economic insecurity and poverty or worse access to education and health care. However, I am not here to portray women as victims. I am here to call on all of them to step up their engagement in public affairs. Women are agents of change. The world has a collective responsibility to support them because we are already seeing the consequences of a world that is run without taking their unique and diverse experience into proper account.

Time has not been very favourable to the ideas that built and sustain the Organization. The peace we should safeguard is fraying. The international cooperation we should foster has not prevented a climate catastrophe. And the spirit of shared global commons that the United

Nations embodies is under attack from extremists, their voice multiplied by new technologies. Half measures are not enough to cope with those challenges. We have tried that before. It is time for action and for clarity.

We, the Members of the United Nations, need to clearly side with victim over aggressor. We must choose the international rules-based order over the power of the gun. We must urgently deliver on our climate goals and find working rules for social media platforms to protect the fabric of our societies and the international order. Sure, we can delay and compromise. But again, history teaches us that passivity and ignorance never solve crises; they only delay the moment of reckoning. And since obeying even the smallest of rules matters, let me finish here to respect the agreed time limit.

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

*Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

#### **Address by Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic**

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

*Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.*

**The Acting President:** On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations His Excellency Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

**President Macron (spoke in French):** It is an honour for me to speak before the Assembly on behalf of France. At this point in time, I am thinking of those who have fought in my country and everywhere in the world for France to be free. I am also thinking of those for whom, in the past, the fate of Europe was a matter of concern, whether they came from Africa, Asia, Oceania or America, because a part of their freedom and the future of the world was at stake. I am thinking of those who wrote our Charter and built the walls of the Organization to avert the worst, which occurred twice in the twentieth century, bringing untold sorrow to all of humankind.



Let us never forget that debt. It serves the interests of all our countries and indicates the path to peace. It reminds us that there is no other legitimate or lasting centre of power than that where the nations come together to make decisions sovereignly. It tells us that the universality of our Organization serves no hegemony or geopolitical oligarchy. Yet, this legacy, our Organization, along with our choices as nations, are today facing a choice.

We have one simple choice to make today, and that is the choice between war and peace. On 24 February, Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, fractured our collective security with an act of aggression, invasion and annexation. It deliberately violated the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of the sovereign equality of States. On 16 March, the International Court of Justice stated that Russia's aggression was illegal and demanded that Russia withdraw. Russia decided, with that action, to pave the way for other wars of annexation, today in Europe, but perhaps tomorrow in Asia, Africa or Latin America.

We may say whatever we like today. I have heard a number of discussions and a number of statements. However, I am certain of one thing. Right now, as I speak, there are Russian troops in Ukraine and, to my knowledge, there are no Ukrainian troops in Russia. That is an irrefutable fact that we must all accept. The longer this war lasts, the more it threatens peace in Europe and peace in the world. It will lead us towards broader, enduring conflict, where everyone's sovereignty and security will be determined solely by power struggles, the size of armies, the solidity of alliances and the intentions of armed groups and militias, and where those who see themselves as strong seek to subjugate those they consider to be weak, using all possible means.

What we have been witnessing since 24 February is a return to the age of imperialism and colonies. France refuses to accept that and will determinedly seek peace. In that regard, our position is clear, and it is in supporting this position that I have pursued dialogue with Russia — even before war broke out — throughout these past months. And I will continue to do so because that is how we will seek peace together. We are seeking peace through initiatives undertaken in the years and months prior to the conflict in order to avert it. We have been seeking peace since 24 February through the humanitarian, economic and military support that we

have provided the Ukrainian people to exercise their legitimate right to self-defence and safeguard their freedom. We have been seeking peace through our condemnation of the invasion of a sovereign State, the violation of the principles of our collective security, and the war crimes committed by Russia on Ukrainian soil, and through our rejection of impunity. The international justice system should establish the crimes and try the perpetrators. We are seeking peace, lastly, through our will to curb the geographic spread and intensity of the war. It is up to us in that regard to support the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency to prevent the war's consequences for nuclear safety and security, as we will do in the future alongside Ukrainians whose sovereignty over their plants is not up for discussion. We managed to have an Agency mission visit the plant and draw up a report independently. Let us work together to prevent the risk of an accident that would have devastating consequences.

All of us here today know that peace can be restored only with an agreement that complies with international law. Negotiations will be possible only if, sovereignly, Ukraine wants them and Russia agrees to them in good faith. We all know too that negotiations will be successful only if Ukraine's sovereignty is respected, its territory liberated and its security protected. Russia now needs to understand that it cannot impose its will through military means, even by cynically accompanying them with sham referendums in the territories that have been bombarded and now occupied. It is up to the members of the Security Council to state that loud and clear, and to the members of the Assembly to support us on this path to peace.

From this rostrum, I call on the States Members of the United Nations to take action to persuade Russia to renounce its choice of war, assess the cost for itself and all of us and end its aggression. It is not a question of taking sides between the East or the West or between the North or South. We are talking about the responsibility of all those who are committed to respect for the Charter and to our most precious good — peace — because beyond war, there is a risk of global division due to the direct and indirect consequences of the conflict.

I know that many here in the Assembly are harbouring a sense of injustice with regard to the dire energy, food and economic consequences of Russia's war. I also know that some countries represented here have remained neutral with regard to this war. I want to say to tell them as clearly as possible

today that those who wish to take up the cause of the non-aligned by refusing to express themselves clearly are mistaken and bear a historic responsibility. The cause of the non-aligned used to be a cause for peace. The cause of the non-aligned used to be on behalf of the sovereignty of States and for the territorial integrity of each of them. That is what the cause of the non-aligned used to be. Those who remain silent today, in spite of themselves — or secretly with a degree of complicity — further the cause of a new imperialism, of a modern cynicism that breaks up our international order, without which peace is not possible.

Russia is working to implant the idea today of a double standard, but the war in Ukraine should not be a conflict that leaves anyone feeling indifferent. It is close to Europeans who have chosen to support Ukraine without entering into war with Russia. It feels farther away for many States represented here, but we have all felt the direct consequences of it and we all have a role to play to end this war because we are all paying its price. Because of its very foundations, this war launched by Russia flouts the principles at the heart of our Organization. It flouts the principles of the only international order possible, the only order that can guarantee peace — respect for national sovereignty and the inviolability of borders.

In that regard, let us not conflate causes and consequences. Who here can defend the idea that the invasion of Ukraine does not warrant punishment? Who here could consider that, on the day on which something similar is done to them by a more powerful neighbour, the silence of the region and the world would be the best response? Who can support that? Who can believe that it would suffice for Russia to win this war so that we could move on to something else? Nobody. Contemporary imperialism is not European or Western. It takes the form of a territorial invasion backed by a globalized hybrid war that uses energy prices, food security, nuclear safety, access to information and movements of people as weapons to divide and destroy. That is how this war is undermining the sovereignty of us all.

France will therefore stand with the free peoples of the United Nations to address the consequences of the conflict and all the inequalities that it is exacerbating by challenging bloc geopolitics and exclusive alliances because, beyond the direct consequences of the war, the risk we are now facing is that of a new partitioning of the world. Some would have us believe that there is the

West on one side that will defend outmoded values to serve its interests, and that on the other side there is the rest of the world that has suffered so much and seeks to cooperate by supporting the war or by looking the other way. I object to that division for at least two reasons.

The first is a question of principle, as I mentioned earlier. Our Organization champions universal values. Let us not allow the mistaken idea to take hold that there is something regional or adaptable in the values of the Charter. Our Organization has universal values and the division in the face of the war in Ukraine is simple. Are members for or against the law of the strongest, non-respect for the territorial integrity of countries and national sovereignty? Are members for or against impunity? I cannot imagine any international order or lasting peace that is not based on respect for peoples and the principle of responsibility. Therefore, yes, our values are universal and that is why they can never serve a Power that violates these principles. And when we have taken liberties with these same values in recent years, we have been wrong to do so, but that cannot under any circumstances justify trampling on what we collectively built after the Second World War.

I hear Russia say that it is ready to work on new cooperation and a new international order, without hegemony. That is great, but on what principles is that new order based? Invading a neighbour? Not respecting borders of those I do not like? What is that order? Who is hegemonic today if not Russia? What is being proposed to us? What is being sold to us? What dream is being sold on the good faith of some of us here today? Nothing that lasts for long. Let us not give into the cynicism that is breaking up the order that we have built and that alone has enabled us to maintain international stability. These values — respect for national sovereignty, the integrity of borders — are our values. I reiterate that we were wrong every time we took liberties with them, but they are the values that we built after the Second World War, after colonialism. Let us refuse to have history falter under the pretext that today it is other geographic regions that are affected. Let us not give in.

The second reason I object to this attempt to partition the world is pragmatic. Behind the emerging divisions, there is an attempt to partition the world in a way that ramps up tension between the United States and China. I believe this is a disastrous mistake for us all because it would not be a new Cold War. Several powers of disorder and imbalance are taking advantage of this period to multiply regional conflicts, return to

the path of nuclear proliferation and reduce collective security. I therefore believe that we must do everything we can to ensure that this new division does not happen because our challenges are growing in number and urgency and require new cooperation.

Let us look at Pakistan. A third of the country has been flooded. There are more than 1,400 dead, 1,300 injured and millions of people in emergency situations. Let us look at the Horn of Africa. It is experiencing the worst drought in 40 years and a rainy season that will probably be worse still. Half of humankind now lives in a climate danger zone. Our ecosystems are reaching the point of no return. Let us look at Somalia, Yemen, South Sudan and Afghanistan. Famine is returning. The food crisis is affecting everywhere, and the most vulnerable are hardest hit. Around the world, 345 million people, including 153 million children, are experiencing acute hunger. There are currently 55 civil wars being waged on our planet. There are 100 million displaced persons. While between 1990 and 2015, 137,000 people escaped extreme poverty every day, by 2030 some 345 million in conflict-affected countries could slip back into it.

The most vulnerable people are always the hardest hit by crises, climate disruption, pandemics and rising food prices. These threats are all still present, while in addition terrorism, among other areas, is affecting the Sahel and the Middle East. There is nuclear proliferation in Iran and North Korea, which we have not managed to curb. These are the emergencies facing us. As time is short, the description I have just given is not exhaustive, but these emergencies are each either the result of deep-rooted flaws in our international system, which was able to reap the benefits of globalization but failed to contain its divisions, threats and imbalances, or the result of divisions among us.

Our shared responsibility is to work to help the most vulnerable, those most affected by all these challenges. As Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India, rightly said, now is not the time for war. Nor is it time for revenge on the West, or for Western opposition to the rest of the world. It is time for sovereign, equal countries to work together on today's challenges. That is why we must urgently create a new contract between North and South, an effective, respectful contract on food, climate and biodiversity, and education. The time for bloc thinking has passed. It is now time to build specific action coalitions and reconcile legitimate interests and the common good.

To address the global food crisis, France has doubled its contributions to the World Food Programme. Along with the European Union, we established solidarity corridors that enabled the export by land of more than 10 million tons of grain since spring. The agreement brokered on 22 July complemented those efforts, thanks to the work of the Secretary-General, which led to the export of 2.4 million tons of grain through the Black Sea, a process that is ongoing.

We launched the Food and Agricultural Resilience Mission initiative, which allows us to provide vulnerable countries with food at low prices, without political conditions, and to invest in agriculture in countries that would like to be self-sufficient. I would also like to announce that France will fund the export of Ukrainian wheat to Somalia, in partnership with the World Food Programme. We will do so with solidarity, efficiency and the required full transparency.

Tomorrow we will meet with the African Union, United Nations agencies, the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the European Commission to develop a mechanism that can ensure access to fertilizer for Africa, in support of the Secretary-General's initiatives in that regard.

With regard to climate and biodiversity, in a few weeks we will meet in Egypt for the twenty-seventh Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Let us be clear here about what a just transition means. Our first collective fight is to eliminate coal. The crisis must not make us lose sight of that goal. Otherwise, we will exceed the predictions of a 2°C global temperature increase. I am prepared to invest in funding coalitions, as we did with South Africa a few months ago. We must continue along that path. However, China and the large emerging Powers must make a clear decision at COP. It is crucial.

Together with the large emerging Powers, we must build coalitions with State actors and our international financial institutions to develop comprehensive energy production solutions and effect changes to industrial production models, which alone can bring about that transition.

The Group of Seven must lead by example. The richest countries must accelerate their carbon neutrality programmes and must also make the effort to show restraint and share green technologies. Members know that they can count on the European Union in that area.

I also believe that we must acknowledge that it is challenging for the poorest countries to take simultaneous steps to fight poverty and accelerate the transition. We cannot ask the same of both sub-Saharan Africa, where 100 million people remain without access to electricity, and the largest emitters. That is why the richest countries must strengthen their financial and technological solidarity with the poorest countries on climate issues. We must provide funding and solutions and accelerate that agenda, as we were able to do during the pandemic, and we must do in a more forceful, effective and determined manner. In that context, together we must also protect our carbon pricing and biodiversity. Together with Costa Rica, France will host the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference. Let us make it the COP21 for oceans.

With regard to health, we must learn from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic. We must recognize that health systems and personnel are our first line of defence in the most vulnerable countries. I will underscore that crucial point during the seventh Replenishment Conference of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, to which France remains one of the principal contributors. We must also ensure that the World Health Organization establishes early-warning systems to prevent the spread of other viruses. We must address human and animal health together. That is the key objective of the One Health Initiative, led by France, in coordination with several other countries.

As with the Global Partnership for Education, we must continue our efforts so that children can attend school after the pandemic prevented them from doing so. It means addressing the root of the problem, combating all inequalities and working towards our common future.

As members can see, more cooperation and partnerships among stakeholders in the North and the South must be developed in all areas. Greater commitment is needed from our major institutions. All of that is the opposite of division. Who was there during the pandemic? Who proposed funding for the climate transition? It is not those who now propose a new international order but had no vaccines that worked. It is not those who did not show solidarity and contributed nothing to help mitigate climate issues. Those are the challenges that affect us all. We must demonstrate greater solidarity and engage in more cooperation, but

under no circumstances should we yield to siren calls that lead nowhere.

To that end, we must also be clear about the situation in the poorest countries and the middle-income countries — whether in Africa, South America, Asia or the Pacific. The pandemic has increased inequalities. The war and its consequences have increased the number of challenges for several countries. The Group of 20 (G-20) must therefore absolutely adhere to last year's goal to mobilize \$100 billion from special drawing rights, but we must do more, above all with respect to the IMF's special drawing rights allocations.

We must honour our commitments. Several countries, in particular in Africa, have not yet seen that money. We cannot tell them that it is being held up by a Parliament or being prevented by some rule. That cannot happen. It will be too late. We must do more because the challenges are even greater. We must increase our special drawing rights allocation to 30 per cent for the most vulnerable African countries and the poorest countries in the world. Along with the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, we must recommit our mechanisms, which are no longer adapted to the current context.

The rules in use today are those from the 1980s. The situation in our post-COVID-19 world — increased climate deregulation, the loss of biodiversity, imbalances created by the war — call for greater solidarity. We need a new financial compact with the South. That is where we must act. That is what should bring us together, not to fight a common enemy or to refute false narratives or historical revisionism, but to protect the planet on which we all live and for equal opportunities for all.

The fight is our fight. It brings us all together. We simply need to make a little more effort to adhere to our agreements and respect one another. This is the true fight. If we are not able to fight together, it will be the cause of all division and conflicts in the future.

I invite all those who wish to build that new compact with us to the Paris Peace Forum, which will be held on 11 November, ahead of the G-20 meeting to be held in Bali. I invite them to move forward with us without relinquishing our common values and guiding principles. We must focus on essential matters and not give in to the world's divisions or increased threats to peace. We must not allow the number of crises, including those that cannot be resolved, to increase.



We cannot allow the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Those are all risks that we will not be able to manage in the future without involving the major Powers most directly concerned. It is precisely that effort to involve the major regional Powers that must be made in the Middle East, via a follow-up to the 2021 Baghdad conference, in order to ensure stability in Iraq, Lebanon and the entire region.

The five permanent members of the Security Council are no longer the only ones with something to say, and if they have something to say it is clear. That can work only if we are able to work more broadly to achieve the international consensus that is so necessary for peace. That is why I hope that we can commit at last to reform of the Security Council so that it is more representative, welcomes new permanent members and

remains able to fully play its role by restricting the use of the right to the veto in cases of mass atrocities.

Together, we must build peace and contemporary international order to achieve the goals of the Charter of the United Nations. On that path, the United Nations can count fully on France. On that path, each country represented here can count on France.

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

*Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.*

*The meeting rose at 2.30 p.m.*