



General Assembly

Seventy-sixth session

3rd plenary meeting

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New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Shahid (Maldives)

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

Agenda item 112

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization (A/76/1)

The President: The General Assembly will hear a presentation by the Secretary-General of his annual report (A/76/1) on the work of the Organization, under agenda item 112.

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

The Secretary-General: I am here to sound the alarm. The world must wake up. We are on the edge of an abyss and moving in the wrong direction. Our world has never been more threatened or more divided. We face the greatest cascade of crises in our lifetime. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has super-sized glaring inequalities. The climate crisis is pummelling the planet. Upheaval from Afghanistan to Ethiopia, to Yemen and beyond has thwarted peace. A surge of mistrust and misinformation is polarizing people and paralysing societies. Human rights are under fire and science is under assault. Economic lifelines for the most vulnerable are coming too little and too late, if they come at all. Solidarity is missing in action when we need it most.

Perhaps one image tells the tale of our times — the pictures we have seen from some parts of the world of COVID-19 vaccines in the garbage, expired and unused. On the one hand, we have seen the vaccines

developed in record time — a victory of science and human ingenuity. On the other hand, we have seen that triumph undone by the tragedy of a lack of political will, selfishness and mistrust — a surplus in some countries and empty shelves in others; a majority of the wealthier world vaccinated, while more than 90 per cent of Africans are still waiting for their first dose. This is a moral indictment of the state of our world. It is an obscenity. We have passed the science test, but we are getting an “F” in ethics.

The climate alarm bells are also ringing at fever pitch. The recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change was a code red for humankind. We see the warning signs in every continent and region: scorching temperatures, the shocking loss of biodiversity, polluted air, water and natural spaces, and climate-related disasters at every turn. As we recently saw, not even this city — the financial capital of the world — is immune. Climate scientists tell us that it is not too late to continue aiming for the 1.5°C threshold agreed by the international community as part of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, but the window is rapidly closing. We need a 45 per cent cut in emissions by 2030, yet a recent United Nations report has made clear that, with present national climate commitments, emissions will rise by 16 per cent by 2030. That would condemn us to a hellscape of temperature rises of at least 2.7°C above pre-industrial levels — a catastrophe.

Meanwhile, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development has just reported a gap of at least \$20 billion in essential and promised climate financing to developing countries. We are weeks away

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

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from the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Glasgow, but seemingly light years away from reaching our targets. We must get serious and we must act fast.

COVID-19 and the climate crisis have exposed profound fragilities as societies and as a planet. Yet, instead of humility in the face of these epic challenges, we see hubris. Instead of being on the path leading to solidarity, we are on one leading to a dead end of destruction.

At the same time, another disease is spreading in our world today — a malady of mistrust. When people see promises of progress denied by the realities of their harsh daily lives; when they see their fundamental rights and freedoms curtailed; when they see petty as well as large-scale corruption around them; when they see billionaires joyriding to outer space while millions go hungry on Earth; when parents see a future for their children that looks even bleaker than the struggles of today; and when young people see no future at all, the people whom we serve and represent may lose faith not only in their Governments and institutions, but in the values that have animated the work of the United Nations for more than 75 years: peace, human rights, dignity for all, equality, justice and solidarity.

As never before, core values are in the crosshairs. A breakdown in trust is leading to a breakdown in values. Promises, after all, are worthless if people do not see results in their daily lives. The failure to deliver creates space for some of the darkest impulses of humankind. It provides oxygen for easy fixes, pseudo solutions and conspiracy theories. It is kindling that stokes ancient grievances, cultural supremacy, ideological dominance, violent misogyny and the targeting of the most vulnerable, including refugees and migrants.

We face a moment of truth. Now is the time to deliver. Now is the time to restore trust. Now is the time to inspire hope. And I do have hope. The problems that we have created are problems we can solve. Humankind has shown that we are capable of great things when we work together. That is the *raison d'être* of our United Nations. But let us be frank. Today's multilateral system is too limited in its instruments and capacities in relation to what is needed for effective governance of managing global public goods. It is too fixed on the short term. We need to strengthen global governance. We need to focus on the future. We need to renew the social contract. And we need to ensure a United Nations fit for a new era.

That is why I presented my report on Our Common Agenda in the way that I did. It provides a 360° analysis of the state of our world, with 90 specific recommendations that take on the challenges of today and strengthen multilateralism for tomorrow. Our Common Agenda builds on the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. It is in line with the mandate that I was given by the Declaration on the commemoration of the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations (resolution 75/1) to seek a pathway to a better world. But, in order to reach that land of our promises, we must bridge great divides. I see six great divides — six Grand Canyons — that we must bridge now.

First, we must bridge the peace divide. For far too many people around the world, peace and stability remain a distant dream — in Afghanistan, where we must boost humanitarian assistance and defend human rights, especially those of women and girls; in Ethiopia, where we call on the parties to immediately cease hostilities, ensure humanitarian access and create the conditions for the start of an Ethiopian-led political dialogue; in Myanmar, where we reaffirm unwavering support to the people in their pursuit of democracy, peace, human rights and the rule of law; in the Sahel, where we are committed to mobilizing international assistance for regional security, development and governance; in places such as Yemen, Libya and Syria, where we must overcome stalemates and push for peace; in Israel and Palestine, where we urge leaders to resume a meaningful dialogue, recognizing the two-State solution as the only pathway to a just and comprehensive peace; and in Haiti and so many other places left behind, where we stand in solidarity through every step out of crisis.

We are seeing an explosion in seizures of power by force. Military coups are back. The lack of unity among the international community does not help. Geopolitical divisions are undermining international cooperation and limiting the capacity of the Security Council to take the necessary decisions. A sense of impunity is taking hold.

At the same time, it will be impossible to address dramatic economic and development challenges while the world's two largest economies are at odds with each other. Yet I fear that our world is creeping towards two different sets of economic, trade, financial and

technological rules, two divergent approaches in the development of artificial intelligence and, ultimately, the risk of two different military and geopolitical strategies, and that is a recipe for trouble. It would be far less predictable than the Cold War.

To restore trust and inspire hope, we need cooperation. We need dialogue. We need understanding. We need to invest in prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding. We need progress on nuclear disarmament and in our shared efforts to counter terrorism. We need actions anchored in respect for human rights. And we need a new comprehensive Agenda for Peace.

Secondly, we must bridge the climate divide. That requires bridging trust between the North and the South. It starts by doing all that we can now to create the conditions for success in Glasgow. We need more ambition from all countries in three key areas — mitigation, finance and adaptation.

More ambition on mitigation means countries committing to carbon neutrality by the middle of the century and to concrete 2030 emission reduction targets that will get us there, backed up with credible actions now.

More ambition on finance means developing nations finally seeing the promised \$100 billion a year for climate action, fully mobilizing the resources of both international financial institutions and the private sector.

More ambition on adaptation means developed countries living up to their promise of credible support to developing countries in order to build resilience to save lives and livelihoods. That means 50 per cent of all climate finance provided by developed countries and multilateral development banks should be dedicated to adaptation. The African Development Bank set the bar in 2019 by allocating half of its climate finance to adaptation. Some donor countries have followed its lead. All must do so.

My message to every Member State is this: Do not wait for others to make the first move; do your part. Around the world, we see civil society, led by young people, fully mobilized to tackle the climate crisis. The private sector is increasingly stepping up. Governments must also summon the full force of their fiscal policymaking powers to make the shift to green economies by taxing carbon and pollution instead of people's income in order to more easily make the switch

to sustainable green jobs; by ending subsidies to fossil fuels and freeing up resources to invest back into health care, education, renewable energy, sustainable food systems and social protection for their people; and by committing to no new coal plants. If all planned coal power plants become operational, we will not only be clearly above 1.5°C — we will be well above 2°C. The targets of the Paris Agreement will go up in smoke. This is a planetary emergency. We need coalitions of solidarity between countries that still heavily depend on coal and countries that have the financial and technical resources to support their transition. We have the opportunity and the obligation to act.

Thirdly, we must bridge the gap between rich and poor within and among countries. That starts by ending the pandemic for everyone, everywhere. We urgently need a global vaccination plan to at least double vaccine production and ensure that vaccines reach 70 per cent of the world's population in the first half of 2022. That plan could be implemented by an emergency task force made up of present and potential vaccine producers, the World Health Organization, partners of the Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator and international financial institutions, working with pharmaceutical companies.

We have no time to lose. A lopsided recovery is deepening inequalities. Richer countries could reach pre-pandemic growth rates by the end of this year, while the impacts may last for years in low-income countries. Is that any wonder? Advanced economies are investing nearly 28 per cent of their gross domestic product in economic recovery. For middle-income countries, that number falls to 6.5 per cent, and it plummets to 1.8 per cent for the least developed countries — a tiny percentage of a much smaller amount.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the International Monetary Fund projects that cumulative economic growth per capita over the next five years will be 75 per cent less than in the rest of the world. Many countries need an urgent injection of liquidity. I welcome the issuance of \$650 billion in special drawing rights (SDRs) by the International Monetary Fund. But those SDRs are largely going to the countries that need them least. Advanced economies should reallocate their surplus SDRs to countries in need. SDRs are not a silver bullet but they provide space for sustainable recovery and growth.

I also renew my call for a reformed and more equitable international debt architecture. The Debt

Service Suspension Initiative must be extended to 2022 and should be available to all highly indebted vulnerable and middle-income countries that request it. That would be solidarity in action. Countries should not have to choose between servicing debt and serving people.

With effective international solidarity, it would be possible at the national level to forge a new social contract that includes universal health coverage and income protection, housing and decent work, quality education for all and an end to discrimination and violence against women and girls. I call on countries to reform their tax systems and to finally end tax evasion, money-laundering and illicit financial flows. As we look ahead, we need a better system of prevention and preparedness for all major global risks. We must support the recommendations of the Independent Panel for Pandemic Preparedness and Response. I have put forward a number of other proposals in Our Common Agenda, including an emergency platform and a Futures Lab.

(spoke in French)

Fourthly, we must bridge the gender gap. COVID-19 exposed and exacerbated the world's oldest injustice — the power imbalance between men and women. When the pandemic struck, women made up the majority of front-line workers. They were the first to lose their jobs and the first to put their careers on hold to care for their loved ones. School closures disproportionately affected girls, stunting their progress and increasing the risk of abuse, violence and child marriage.

Bridging the gender gap is not just about justice for women and girls. It is a game-changer for all of humankind. More equal societies are also more stable and peaceful. They have better health systems and more dynamic economies. Women's equality is essentially a question of power. If we are to solve the most difficult problems of our time, we must urgently transform our male-dominated world and shift the balance of power. That means more women leaders in parliaments, cabinets and boardrooms. It means women must be fully represented and able to make their full contribution everywhere.

I urge Governments, corporations and other organizations to take bold steps, including benchmarks and quotas, to establish gender parity at all levels. At the United Nations, we have achieved this among the senior management and among country team leaders.

We will continue until we achieve gender parity at all levels.

At the same time, we must push back against regressive laws that institutionalize gender discrimination. Women's rights are human rights. Economic recovery plans should focus on women, including through large-scale investments in the care economy. And we must adopt an emergency plan to address gender-based violence in every country.

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and build a better world, we can and must bridge the gap between women and men.

Fifthly, to restore confidence and hope, we must bridge the digital divide. Half of humankind has no access to the Internet. We must ensure that everyone is connected by 2030. That is the vision of my Roadmap for Digital Cooperation — to embrace the promise of digital technology while safeguarding against its perils.

One of the greatest perils we face is the growing power of digital platforms and the use of data for nefarious purposes. A vast library of information is being collected about each of us. And we do not even have access to it. We do not know how this information was collected, by whom or for what purposes, but we do know that our data is being used commercially to further increase profits. Our behaviours and habits are becoming products that are sold like futures contracts.

Our data is also being used to influence our perceptions and opinions. Governments and other entities can exploit it to control or manipulate the behaviour of citizens, thereby violating the human rights of individuals or groups and undermining democracy. This is not science fiction; this is our reality today. And it requires serious debate.

The same is true for other dangers of the digital age. I am certain, for example, that any future major confrontation — and, of course, I hope that such a confrontation never happens — will start with a massive cyberattack. What legal frameworks would allow us to deal with such a situation?

Today, autonomous weapons can target and kill people without human intervention. Such weapons should be banned, but there is no consensus on how to regulate such technologies.

In order to restore trust and rekindle hope, we must put human rights at the centre of our efforts to ensure that a safe, fair and open digital future for all.

(spoke in Spanish)

Sixthly and finally, we have to bridge the gap between generations. Young people will inherit the consequences of our decisions — good and bad. At the same time, 10.9 billion people are expected to be born before the end of the century. We need their talents, ideas and energies.

Our Common Agenda proposes the convening of a summit on transforming education next year to address the learning crisis and expand opportunities for today's 1.8 billion young people.

Young people need more than support. They need a seat at the table. That is why I will appoint a special envoy for future generations and create a United Nations youth office. And the contributions of young people will be central to the Summit of the Future, as set out in Our Common Agenda.

Young people need a vision of hope for the future. Recent research conducted across 10 countries has shown that the majority of young people suffer from high levels of anxiety and distress about the state of our planet. Sixty per cent of the future voters of those countries feel betrayed by their Governments.

We must show children and young people that, despite the seriousness of the situation, the world has a plan and that Governments are committed to its implementation. We must act now to bridge the great divides and save humankind and the planet.

(spoke in English)

With real engagement, we can live up to the promise of a better, more peaceful world. That is the driving force of Our Common Agenda. The best way to advance the interests of one's own citizens is by advancing the interests of our common future. Interdependence is the logic of the twenty-first century. And it is the lodestar of the United Nations. This is our time — a moment for transformation, an era to reignite multilateralism, an age of possibilities.

Let us restore trust. Let us inspire hope. And let us start right now.

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

Agenda item 8

General debate

The President: I am honoured to welcome everyone to the opening of the general debate, as we kick off the high-level week of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly.

I am even more pleased to welcome everyone back to an in-person session of the General Assembly. For a year and a half, we have suffered in silence and in anxiety; for a year and a half, we have worried, we have grieved and we have waited. Let us wait no more.

I would like to express my deep gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkır, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, for his stewardship of the Assembly during very trying times.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his leadership and wisdom and look forward to working with him.

I must also express heartfelt gratitude to both President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih and the people of the Maldives for putting their faith and trust in me. I am truly humbled and deeply proud to stand as a small islander at this great podium on behalf of our people. Our country may be small, and I may be even smaller, but, today, we are mighty. Today, we stand with giants. My standing here today in the General Assembly is a reflection of the success of President Solih's foreign policy.

We have plenty of challenges. But, for just a moment, let us celebrate all that we have achieved in the past two years. In record time, humankind has developed multiple viable vaccines for the coronavirus disease (COVID-19). Scientists and researchers from dozens of countries collaborated on a remarkable feat of human ingenuity. The largest vaccine roll-out in the history of mankind is currently under way. While certainly not without flaws, it is monumental in its undertaking. For those accomplishments alone, we should be proud.

Before I outline the seventy-sixth session and the hopeful theme I have chosen to pursue, allow me to ask members this question. Where do we want to be at this time next year? What is it that we, as a people, intend to achieve over the next 12 months? From my discussions with many in the Assembly Hall; from social media; from the United Nations 75 survey and from the Secretary-General's Our Common Agenda report, the

answer is clear. The world wants peace of mind. The people want solutions to the challenges we collectively face. And challenges are not in short supply — fragility, conflict, COVID-19, climate change, the list goes on. Those issues and more keep our citizens awake at night. They feel a collective anxiety, in a worry that things are progressively getting worse. They worry that we are not doing enough to solve the problems facing our world. My friends, they are not wrong. We can do more. We know that in our hearts.

With regard to COVID-19, we have the vaccine, the know-how and the capacity for distribution. We lack only the political support.

Concerning climate change, we have incredible innovations in renewable energy, adaptive technologies and in transitioning away from fossil fuels. We lack again only the political support and related financing.

With respect to conflict and instability, we have near universal desire for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. Yet, we falter at the finish line, leaving treaties not ratified. Regarding humanitarian concerns, we have enough food and water to provide for the planet many times over. Yet, there is genuine fear that we will see the return of famine and the impact of drought. Hundreds of millions will require humanitarian assistance by year's end.

My friends, there are moments in time that are turning points, and this is one such moment. We can choose a path of isolationism and mutual destruction, of a slow retreat of human experiment, or we can forge together a new path — a sustainable and resilient path — that changes the future of our planet. COVID-19 may have been a tragedy of the grandest scale, but it may also have been a canary in the coal mine, warning us of the perils we face if we continue to drag our feet to avoid making the hard but necessary choices.

I wholeheartedly believe in the power of humankind to overcome those challenges. One cannot live in the Maldives and face the existential threat of sea-level rise without having hope in humankind. That hope extends far. I am hopeful that we, too, can overcome differences and that we can bypass protocols and obstacles to transform our societies.

With that hopeful vision for a better tomorrow, I intend to pursue five rays of hope that will direct the efforts of the General Assembly this year.

First, I will stand firmly behind the need to ensure vaccine equity to vaccinate the world. As President of the General Assembly, I intend to host a high-level meeting on just that issue and to address the practical obstacles that have emerged around supply, storage and distribution.

Secondly, on the longer-term recovery from COVID-19, I will push for a recovery that builds back better stronger, greener and bluer. By following the paths laid out by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we can pivot away from destructive practices and embrace a better future.

Thirdly, we must return our attention to the climate crisis, which has taken a back seat to COVID-19. The report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and others speak for themselves — we are no longer on the wrong path; we are on the edge of the cliff. I am pleased to note that I will host a series of events on climate action. The first in the lead-up to the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will help to build ambition and ensure that action is very much on the agenda. We must bridge the capacities needed to actually deliver on climate promises. It is one thing to have innovative renewable technologies; it is an entirely different thing if a country or a community cannot absorb that technology. I believe we can close the gap.

Another event later in the session will acknowledge the other major environmental efforts under way on oceans, desertification and biodiversity. We will aim to address those interlocking issues during that super session on the environment.

My fourth ray of hope focuses on human rights — one of the fundamental pillars of our Organization. We must uphold the principles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights above all else, particularly during moments of conflict or strife, as we have all recently seen. We must also endeavour to always empower and support the most vulnerable and those who have been disadvantaged. As President of the General Assembly, I am determined to have a cross-cutting gender approach to my presidency, including advocating for a build-back-better approach to COVID-19 that prioritizes gender sensitive policies and initiatives.

Fifthly, and finally, United Nations reform and revitalization must continue. It must also continue here in the General Assembly. It is not about the balance of

power; it is about efficiency. Every organ of the United Nations must be at its peak and able to deliver as it was intended. One of the first things I will do, in that regard, is to listen to our constituents, by engaging better with civil society organizations and by bringing more youth on board, such as through our Youth Fellowship Programme. We will hear about the priorities that matter to people and come to know new ways that the General Assembly can make a difference.

Allow me to remind members of what the Assembly Hall represents. Out of the ashes of the greatest war and the greatest atrocities of human history, we came together and agreed to collaborate to tackle the challenges we face. For the 7 billion plus constituents around the world, this is what they see when they think of the United Nations — iconic world leaders standing before a marble green backdrop, debating not whether to help but how to help. Let us not let them down.

We have never been so technologically advanced. We have never been so connected. We have never had the wealth, the resources or the know-how that we have now. There is nothing in our part to stop us but ourselves. Let us be the United Nations that people want us to be.

In the darkest days of the pandemic, when cities were shuttered and vaccines still a dream, the peoples of the world came together, as they were before. They left messages of support on their windows; they sang for each other from balconies; they clapped in the evenings for their front-line workers, their heroes; they prayed in unison asking for that miracle that could give us back the normalcy that we took for granted. It was hope and a sense of shared humanity that allowed them to do that. Let us give them hope now.

Before giving the floor to the first speaker, I wish to remind members of the following.

Representatives who are physically present in the General Assembly Hall are to deliver their statements for the general debate. Alternatively, pursuant to General Assembly decision 75/573, of 14 July 2021, and without setting a precedent for future general debates, each Member State, observer State and the European Union can submit a pre-recorded statement, which will be played in the Assembly Hall after introduction by their representative who will be physically present in the Assembly Hall. Introduction of the pre-recorded statements will be made by delegations from their national seats.

In accordance with the same decision, in addition to the verbatim records, the President of the General Assembly will circulate as a document of the Assembly a compilation document of the statements delivered by means of pre-recorded statements submitted to the President no later than the day on which the pre-recorded statement was played in the Assembly Hall, and such pre-recorded statements will be attached to the verbatim records of the meetings. Submissions in that regard should be made to estatements@un.org.

The list of speakers for the general debate has been established on the basis that statements should be no longer than 15 minutes in order to enable all the speakers to be heard at a given meeting. I would like to appeal to all 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 inside the General Assembly Hall after a speech has been delivered is strongly discouraged, especially in the light of the ongoing coronavirus disease pandemic.

In that connection, 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-sixth session?

It was so decided.

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*): It is an honour to once again open the General Assembly.

I come here to show a Brazil that is different from the one portrayed in newspapers or television. Brazil has changed a great deal since we took office in January 2019.

Brazil has not had a single case of corruption in the past two years and eight months. My country has a President who believes in God, respects the Constitution, values family principles and is loyal to its people. This is a lot; it is a solid foundation, considering that we were on the brink of socialism.

Our State-owned enterprises used to incur losses in the billions of dollars, and are now profitable. Our National Development Bank was used as a conduit to finance public works in communist countries, with no collateral guarantees. It is the Brazilian people themselves who bore the brunt of those commitments and costs.

All of that has changed. I now present to the General Assembly a new Brazil, whose credibility has already been restored worldwide. My country currently has the largest public-private investment partnership programme in its history. This programme is already in place and being fully implemented. So far, we have collected \$100 billion in new investment contracts and \$23 billion in concession projects.

In the infrastructure sector, we auctioned 34 airports and 29 port terminals to the private sector. We already have more than \$6 billion in private contracts for new railroads. We also introduced a railway permit system, which brings our model closer to that of the United States. In just a few days, we received 14 applications for permits for new railroads, amounting to nearly \$15 billion in private investments.

Under our Administration, we have promoted the revitalization of the railway transportation system. As a result, there is less fossil fuel consumption and a decrease in operational costs associated with doing business in Brazil, especially in connection with food production.

Great progress has been made in the field of basic sanitation. The largest auction in this sector's history took place in April, with concession projects granted for water distribution and sewage services in Rio de Janeiro.

We have everything that investors are looking for: a large consumer market, excellent assets, a solid tradition of honouring contracts and confidence in our Government.

I also wish to announce that in the next few days, we will be holding an auction for the deployment of 5G technology in Brazil. Our modern, sustainable low-carbon agriculture currently feeds more than 1 billion people around the world while occupying only 8 per cent of our national territory.

No other country in the world has environmental legislation as comprehensive as ours. Our Forest Code sets an example for other countries to follow. Brazil is a country that is as vast as a continent, and it has great environmental challenges. It encompasses 8.5 million square kilometres, 66 per cent of which remains pristine and continues to have the same native vegetation it did in the early 1500s, when the country was discovered.

In the Amazon biome alone, 84 per cent of the forest is untouched and is home the greatest biodiversity on the planet. I note that the Amazon region covers an area equivalent to that of all Western Europe.

We moved up the target date, from 2060 to 2050, for attaining the goal of climate neutrality — net zero. Human and financial resources aimed at bolstering environmental agencies were doubled, with a view to fully eliminating illegal deforestation.

The results of this important initiative are already visible. In the Amazon region, we have seen a 32 per cent drop in deforestation in August compared to August of last year. What other country in the world has an environmental preservation policy like ours? All are invited to come and visit our Amazon.

Brazil today is already setting an example in energy generation, with 83 per cent of our energy coming from renewable sources. At the upcoming twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, we will pursue consensus on rules governing a global carbon credit market. We hope that industrialized countries will indeed fulfil their climate financing commitments in substantial amounts.

The future of green jobs lies in Brazil, in renewable energy, sustainable agriculture, low-carbon industries, basic sanitation, waste management and tourism.

We have ratified the Inter-American Convention against Racism, Racial Discrimination and Related Forms of Intolerance.

We believe that the traditional nuclear family is the very foundation of civilization and that the freedom of human being is made complete only with the freedom to worship and freedom of expression.

Fourteen per cent of Brazil's territory, which represents over 110 million hectares — an area equivalent to Germany and France combined — is devoted to indigenous reserves. Those areas are home to 600,000 indigenous people, who live there in freedom and increasingly wish to use their lands for agriculture and other activities.

Brazil has always participated in United Nations peacekeeping operations, from the Suez to the Congo and from Haiti to Lebanon.

My country has always welcomed refugees. At our border with neighbouring Venezuela, Operation Welcome, conducted by the Federal Government, has already received and welcomed 400,000 Venezuelan citizens who were displaced due to the severe political and economic crisis bred by the dictatorship's regime.

The future of Afghanistan also gives us cause for great concern. We will grant humanitarian visas to Afghan Christians, women, children and judges.

As we commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the attacks against the United States of America on 11 September 2001, we reiterate our condemnation of terrorism in all its forms.

In 2022, Brazil will once again hold a seat on the United Nations Security Council. I wish to thank the 181 countries out of a total of 190 that trusted Brazil in that regard. It is the visible result of a serious and responsible foreign policy led by our Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We support the reform of the Security Council, where we seek a permanent seat.

The pandemic caught us all by surprise in 2020. We sincerely regret every death in Brazil and across the world. I have always advocated for fighting against both the virus and unemployment, at the same time and with the same sense of responsibility.

Isolation and lockdown measures left behind a legacy of inflation, particularly in relation to food prices, all over the world. In Brazil, in order to cater to those in need, forced to stay at home due to decisions taken

by governors and mayors and who lost their sources of income, we granted emergency relief compensation in the amount of \$800 to 68 million people in 2020.

I wish to recall that we ended 2020, the year of the pandemic, with more formal jobs than was the case back in December 2019 thanks to the initiatives led by our Government, for example, programmes to ensure working conditions and income support, which have cost us nearly \$40 billion. In the first seven months of this year alone, we created nearly 1.8 million new jobs. I also wish to recall that our growth rate forecast for 2021 is estimated at five per cent.

Thus far, the Federal Government has distributed more than 260 million doses of coronavirus disease (COVID-19) vaccines. More than 140 million Brazilian citizens have received at least the first shot, which accounts for almost 90 per cent of the adult population. Eighty per cent of the indigenous population has already been fully inoculated against COVID-19. By November this year, all citizens who choose to be vaccinated in Brazil will be duly covered. We support vaccination efforts; however, my Administration has not supported a vaccine or health passport or any other vaccine-related obligation.

Since the pandemic started, we have supported doctors' professional autonomy in the quest for early treatment measures, in line with the recommendations issued by the Brazilian Federal Council of Medicine. I myself underwent early treatment for COVID-19. Of course, we respect the confidentiality of the doctor-patient relationship with regard to decisions on the proper medication to be used, as well as the potential for off-label use. We cannot understand why many countries, along with a large portion of the media, took a stance against early treatment measures. History and science will certainly hold everyone accountable.

On 7 September, our national independence day, millions of Brazilians peacefully and patriotically took to the streets in the largest demonstration in our history to show that they will not give up on democracy or individual freedoms and to show their support for our Administration.

As I have outlined, Brazil is entering a new era. In terms of the economy, we are one of the best performers among emerging countries. My Administration has restored our foreign credibility and, today, Brazil is one of the best investment destinations in the world.

It is here at the General Assembly that we envision a world with greater freedom, democracy, prosperity and peace. May God bless us all.

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. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States of America

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the United States of America.

Mr. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States of America, 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. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States of America and to invite him to address the Assembly.

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

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

Each death is an individual heartbreak, but our shared grief is a poignant reminder that our collective future will hinge on our ability to recognize our common humanity and to act together. This is the clear and urgent choice that we face today at the dawning of what must be a decisive decade for our world — a decade that will quite literally determine our futures.

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

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

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

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

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

Instead of continuing to fight the wars of the past, we are fixing our eyes on devoting our resources to the challenges that hold the keys to our collective future: ending this pandemic, addressing the climate crisis, managing the shifts in global power dynamics, shaping the rules of the world on vital issues like trade, cyberactivity and emerging technologies, and facing the threat of terrorism as it stands today.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We elevated the Quad partnership among Australia, India, Japan and the United States so as to take on challenges ranging from health security to climate to emerging technologies.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

To fight this pandemic, we need a collective act of science and political will. We need to act now to get shots in arms as fast as possible and expand access to oxygen, tests and treatments to save lives around the world. For the future, we need to create a new mechanism to finance global health security that builds on our existing development assistance, and a global health-threat council that is armed with the tools we need to monitor and identify emerging pandemics so that we can take immediate action. The United States has already put more than \$15 billion towards the global COVID-19 response. We have shipped more than 160 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine to other countries. That includes 130 million doses from our own supply and the first tranche of a half-billion doses of Pfizer vaccine that we purchased to donate through the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) Facility.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

We will continue to uphold the long-standing rules and norms that have formed the guardrails of international engagement for decades and that have been essential to the development of nations around the world — bedrock commitments like freedom of navigation, adherence to international laws and treaties, and support for arms control measures that reduce risk and enhance transparency.

Our approach is firmly grounded and fully consistent with the United Nations mission and the values we agreed to when we drafted the Charter of the United Nations. They are commitments that we all made and that we are all bound to uphold. As we strive to deal with these urgent challenges, whether they are

long-standing or newly emerging, we must also deal with one another. All the major Powers of the world have a duty, in my view, to carefully manage their relationships so that they do not tip from responsible competition to conflict.

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

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

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

We must also remain vigilant to the threat that terrorism poses to all our nations, whether emanating from distant regions of the world or in our own backyards. We know that the bitter sting of terrorism is real, and we have almost all experienced it. Last month, we lost 13 American heroes and almost 200 innocent Afghan civilians in the heinous terrorist attack at the Kabul airport. Those who commit acts of terrorism against us will continue to find a determined enemy in the United States.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

grow and to prosper. That is the idea behind the Build Back Better World initiative.

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

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

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

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

We must seek a future of greater peace and security for all the people of the Middle East. The commitment of the United States to Israel's security is without question and our support for an independent Jewish State is unequivocal. But I continue to believe that a two-State solution is the best way to ensure Israel's future as a Jewish democratic State, living in peace alongside a viable, sovereign and democratic Palestinian State. We are a long way from that goal at this moment, but we must never allow ourselves to give up on the possibility of progress.

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

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

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

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

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

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

We all must advocate for women and the rights of women and girls to use their full talents to contribute economically, politically and socially and to pursue their dreams free of violence and intimidation, from Central America to the Middle East, to Africa and to Afghanistan, wherever it appears in the world.

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

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

As we steer our nations towards this inflection point and work to meet today's fast-moving, cross-cutting challenges, let me be clear: I am not agnostic about the future we want for the world. The future will

belong to those who embrace human dignity, not those who trample it. The future will belong to those who unleash the potential of their people, not those who stifle it. The future will belong to those who give their people the ability to breathe free, not those who seek to suffocate their people with an iron hand.

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

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

This is a moment where we must prove ourselves the equals of those who came before us, who with vision and values and determined faith in our collective future built our United Nations, broke the cycle of war and destruction, and laid the foundations for more than seven decades of relative peace and growing global prosperity. Now we must again come together to affirm that the inherent humanity that unites us is much greater than any outward divisions or disagreements.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States of America, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives

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

Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives, 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. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Solih (*spoke in Dhivehi; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): It is my singular honour to offer, on behalf of a proud nation, our

congratulations to His Excellency Mr. Abdulla Shahid on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session. I would also like to extend our hearty congratulations to the Secretary-General on his reappointment.

Fifty-six years ago, right after our independence, we made haste to seek to become a Member of the United Nations. However, our entry was not guaranteed. It was the age of decolonization and self-determination, when numerous new nations came into existence. It was the age when humankind shook off the shackles of the past for the sake of civilization and progress.

As the story goes, the matter of allowing entry to small States, such as ourselves, was fiercely debated. It was a question of whether or not a small island would qualify to meaningfully contribute to world affairs. Today, 56 years later, as President of the Republic of Maldives, I address the presidency of the General Assembly in our mother tongue. Our mother tongue, Dhivehi, the language in which we take pride and is close to our hearts, is a language that is most familiar to the President of the General Assembly at this session. The Maldives may be small in size. Maldivians, however, are large in their rich culture and heritage. This is indeed a great honour for our nation.

It is highly apropos that your tenure, Mr. President, at the helm of the Assembly is entitled the “Presidency of Hope”, because indeed hope is a highly desirable commodity in these difficult times. It is surely what led to the formation of the United Nations. It was hope for a world devoid of the ugliness of wars and famine. It was hope for the equality of all peoples to prevail; hope for justice, human rights, self-determination and democracy to reign supreme; hope for a world where people oppressed under the yoke of colonial rule and other forms of oppression were rendered free. It was hope that we would preserve our planet, its resources, ecosystems and wonders for generations yet to be born.

For the past 76 years, we have gathered in this great Hall every year to deliver speeches that inspire us to scale seemingly insurmountable odds and resolve the various problems that afflict our global community. Yet for all our achievements and successes, the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has pushed our progress back years. The adverse impacts of climate change are increasing. The steady growth of the world’s population is also increasing the presence of famine. The threat of terrorism remains one of the biggest challenges we

face today. It is an ever-present blemish on our common humanity. That is why my duty today would be, first and foremost, to call on the world community to resolve to back up our hopes with effort. I believe the five rays of hope offered in the manifesto of the President of the General Assembly offer great hope in and of themselves.

From our small island nations to the Powers spanning continents, the consequences of COVID-19 have been the same. It has laid bare, in the starkest of terms, what we have all already known, namely, that, in today’s world, we are bound together. We must work together in solidarity and unity to achieve our ambitions together.

For the Maldives, as was the case the world over, the COVID-19 pandemic was a challenge without precedent. Our economy relies on welcoming tourists to our shores. We import nearly everything — from food to medicine to the materials with which we build our shelter. Having closed our borders, we were faced with catastrophic outcomes. Tourists stopped arriving, foreign currency receipts dropped, and businesses collapsed. The lockdown hindered social well-being and set back years of schooling for our beloved children.

Our task back then was to determine the best course of action. The decision to close our borders was neither desired nor welcomed. Left with no choice, we closed our borders. We acquired all the resources needed to upgrade our health-care system. At the time, a vaccine was a distant dream. Throughout that plight, we firmly abided by strict standards. We successfully managed the pandemic by adhering to the instructions provided by our health-care professionals. Employees, agencies and volunteers willingly lined up. Food, medical supplies and other necessities were stockpiled. As a result, we were able to tackle the pandemic.

We have vaccinated 95 per cent of all school children and 85 per cent of all residents in the Maldives. Schools and businesses have resumed. Our borders have reopened, thereby opening the doors to our resorts. The Maldives is ready to welcome the world. The Maldives has again become the sunny side of life. Come visit us.

COVID-19 will persist so long as it is not defeated everywhere. The key is vaccines. Vaccinating the world as soon as possible is the way we overcome it. Vaccine equity is of paramount importance in that regard. Eventually, as the world recovers from the COVID-19 menace, we must all collectively resolve to make sure that such a catastrophe is not repeated. Our citizens are

banking their hopes on all present here to ensure that we pool our resources, efforts, knowledge, skills and discoveries to prevent the next world pandemic.

Managing the virus is one aspect of recovery from COVID-19. Equally important is the task of rebuilding our economy, restoring livelihoods and a return to normal life. COVID-19 is an urgent call to action.

There is overwhelming scientific evidence that the climate emergency could be catastrophic to humankind. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report entitled *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis*, published just a few weeks ago, was a shocking reiteration of what we have long known. It is shocking because of the starkness of its pronouncement that we have simply brushed off the reality of climate change for far too long.

I wish to highlight one important aspect of the report — that the past five years have been the hottest on record since records started in the mid-nineteenth century. The rate of sea-level rise has tripled in comparison to the period 1901 to 1970. We have already caused a 1.1°C increase in global warming. The recommendations are alarming given their urgency. Global emissions need to be reduced by 45 per cent by 2030, and reach net-zero by 2050, if we are to limit warming to 1.5°C. “Existential threat”, “cease to exist”, “climate vulnerable”, “risk of disappearing”, “loss of identity” and “environmental refugees” are all phrases commonly tossed around to describe the plight that the people of the Maldives and other island States like us would face if current trends continue unabated. The difference between 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees is a death sentence for the Maldives. One overarching fact remains — the state of environmental ruin that small island States endure now will, without a doubt, catch up with larger nations sooner rather than later. There is no guarantee of survival for any nation in a world where the Maldives ceases to exist.

I come here today with messages that resonate closer to the heart than the cold facts presented by science. I carry in my hand the words of young Maldivian children who have written to me asking me to share their pleas for our world’s climate with the General Assembly. These are pleas to protect the vulnerable environment that they call home, in which they will grow up and hope to achieve their dreams. This is the collective calling of generations to come. We must listen.

Yet we remain hopeful that the day is not lost. Addressing the climate emergency requires a break from the lacklustre business-as-usual practices that currently dominate the global climate-change regime. It requires countries to adopt more stringent measures to halt their emissions. It needs the world’s wealthy nations to help smaller nations receive the necessary support — in the form of capacity-building, technology transfers and financial resources — to ramp up their defences in the climate fight. It also requires us to give up our addiction to fossil fuels and adopt cleaner, smarter technologies for our energy use.

We are determined to not passively wait on the climate front. We aspire to be more than another cautionary tale of what happens when nature and the destructive forces it can unleash are not respected. We have put forward an ambitious plan to reach net-zero by 2030, which we hope to achieve with international support.

When we speak of pressing global issues, addressing terrorism and violent extremism remains on the agenda. We cannot be complacent to the growing threat posed by extremist interpretations of religious texts. The Maldives has always prided itself on being a moderate Muslim country in which a pluralistic and rationalist Islam prevailed. But we are not immune from the threat posed by radicalized extremists. On 6 May, we suffered one of the worst terrorist attacks on our soil — the targeted assassination attempt on our Speaker of Parliament, former President Mohamed Nasheed. We will not stand idly by while more cowardly attacks are planned and more young minds are poisoned by false and violent interpretations of religion. We condemn terrorism in all its forms everywhere and reiterate our steadfast commitment to work with the international community to address terrorism in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.

Our Government and the people of the Maldives stand firmly and resolutely with the Palestinian people. Despite decades of United Nations efforts, the Palestinian people have yet to see justice. We continue to bear witness to Israel’s wanton and ever-escalating violations of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian people. Generations of educated youth around the world are standing up for the rights of the Palestinian people. They are standing up in protest against the unjust and inhumane treatment of the Palestinian people. Despite the many resolutions of both the General Assembly and the Security Council, the rights of Palestinians

are minimal or non-existent. As the Head of State of a small country, I am able to stand here and speak to the Assembly today because my country is recognized as a State. What has the world got to lose by fully recognizing Palestine as an independent State? On behalf of the Maldivian people, I want that privilege extended to millions of my Palestinian brothers and sisters — for them to be fully recognized by the United Nations and their individual liberties protected. I want to see a fully recognized Palestinian State with all the benefits and opportunities that membership confers. The Maldivian people will continue to fight for the full recognition of Palestine as an independent State.

As a neighbour in the wider South Asia region, we are also concerned about the long-term peace and stability of Afghanistan. We want to ensure the safety of the people and the protection and realization of the rights of women and girls. We also want to ensure that steps are taken to form an inclusive and representative Government for the people. Through these steps, Afghanistan can demonstrate its commitment to building a peaceful, durable and thriving country.

I believe that the United Nation still offers the best hope for humankind. The Organization still represents the pinnacle of what concerted diplomacy can achieve and continues to embody the hopes of all — irrespective of status, class or gender — who believe in peaceful dialogue to solve global problems. From farming to pandemics to terrorism, the United Nations is the most important global platform for deliberative decision-making to solve the world's most important challenges.

I thank the international community for its support for the Maldives candidature for the presidency of the General Assembly. I wish this Assembly every success in its work.

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

Mr. Ibrahim Mohamed Solih, President of the Republic of Maldives, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by His Excellency Mr. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia.

Mr. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia, 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. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Duque Márquez (*spoke in Spanish*): We meet again in this global forum, which has historically been a vital space for the development of multilateralism, peacebuilding and responses to threats to our shared home, against the backdrop of a cruel pandemic that is battering our health systems, our economies, our gains in equity and progress on fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Above and beyond all considerations, we find ourselves once again in this historic hemicycle recalling the fragility of the human being and, at the same time, recognizing the greatness and capacity of a human race that can overcome any challenge.

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) abruptly burst into our lives, changing our daily lives and interactions and taking away loved ones. This lethal virus has tested our emotions and brought us to understand, now more than ever, the worth of the embrace of a father and a mother, how much it means to us to share as a family and how much an unexpected friendly encounter fills our hearts.

While this fateful virus has threatened our economies and our education and health systems, technology — the Internet of Things, artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, cloud computing and other applications — has revealed that advances in the virtual world are opportunities for human development. The pandemic has shown our strengths as well as our weaknesses.

We have observed failures of multilateralism to respond equitably and articulately to the most acute challenges. The gaps between nations in terms of vaccination are unprecedented. While some nations procure additional doses amounting to six or seven

times the numbers of their populations and further announce the availability of third doses as boosters, other nations have not administered a single dose just to inject hope.

The pandemic has exacerbated other crises whose effects are equally threatening. We are witnessing the increased effects of climate change, greater inequalities caused by economic downturns, and migratory crises triggered by those who are willing to risk their lives, fleeing dictatorships and abusive regimes, for a decent job or a plate of food.

The pandemic has also had a major impact on peacebuilding and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. This reality provides me with the context to share with the General Assembly Colombia's response to these global challenges and to propose actions that we must take together equitably, without divisiveness, and by thinking without restrictions about the future of humankind.

In our country, we have taken on the pandemic with three approaches: health care, care for the most vulnerable and economic revival. Our progress on the national vaccination plan allowed us to cover at least 70 per cent of Colombians. We joined the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility mechanism, assuming regional leadership and coordinating with the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization. Today I call on the international community to strengthen multilateralism in health and to improve equity in the distribution of vaccines. That is our moral duty.

If we continue to fall behind in the equitable distribution of vaccines to all nations, we expose ourselves as humankind to new variants that may attack us with greater ferocity. Global immunity requires solidarity where there is no hoarding by some in the face of others' needs.

In caring for the most vulnerable, we have acted with determination and creativity, inspired by the path set forth in the 2030 Agenda. We can proudly say that we are the Government of Colombia that has launched the most ambitious social agenda in this century and, perhaps, in all of Colombia's recent history. We will keep in place until December 2022 a basic emergency income, the Solidarity Income, which reaches more than 4 million vulnerable households and provides direct economic support to more than 25 per cent of our entire population.

In addition, we have created an employment subsidy that protects more than 4 million official workers and a scheme for refunding the value added tax for more than 2 million vulnerable households, thereby correcting the regressive effect of this tax. This unprecedented social agenda also includes paying a 25 per cent premium for the hiring of young people, which is tantamount to social security. This is today a State policy that reinforces the implementation of a policy that embodies true transformation for social good: public university education provided tuition-free on a permanent basis to the neediest as well as to the emerging middle class of our country.

These advances, which have arisen from effort and fiscal responsibility, allow us to protect our social achievements. We have made the most significant social reform of this century in Colombia by adopting the greatest fiscal reform. Revenue collection has reached 1.8 per cent of gross domestic product, thereby strengthening fiscal control of debt and deficit reduction and establishing a clear path to stabilizing public finances and ensuring a broad social safety net. That collective effort was achieved without populism or demagoguery, while guaranteeing competition among businesses.

Our achievements in health, social care and fiscal stability are all part of the Commitment to Colombia, our reactivation agenda. With private, public and public-private investments, we are already seeing economic gains — the second quarter of this year was undoubtedly our best quarter in terms of growth this century. It has also set us firmly on the path towards a growth rate of more than 7 per cent in 2021, which will allow us to achieve our highest levels of growth this century.

The Colombian New Deal is the best way to recover in the wake of the pandemic's impact on the fulfilment of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In addition, it guides us and brings us closer to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Today I am making a global call. Many emerging countries, faced with the threat of COVID-19, have been forced to increase their debt and fiscal deficits. Many have not begun to go through the necessary fiscal reforms to pay for emergency expenditures and are now being evaluated by credit rating agencies with pre-pandemic standards and criteria.

Given the high levels of debt and existing needs, a global consensus, led by the International Monetary Fund and multilateral development banks, is required to establish new minimum fiscal risk criteria during the post-COVID-19 recovery phase. Otherwise, in the short term, in the face of the demand for debt and a generalized increase in the cost of capital, we might see a debt crisis that could bring about further setbacks and global recessionary effects.

All of the challenges and actions we are addressing today are also taking place amid the greatest threat faced by humankind, namely, the climate crisis. In the face of that challenge, Colombia is acting with determination and a moral commitment. We are a country that represents only 0.6 per cent of global carbon dioxide emissions, yet is one of those most threatened by the effects of climate change.

Our action requires commitment, boldness and exercising leadership by example. That is why we will be attending the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow with a commitment to reduce our greenhouse-gas emissions by 51 per cent by 2030. We are also on course to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Our journey in that regard has already begun, as underscored by our rapid energy transition, which already has its own legislation. We are exponentially expanding that legislation to include non-conventional and renewable energies in order to multiply by 20 our available capacity in comparison to when our Government first took power. We also hope to achieve zero deforestation by 2030, which will go hand in hand with the development of the circular economy, harnessing an efficient green hydrogen cycle and, above all, unrestricted defence of the Amazon.

Limited fiscal stability as a result of the impact of the pandemic will become an obstacle for many in meeting our shared goals if we do not develop global tools. I therefore propose to the international community that, for a certain period of time and with the support of the International Monetary Fund, a rule be established whereby all structural climate action expenditures and investments can be considered outside the traditional fiscal deficit measurement lines.

Such tools, as well as multilateral debt relief and debt forgiveness in the face of concrete climate action achievements, should be applied as soon as possible and without conditions. When addressing urgent

investments, we cannot be hindered by domestic political debates arising from conflicts over resource allocation. Action needs to be taken now, immediately and without delay. Our region, Latin America and the Caribbean, needs to strengthen green financing, which urgently requires the capitalization of the Inter-American Development Bank and the Development Bank of Latin America. That must be conducted alongside other tools.

Colombia is tackling the pandemic, addressing climate action and, at the same time, dealing with the worst migratory crisis on the planet due to the millions of Venezuelans fleeing the infamous narco-dictatorship. Our work with the United Nations and the Office of Mr. Filippo Grandi, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, has shown great progress, including by granting temporary protection status to 1.8 million Venezuelan migrants living in our country.

We shoulder that challenge without being a rich country and at an enormous fiscal cost. The situation requires the disbursement of the commitments made by the international community through the donor conferences established. I therefore call for mobilization in that regard.

I must pause here to state the following clearly: although the dialogue between the interim Government of Venezuela, which embodies the democratic resistance, and the narco-dictatorship offers some hope, there is no room for naivety. The only effective outcome of the situation would be the convening, as soon as possible, of a free and transparent presidential election with careful international observation. Any solution that perpetuates the shameful dictatorship and allows the regime to gain time will only exacerbate the greatest humanitarian disaster our continent has ever known. The end of the dictatorship is the only viable path to the well-being of the Venezuelan people. That, above all, should be the purpose of international action in that regard.

On the other hand, Colombia is also making progress in building on our “peace with legality” policy. Not even the effects of the cruel COVID-19 pandemic will deter us from our commitment to the demand of our people for an end to narco-terrorist violence. The fragile Final Peace Agreement, which was signed in 2016 with the terrorist group Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), has seen significant progress made, allowing us to consolidate the reintegration process of

those who are now entering legality, as verified by the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia.

Thanks to our commitment to development plans with a territorial focus and our focus on those areas most affected by violence, the Ombudsman's Office of Colombia has highlighted that, in the three years that our Administration has been in power, more progress has been made than in the first 20 months of implementation.

In that context, we are moving towards the largest investment in tertiary roads and the largest property certification initiative in our history. We are also making progress in the implementation of a multipurpose land registry, with an agenda to ensure equity in the purchase of rural products without intermediaries. That has led us to enjoy the largest agricultural commodities exports ever recorded in the country.

Nevertheless, we continue to face multiple challenges due to the activities of FARC dissidents, the National Liberation Army and other criminal groups that have never been committed to peace. They persist in their attacks on social leaders, environmental leaders and those in the process of reintegration.

Despite the many challenges, our peace with legality policy shows us that we have excellent reasons to be optimistic. In recent decades, we have recorded the lowest homicide and kidnapping rates in history since statistics were first taken for those heinous crimes, without losing sight of the fact that drug trafficking fuels violence and that we have to take firm measures to combat it. We have succeeded in confiscating the largest amounts of coca and manually eradicating the greatest number of illicit crops in the history of Colombia.

We are moving forward with resolve, but we must make a difference by acting together. In Colombia, greater coca production means lower levels of peace and environmental protection. Every gram of coca consumed in demand-driven nations translates into homicide and ecocide in Colombia. For every hectare of coca that has been planted, two hectares of tropical rain forest are destroyed. Dealing with the worrisome increase in narcotics consumption throughout the world is urgent. It is time for members of the international community to assume their share of responsibility.

The fight against crime and strengthening peace with legality demand that we continue to make progress in zero-tolerance for all behaviour by members of the

public force that runs contrary to the Constitution and the law and that we continue to take substantial steps towards structural reforms of law enforcement, in tandem with unconditionally and constantly defending human rights. Our public force is patriotic and committed, and its mandate is to always act in line with the Constitution, the law and human rights.

The realities that we are facing also demand that we constantly strengthen democracy to counter any threat posed by hatred and social division. All that we can do to ensure a solid democracy is a guarantee for a better future. In Colombia, young people have been hit hard by the pandemic, and today they are leading the major debates on climate action by proposing policies and joint action.

We have signed a pact with the youth to make a genuine change in the policies that will benefit them. In December, the first open and popular elections will take place to form municipal youth councils. Such elections are unprecedented in Latin America and will legitimize young people as the citizens who will effectively pave the way forward so that policymaking prevails over protests. That represents the great determination of Colombia, and we will not fail, as we want those young, empowered citizens to demonstrate our true capacity for democratic change.

This will be the last time that I address the Assembly in my capacity as President of Colombia. In 2018, I outlined our legality, entrepreneurship and equality agenda (see A/73/PV.8). In the year 2021, we have shown that, despite the situation that the pandemic has forced upon us, our agenda continues to march on. It has become State policy and is progressing in step with the circumstances. Colombia is moving forward on large-scale vaccinations. Colombia is moving forward on safely reopening. Colombia is moving forward with the largest budget for social programmes in the country's history. Colombia is moving forward on energy transition and climate action. Colombia is moving forward on its fraternal approach towards migration. Colombia, which embodies peace with truth, justice, reparations and non-repetition, is also on a clear path ahead.

Colombia has invested in gender equality among the members of the Cabinet. Colombia also wants to contribute to the modernization and reform of this great multilateral organization in order to ensure its

longevity and make it more relevant to the citizens whom it serves.

We know that we have many challenges and obstacles to overcome, but Colombia is a great nation that thinks globally in its efforts to become an example and foster progress. This is the Colombia that believes in multilateralism and the Colombia that calls for joint action. This is the Colombia that solves problems involving democracy within democracy, faces adversity with the certainty of turning it into an opportunity, never lets up and will never let up in the face of any storm. Colombia is made up of good, honourable and hard-working people, who are today represented at this global meeting and would like to say through me that it is time for action on climate change and brotherly migration. They demand that, united together, we must not wait any longer.

The 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. Iván Duque Márquez, President of the Republic of Colombia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

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*): It is my pleasure to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Abdulla Shahid on assuming the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session and to wish him every success. I also express our appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkir for his efforts in leading the work of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. I congratulate as well His Excellency Mr. António Guterres on his re-appointment as Secretary-General. We emphasize our support for him in accomplishing his mission.

Today's meeting, which is being held in-person rather than virtually under the theme "Building resilience through hope", represents an important event regarding the return to normal life without giving up the means of protection and prevention after the difficult period the world has faced due to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has caused millions of victims and countless humanitarian, social and economic crises.

The difficult experience that humankind continues to face has revealed gaps and vulnerabilities of our collective security system, while imparting upon us many lessons, including the importance of striking a balance between concern for people's health and maintaining economic cycles to secure their livelihoods. It has also taught us the importance of integration between the role of the State within its borders, on the one hand, and its role in confronting cross-border issues and implementing joint commitments to overcome challenges, crises and disasters, on the other.

We reaffirm our support for achieving the priorities of this session, while emphasizing the need for the equitable distribution of vaccines, while ensuring their accessibility for the countries of the South and treatment for all. Efforts to combat the other pandemics must be coordinated as well, namely, fake news, conspiracy theories and the unprecedented scepticism concerning vaccines' effectiveness, which has also spread throughout the world during the crisis and continues to hinder the critical distribution of vaccines amid the continued COVID-19 pandemic.

In that regard, the State of Qatar has adopted a balanced and effective approach to addressing the pandemic and its impacts on health and the economy at the national level. Experience has shown that success in this fight depends upon the policies and the capabilities of the State, especially in the field of public health, and on citizens' sense of responsibility and their level of awareness.

Based on our partnership with the international community to confront global crises, the State of Qatar has spared no effort to provide support to the relevant international institutions and countries affected by the pandemic. We have continued to provide medical supplies and to cater to other needs related to tackling the pandemic through the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization. We also provided support to the World Health Organization and the humanitarian

initiative to provide vaccines for the most vulnerable groups and countries most in need.

The issue of conflicts is a concern for the United Nations and has placed many burdens on it since its founding. Unfortunately, the Middle East region is a source of many of those burdens. Qatar therefore believes that contributing to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, including by proposing concepts of collective security, is one of its priorities, as there can be no security, stability, development or decent human life under conflicts.

We have always striven to establish an environment of peace, stability and cooperation in the region. For example, in the Gulf region, our immediate environment, we have repeatedly stressed the importance of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf (GCC) and our commitment to settling any differences through constructive dialogue. The Al-Ula declaration, issued by the leaders of the GCC countries last January, embodies the principle of resolving differences through dialogue based on common interests and mutual respect. We are confident of consolidating that consensus reached among brothers.

Meanwhile, we believe that there is no solution to the disagreements and differences over viewpoints with Iran except through rational dialogue based on mutual respect. That also applies to the issue of returning to the nuclear agreement with Iran. I do not think that there is any alternative to that approach, including among those who oppose returning to the agreement.

This year has witnessed numerous Israeli violations in occupied East Jerusalem and the recurrence of attacks on Islamic and Christian holy places, particularly the Al-Aqsa Mosque during the holy month of Ramadan, and the seizure of Palestinian homes in the context of the Judaization and settlement policies. That was followed by a dangerous military escalation in the Gaza Strip, which caused hundreds of casualties among unarmed civilians, exacerbating the already dire humanitarian situation there.

The international community bears responsibility for achieving a comprehensive, just and peaceful settlement of the Palestinian question by establishing a Palestinian State on the 1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, alongside the State of Israel, and by ending the occupation of Arab lands, as well as a just solution to the refugee issue. That is what the international community has agreed upon for decades;

yet it has not been reflected on the ground despite the risks posed by this question if it remains unresolved.

As a result of such continuous procrastination, there occasionally appear some people who believe that it is possible to marginalize the Palestinian question on the international agenda or circumvent such a deeply rooted national question by proposing ideas such as improving the economic situation of the population under occupation instead of ending the occupation.

Recently, the issue of evacuating the residents of the Sheikh Jarrah and Silwan neighbourhoods, the storming of the Al-Aqsa Mosque by settlers and the Palestinian, Arab and international angry popular response reaffirmed the centrality of the Palestinian question and that there is no way to circumvent it.

The United States decision to withdraw from Afghanistan following negotiations with the Taliban constituted an extremely critical turning point for that country. The responsibility lies, first, with the Afghan people, with all their factions, and, secondly, with the international community to work systematically and persistently to achieve a comprehensive political settlement and pave the way for stability in the country, which has long suffered the ravages of war.

As Member States know, Qatar has spared no effort in helping to evacuate thousands of individuals and families of various nationalities during the past weeks. It was our humanitarian duty. However, most important is the fact that we were confident that war offers no solution and that, ultimately, there would be dialogue. We acted on that basis when we hosted the Taliban office following a request from our international partners to open and support a direct dialogue between them and the Taliban in Doha. That position has been proved correct.

In coordination with our international partners, we will continue to do whatever we can to ensure that the tangible gains achieved within the Doha path are maintained, and it is necessary that the parties abide by their commitments during it.

The State of Qatar reaffirms its firm position regarding the need to protect civilians, respect human rights, combat terrorism and achieve a comprehensive political solution to ensure security and stability for the sake of the brotherly Afghan people. In that regard, we emphasize the importance of the international community's continued support to Afghanistan at

this critical stage and of separating humanitarian aid from political differences. We also stress the need to continue dialogue with the Taliban, because a boycott will lead only to polarization and reactions, whereas dialogue could have positive results.

The issue in Afghanistan is not a matter of victory or defeat but rather the failure to impose a political system from outside. Regardless of intentions, the efforts made and the money invested, that experience in Afghanistan has collapsed after 20 years. The world has reached the correct conclusions in that regard. However, it is important to avoid slipping into counter-extremism by major Powers not abandoning their duties regarding issues of world peace, ensuring the implementation of international conventions and protecting civilians from war crimes. There is a difference between imposing trusteeship on other countries and major Powers carrying out their duties to implement international resolutions and conventions. It is also unreasonable for major Powers to impose on other countries by force of arms a form of political system that they deem appropriate, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, to give up supporting countries that have adopted the same system of Government desired by the will of their peoples without external interference.

A decade has elapsed since the start of the Syrian crisis, which unfolded with a peaceful uprising and then turned into a humanitarian catastrophe due to the war launched by the regime against its people and the extremist armed forces that took advantage of the situation. The continuation of the crisis poses immense perils, including exacerbating the threat of terrorism to Syria itself and to the peace and security of the region and the world.

The Syrian issue should not be neglected, and neither should the international community turn its back on the suffering of the Syrian people, as happened recently during the bombing of the city of Dara'a and other areas. There may come a day when we remember such incidents with great regret.

The international community must redouble its efforts to put an end to this crisis through a peaceful solution, in accordance with the first Geneva communiqué (S/2012/522, annex) and the implementation of resolution 2254 (2015) and all its elements, and through maintaining the national unity, territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Syria.

With regard to Libya, the positive developments it has witnessed during past year inspire cautious optimism. The ceasefire, the convening of the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, the election of representatives of the interim executive authority and the winning of a vote of confidence in the House of Representatives by the interim Government of National Unity are all positive developments. We call on all Libyan parties to maintain those gains and to ensure the full implementation of what has been agreed upon on the political, economic and security tracks, as well as the successful holding of elections while working to achieve comprehensive reconciliation.

With regard to the crisis in Yemen, where the war has led to a tragic humanitarian situation and risks of division that may, in turn, lead to the outbreak of other conflicts, the State of Qatar reaffirms its support for Yemen's unity and territorial integrity. We maintain our firm position that the only way out of the crisis is through negotiation among the Yemeni parties based on the outcome of the Comprehensive National Dialogue, the Gulf Cooperation Council Initiative and the relevant Security Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2216 (2015).

Today marks the fiftieth anniversary of Qatar's becoming a State Member of the United Nations on 21 September 1971. During the past five decades, the relationship between Qatar and this international Organization has been characterized by close cooperation and the establishment of exemplary partnerships in various fields. Qatar's bet on international institutions and multilateral cooperation is a strategic one. In that context, we emphasize that we will continue our support to United Nations entities and fulfil our commitments to the issues identified as priorities by the international community at this stage.

We are pleased that Doha has become a hub of international multilateral action in our region, which is in dire need of the work and efforts of United Nations agencies and international institutions. Their offices in Doha have assumed their functions, and we look forward to inaugurating the United Nations House in Doha soon.

On the topic of the United Nations and the global issues facing humankind as a whole, which highlight the need for its role, I would like to refer to the participation of the State of Qatar in international efforts to combat terrorism and address its causes through

support for education and by addressing poverty and unemployment among youth and resolving conflicts, which also constitute a breeding ground for terrorism.

I refer also to the world's increasing dependence on information technology and modern communication in all aspects of life, from education to security and the economy. On the other hand, the world has felt the effects of the misuse of cyberspace, including breaching private domains by individual and international piracy and the serious threat it poses to the security and stability of the international community. From that standpoint, we reiterate the call for the United Nations to lead the process of unifying efforts to prevent the misuse of the scientific progress in cybersecurity and regularize this vital aspect according to the rules of international law.

Climate change remains one of the most critical challenges of our time, as it causes disastrous impacts on all aspects of life for the current and future generations. We must continue our joint efforts to confront those impacts. We look forward to the upcoming twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which will be held in Glasgow in the United Kingdom, being a turning point towards realizing the ambitions of the international community.

In that respect, we note that the State of Qatar has placed climate change at the top of its priorities, and it continues to take the necessary measures to develop climate change-related technologies and clean energy. We will present all that at the conference in November.

Mr. Gastorn (Tanzania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In conclusion, our joint responsibility and the shared destiny of humankind require dedication to the values of partnership in international relations to achieve the interest of our peoples and the good of humankind.

The Acting 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 Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, President of the Slovak Republic

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Slovakia to introduce an address by the President of the Slovak Republic.

Mr. Korcok (Slovakia): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by Her Excellency Ms. Zuzana Čaputová, the President of the Slovak Republic, on the occasion of the general debate of the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly.

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

A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex I and see A/76/332).

Address by Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic

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

Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese 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. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Rebelo De Sousa (spoke in Portuguese; English interpretation provided by the delegation): I congratulate you on your election, Mr. President, and extend our full support for your priorities — to recover sustainably from the pandemic, uphold human rights and revitalize multilateral organizations, namely, the United Nations. I thank the outgoing President, Mr. Volkan Bozkir, for a historic General Assembly session.

As I said here in June, I congratulate the Secretary-General for his exemplary first term. I thank the General Assembly for the confidence it placed in the right person at the right time. I fully support the call for a global ceasefire, the reform process of the United Nations and the Call to Action for Human Rights. I equally support the priorities chosen — a United Nations 2.0 and an agenda focused on persons — to respond to the pandemic, seek international peace and security, galvanize climate action, achieve the Sustainable Development Goals in the Decade of Action, ensure

the centrality of human rights, promote gender equality and address the challenges of digital transformation.

The pandemic, the resulting economic and social crises and the recent developments in Afghanistan provide us with pieces of evidence that we cannot and must not ignore.

First, the world is multipolar. No country, no matter how powerful, can face, on its own or with only a few partners, climate change, pandemics, economic and social crises, terrorism and misinformation and also promote the safe and orderly movement of persons, the protection of the most vulnerable and human rights.

Secondly, the governance of a multipolar world requires commitment and agreement among nations, and that means multilateralism.

Thirdly, multilateralism, faced with challenges that go beyond borders and require joint responses, must be based on international law, the values of the Charter of the United Nations and the strengthening of international organizations, starting with the United Nations and its specialized agencies.

Fourthly, whenever we hesitate on multilateralism, whenever we question international law and the role of international organizations, we fail. We witnessed it in the response to the pandemic and to emerging crises and in the promotion of peace and security. Our common agenda and the innovative ideas put forward in the Secretary-General's recent report (A/75/1) are our best road map.

Fifthly, we need to enlarge, deepen and accelerate reforms at the United Nations — in the areas of management, peace and security and the development system. We also need to move forward on the reform of the Security Council in order for it to reflect the realities of the twenty-first century, at the very least with African representation among the permanent members, as well as representation from Brazil and India. But these reforms require additional financial means. Affirming the role of the United Nations while struggling with reforms and denying resources implies, in practice, weakening multilateralism and fostering crisis situations, with negative effects for everyone.

Portugal has always been and will always be on the side of consensus that solves crises. Portugal and the European Union stand with multilateralism, the United Nations, a rules-based international order and human rights. Portugal is committed to reforming the World

Health Organization, supporting an international treaty on pandemics and guaranteeing that vaccines are a global public good. Portugal is also committed to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the relief of external debt of the most vulnerable countries and, as a Champion country, the implementation of the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

In Lisbon in 2022, Portugal and Kenya will host the second United Nations Ocean Conference, an essential dimension of climate action, and Portugal supports the international recognition of the right to a healthy environment.

Portugal participates in peacekeeping operations. My country supports the European Union-Africa dialogue and international action for the stabilization of the Sahel, maritime security in the Gulf of Guinea and the cooperation with Mozambique in its fight against terrorism.

Portugal has never changed course. That was demonstrated during our presidency of the Council of the European Union, in our participation in the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, which is now celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary, and in the global projection of the Portuguese language, spoken by almost 300 million persons. We also demonstrated it through the bold initiative of President Jorge Sampaio, who passed away a few days ago, of the Global Platform for Syrian Students, now extended to Afghan refugees. We do not change our principles, and we will hold this course if we are entrusted with a term in the Security Council five years from now.

We believe that the most pressing concerns of our time, like climate change, pandemics, economic and social crises, wars and insecurity, as well as migration and refugees, only confirm that isolationism, protectionism, unilateralism, intolerance, populism and xenophobia inevitably lead to dead ends.

The Secretary-General's message is clear, insightful and forward-looking. It is an appeal not only to Member States but to all the citizens of the world. There is no planet B — for climate or anything else. Either we, throughout the world, are all aware of that or political leaders will be tempted to forget, delay, stall and waste time. Twenty years after 9/11, six years after the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and a year and a half after the beginning of the pandemic, we need effective multilateralism more than ever. We need actions, not speeches. There really is no more time to waste.

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

Mr. Marcelo Rebelo de Sousa, President of the Portuguese Republic, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

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

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kyrgyzstan to introduce an address by the President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Mr. Kazakbaev (Kyrgyzstan): It is an honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Sadyr Zhaparov, President of the Kyrgyz Republic.

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

A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex II and see A/76/332).

Address by Mr. Gitanas Nausėda, President of the Republic of Lithuania

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

Mr. Gitanas Nausėda, President of the Republic of Lithuania, 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. Gitanas Nausėda, President of the Republic of Lithuania, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Nausėda: This year marks a special anniversary for the independent Lithuanian State. Thirty years ago, the Republic of Lithuania became a State Member of the United Nations. Ever since the restoration of independence, in March 1990, we had been striving for international recognition. Membership in the United Nations made Lithuania a full-fledged member of the international community. It empowered us to seek peace, defend human rights and contribute to effective multilateralism.

A significant decision of the United Nations General Assembly was made in 1992: to call for a

complete withdrawal of foreign military forces from the territories of the Baltic States (resolution 47/21). It was a powerful manifestation of global solidarity — the kind of solidarity we still often need today.

Recent years have shown us that no country is able to deal with global challenges alone. It is a global effort that helps us to mitigate the consequences of the coronavirus disease pandemic. That fight is not over, but I believe that we are on the right path. The way forward is through the widespread use of safe and effective vaccines. We need an active global vaccine-sharing mechanism that will help to protect everyone, including those who are most vulnerable.

Alarmingly, the pandemic is deepening global poverty and inequality. The widening gaps in education, social security and digital connectivity divide the global population. Right now, millions of people are also being overwhelmed by a dangerous infodemic. That, too, is causing much suffering and contributes to many untimely deaths.

I would therefore like to congratulate the United Nations on its efforts in that regard, especially its “Verified” campaign to fight misinformation and disinformation, which pose an ever-greater threat to our societies. In order to counter the various kinds of manipulation, we need a holistic approach and new, concrete ways to get better at detecting, analysing and exposing disinformation.

Various forms of pressure and hybrid attacks are closely related to the deteriorating security situation in many parts of the world. We have seen authoritarian regimes and States continuing their military build-ups and intensifying violent crackdowns on political opposition, free media and civil society. Those regimes have demonstrated many times their willingness to endanger our peace and security and prosperity.

We refuse to accept such behaviour as a new normal. Therefore, Lithuania fully supports the cause to uphold human rights in all countries. Cases in which political activists and human rights defenders are tortured and killed must be carefully investigated.

We also deplore efforts by Russia to exert pressure on the Lithuanian judges and prosecutors investigating the case of atrocities committed by the occupying Soviet Army in Lithuania in 1991. Lithuania calls on all States not to execute related international arrest warrants.

It is also with deep sadness that I recall last year's developments in Belarus. A genuine protest movement that sprang up after a rigged presidential election has been brutally suppressed. Independent civil society and media organizations are being silenced, with hundreds of people detained, severely beaten and tortured. The irresponsible actions of the Belarussian authorities might also have a bigger impact on international security.

We saw it in the hijacking and forced landing of a Ryanair flight on 23 May, which was done in clear violation of international law. Such actions should be treated as a State-sponsored act of terrorism. The Belarussian regime is also testing new methods of hybrid actions. For several months now, Lithuania has been dealing with unprecedented hybrid attacks. By artificially creating and directing irregular migration flows, Belarus is aiming to put political pressure on the European Union. Lithuania firmly rejects that attempt to sow discord and calls on the United Nations to address it.

We all need to actively fight human trafficking, break the business models of smugglers and discourage migrants from endangering their lives. There must be serious discussions on how to prevent one country from using irregular migration to put pressure on another. We must make it clear that people should not be used as tools.

Furthermore, Belarus recently generated yet another outrage by starting the commercial exploitation of an unsafe nuclear power plant close to the Lithuanian border. By ignoring numerous warning incidents and failing to comply with basic international safety standards, the Belarussian regime has once again shown a complete lack of a sense of responsibility. I believe that it would be a colossal mistake to treat such violators on the same footing as climate-friendly producers that respect environmental and nuclear safety rules. Resolving the issue of the Belarussian nuclear power plant is of crucial importance for our environment and a matter of safety for all people of Europe.

For the seventh year, we are witnessing the continued military aggression against Ukraine, as well as the illegal annexation and occupation of Crimea. Those actions violate international law and the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the provisions of the Helsinki Final Act, and should be universally condemned.

We must reinforce the policy of non-recognition of the occupation and annexation of Crimea. It is

also extremely important to protect the rights and freedoms of the local civilian population. I commend Ukraine's efforts to keep the issue on the agenda by creating the International Crimean Platform. Lithuania respects Ukraine's European and Euro-Atlantic choice and continues to support its reforms in this troubled period. Seeking to consolidate international efforts, we co-hosted the Ukraine Reform Conference in Vilnius in July.

We are also currently witnessing a worsening human rights and security situation in the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions of Georgia. Aggressive actions by the occupying forces, such as borderization, movement restrictions and illegal detentions, are hindering the lives of the local people. Our duty is to hold the aggressor accountable.

The international community could also pay special attention to a comprehensive settlement of the Transnistria conflict, based on the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Moldova within its internationally recognized borders.

We are constantly being reminded about the need to preserve the international rules-based order. As we have inherited it, our duty is to pass it onto the next generations. We must show restraint when it comes to international matters and implement our commitments and obligations. The Treaty on Open Skies, the Vienna Document, the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe and many other agreements are crucial for building confidence in international security. The principles of sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity should prevail in the face of new challenges.

For the United Nations to remain relevant and strong, an efficient Security Council is required. Every instance of inaction by the Security Council encourages aggression and threatens the multilateral system. Lithuania therefore strongly supports the initiative on limiting the use of the veto in the Security Council in cases of mass atrocities, genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity.

As an expression of Lithuania's strong commitment to the international human rights agenda, we are also running for a seat on the Human Rights Council for the term from 2022 to 2024. If elected, Lithuania will pay special attention to the protection of human rights defenders, the rights of the child, the rights of persons with disabilities and human rights in conflict areas. We will continue defending the rights of women and

girls, freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of religion and belief and will stand up for ensuring access to information and the safety of journalists.

In order to fulfil those promises, Lithuania will make use of the experience gained by its membership within various United Nations bodies. As the current President of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund, Lithuania is engaged in international efforts to save children's lives and defend their rights. In seeking to make a change, Lithuania has also presented its candidacy for election to the UNESCO Executive Board for the term from 2021 to 2025. We are ready to promote UNESCO's mission and mandate and to contribute to making the organization more efficient, responsive and keen to find sustainable solutions.

I would now like to turn to the challenge of our time — climate change.

The recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change clearly states that we have little time left for necessary decisions and real actions. Lithuania fully supports Secretary-General António Guterres in his call for urgent and bold steps to address the triple crisis of climate disruption, biodiversity loss and pollution destroying our planet. It is crucially important for every country to participate at the upcoming twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Glasgow, with the most ambitious proposals.

Lithuania seeks a timely transition towards a resilient and climate-neutral economy and is committed to reaching the related European Union targets. The recently adopted national climate change management agenda sets goals for Lithuania to reduce emissions by 70 per cent as compared to 1990 and to become climate neutral by 2050. The broad support of society is needed for decarbonization efforts to be effective.

They must bring about new major opportunities for and benefits from innovative green growth, employment, a higher quality of life, public health and biodiversity. The shift from fossil fuels to renewable energy is inevitable. The real question now is, who will be the first to reap the benefits? From an early date, Lithuania has bet on digital transformation, with advances in modern information and communication infrastructure, jump-starting the rapid growth of its digital economy. We intend to do the same with our green transformation.

We have always shared one world, but we have only recently been awakened to the fact of our shared responsibility. We now know that we have to make an effort. We must actively build our common future. The time for passive observation is over. We clearly need a new social contract anchored in human rights, as well as the better management of our global commons. How can all of that be achieved? I believe that the way forward is through an honest and open discussion. Our success depends on our ability to build bridges of trust among peoples and make them work for the whole of humankind. Our hopes, brave ideas and individual strengths should all be channelled into global efforts. Let us build our future together.

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

Mr. Gitanas Nausėda, President of Lithuania, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Uzbekistan to introduce an address by the President of Uzbekistan.

Mr. Ibragimov (Uzbekistan): It is my distinct honour and great privilege to introduce the pre-recorded statement of His Excellency Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan, at the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session.

A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex III and see A/76/322).

Address by Mr. Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Mr. Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 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. Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Tshisekedi Tshilombo (*spoke in French*): We are extremely pleased to find ourselves once again in the General Assembly Hall after a little more than a year's absence, owing to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, — this twenty-first century plague, which is shaking the core of humankind, especially because of the high number of victims, the destruction of national economies and the worsening levels of poverty in the world.

These renewed meetings are encouraging. They give us increasing hope for a return to normal life in our countries, thanks to the ingenuity of our scientists and the joint efforts of our States in a remarkable display of international solidarity. We must step up those efforts and strengthen the momentum of solidarity in order to defeat the COVID-19 pandemic once and for all, relaunch our economies' growth and ensure a better future for the people of our planet.

I therefore welcome the choice of the theme for of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session: "Building resilience through hope — to recover from COVID-19, rebuild sustainably, respond to the needs of the planet, respect the rights of people, and revitalize the United Nations". The theme accurately reflects our determination to eradicate COVID-19 and our desire to rebuild our common destiny through multilateralism under the guidance of a United Nations that is capable of addressing the existential challenges facing humankind, in particular achieving the inclusive Sustainable Development Goals.

Overcoming COVID-19 will be possible and sustainable only if the fight remains a priority for all and if we reach the necessary level of herd immunity for all of humankind. With regard to Africa, it has not sat idly by and will not give in fatalistically to any sort of preordained destiny. On the contrary, Africa has established the Africa Joint Continental Strategy for COVID-19 Outbreak. Within that framework, it has established the COVID-19 Response Fund and launched a medical supply platform to guarantee all its countries access to needed equipment and supplies.

On 28 March, Africa signed an agreement, under the aegis of the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust, to purchase 220 million vaccine doses. Several African countries have laid the groundwork towards establishing an African medicines agency; others are already producing vaccines under licensing agreements. By January 2022, the number of administered vaccine doses

will exceed 25 million a month on the continent. World-renowned African medical researchers have proposed a range of effective treatments for the coronavirus disease that deserve the support of our world Organization and specialized scientific institutions. In that regard, I take this opportunity to thank all the partners that have supported the continent's efforts in combating the pandemic.

Although we welcome the undeniable progress of medical science in testing for the virus and the development of vaccines in record time, it must be said, unfortunately, that the disease remains far from being eradicated. Like a hydra, the pandemic has recurred in a third wave, which is more virulent than the previous two, especially in Africa and other parts of the world, and is unravelling the hope inspired by that significant progress. In order to definitively reverse the current trend, taking the following measures therefore seems urgent to me.

First, there is a need to increase the testing capacity in countries that lack the necessary laboratory equipment.

Secondly, we must ensure a sufficient and rapid supply of the drugs and equipment needed to treat patients.

Thirdly, we must universalize vaccination by supplying vaccines to those countries that do not manufacture them and providing them with the necessary local production capacity. I take this opportunity to call on the international community to support the plans to establish the African medicines agency.

Fourthly, there is a need to encourage medical research and increase scientific cooperation among academic institutions.

Lastly, we must support policies to reform health-care infrastructure and expand health-care coverage for the greatest number of people in developing countries.

COVID-19 is not only destroying human lives. It is also a virus affecting the global economy, which it has plunged into recession, thereby exacerbating the vulnerability and dependence of the economies of poor countries, many of which are in Africa. Furthermore, the impact of the general decline in economic activities has been felt particularly in Africa by the most vulnerable populations, including women and children, especially as a result of the loss of jobs, falling revenues and a drop in school enrolment.

As we work towards eliminating the coronavirus from the lives of our populations, we must therefore also strive to revive the global economy, as we run the risk of increasing their vulnerability, undermining their resilience and compromising their future long-term return to prosperity and social normalcy. We will be able to win the battle only through a joint effort, based on a road map laid out together. That requires sharing responsibilities and greater equity in the complementarity that the globalization of our economies and international issues demand.

In the current health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, African economies are in dire need of financing so that they can recover, especially as their efforts to mitigate the shock of the pandemic and limit its repercussions have proven to be clearly insufficient compared to those of wealthy countries. As a result, the recovery under way will likely be uneven and consequently widen gaps between Africa and the rest of the world.

That is why the African Union welcomes all initiatives concerning the financing of African economies affected by COVID-19, in particular the following initiatives of the Group of 20 (G-20): the debt service suspension initiative and the common framework for debt restructuring; the initiative taken at the Summit on Financing African Economies, held in Paris on 18 May, which launched the idea of a New Deal; the initiative of the fourth summit of the G-20 Compact with Africa concerning the ambitious twentieth replenishment of International Development Association; and, above all, the initiative for the new allocation of \$650 billion in special drawing rights (SDRs) from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to meet the financing needs of countries with economies in difficulty as a result of the pandemic.

However, the \$33 billion in SDRs allocated to Africa within the framework are entirely insufficient to meet the immense needs of its economic recovery. The United Nations and its Member States must therefore support the goal of the Paris Summit of reaching the equivalent of \$100 billion in SDRs for Africa through the reallocation to poor countries of 25 per cent of SDRs allocated to rich countries. Moreover, part of that reallocation could contribute to increasing the capital of the African Development Bank and the World Bank.

It would also be good to see the exceptional allocation of those funds used to promote more vigorously youth

entrepreneurship in Africa, access to capital for small and medium-sized businesses and the green economy. In that spirit, I call for the massive support of technical and financial partners in establishing the Alliance for Entrepreneurship in Africa, which was proposed at the Paris Summit and will hold its constitutive meeting in the coming weeks.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo calls for stepping up the effective provision of resources by the IMF, without forgetting the imperative of alleviating the debt burden of African countries and honouring all promises made to Africa as compensation for the sacrifices it has made to safeguard humankind from global warming. Concerning global warming in particular, we should recall that the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is less than six weeks away and that the year 2030 is only nine years away.

For Africa, 2030 will be marked by a drop of up to 15 per cent in gross domestic product, a decrease in agricultural yields and a sharp increase in the risk of flooding for coastal and island countries. In order to address those negative impacts by that fateful deadline, the African continent will be in need \$30 billion a year to adapt to those circumstances. That amount is expected to reach \$50 billion by 2040.

I am therefore calling on the international community in general, and the friends of Africa in particular, to support the Africa Adaptation Acceleration Program under the leadership of the Global Center on Adaptation and the African Development Bank, which intends to raise \$25 billion in five years to help Africa withstand the shocks of climate change. Beyond proclamations of good faith and good intentions, the recovery of the world economy will be a reality felt by all, and international solidarity will be tangible, especially for the African peoples.

Africa is not in need of handouts. It is struggling to claim spaces of freedom and action in a world that remains in competition with itself in order to forge a better future and make a greater contribution to humankind's overall progress. Africa is in need of constructive and win-win partnerships to develop its fabulous natural resources, acquire development infrastructure and improve the living conditions of its people. Clearly, achieving those goals demands strong and stable democratic institutions, effective public

policies, good governance and regional integration. Africa lacks neither the capacity nor the dynamism of its people, let alone the natural resources, to meet those goals.

Overall, substantial progress has been made over the past two decades in terms of consolidating democratic processes, economic growth and poverty reduction, despite the unforgiving nature of international relations and the adverse consequences of climate change. However, the scourge of insecurity caused by terrorist and armed groups, mercenaries and criminals of all stripes is undermining the institutional stability of our young democracies and obliterating the efforts of many African leaders to develop their countries.

Indeed, while the fight against Da'esh has seen undeniable victories in the Middle East — specifically in Iraq and Syria — in Africa, on the other hand, Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb and other Da'esh-affiliated groups are gaining increasing ground every day. Mali, the Niger, Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad and Burkina Faso are enduring deadly attacks by Da'esh and Boko Haram jihadists on a regular basis. Since 2017, the north-eastern part of Mozambique has been the victim of recurring armed attacks by jihadist salafists from Ansar Al-Sunnah, which have already led to at least 2,600 deaths.

Islamic fundamentalism has reached the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which is paying a heavy price in the provinces of Ituri, North Kivu, South Kivu and Maniema. Jihadists operating under the cover of the Forces démocratiques de libération du Rwanda and the Allied Democratic Forces/Madinat Tawheed Muwaheedina are killing my compatriots and plundering my country's mining and agricultural resources on a massive scale.

In April, terrorists and mercenaries from Libya plunged Africa into deep sorrow by brutally snatching away one of its great leaders, Marshal Idriss Déby Itno, President of the Republic of Chad, who was killed in a cowardly manner on the front lines while defending the sovereignty of his country and the lives of his fellow citizens. From this rostrum, I pay tribute, on behalf of the Congolese people, to the bravery and commitment of that historic figure in protecting Africa against terrorism.

Africa refuses to serve as a rear base for international terrorism. That is why some African leaders, including those of the Group of Five for the

Sahel, have come together to pool their forces against the common enemy. In order to express the will and the fierce determination of the Congolese people and their leaders to actively contribute to eradicating terrorism, which not only destroys nations and compromises the future of democracy in the world but also increasingly extends its tentacles into Africa, the Democratic Republic of the Congo joined the global coalition against terrorism as its eightieth member. My country welcomes the decision taken by the coalition's meeting in Rome on 28 June to set up a working group on terrorism in Africa.

Article 1, paragraph 1, of Chapter I of the Charter of the United Nations clearly states that one of the purposes of creating the United Nations is to “maintain international peace and security”. Today international peace and security are largely dependent on the internal stability of Member States.

That is why, when African States are destabilized or threatened with destabilization, particularly by terrorism, the United Nations has a duty to actively support them in their heroic struggle for the well-being of all humankind over and above statements of compassion and good intentions, which are rarely followed up with action on the ground.

If the community of nations downplays the danger posed by the spread of jihadism in Africa and if it does not adopt a comprehensive and effective strategy to eradicate that scourge, the wounds opened up in the Saharan region and in Central and Southern Africa will continue to spread until they join together to become a genuine threat to international peace and security.

The Democratic Republic of Congo therefore supports the implementation of a global counter-terrorism strategy based on the following pillars: the adoption of coordinated security policies; strengthening State capacities, particularly by pooling resources and exchanging security information; respect for human rights; and prevention.

In the context of prevention, it is essential to emphasize that, in addition to security measures involving intelligence and operational services, we must promote upstream socioeconomic measures focused on education, youth employment and the fight against poverty in order to eradicate terrorism from our societies in the long term. While injustices and inequalities between nations and individuals persist in

the world, terrorism will always find fertile ground for its emergence and spread.

The African peoples and their leaders are sufficiently aware that the development of their continent is solely their responsibility and depends on incorporating their respective countries into a free trade area. The latter should, in fact, promote the movement of people and goods, as well as the integration of intelligence, resources and initiatives.

The establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) is the outcome of that awareness, of the will of Africans to enhance their economic independence and of the need to develop Africa in a world where the poor are entitled only to pity and disregard. Making the AfCFTA a success, that is, making it effective and transforming it into a huge market of more than 1 billion consumers, is therefore becoming a major issue and challenge for both African leaders and elites in the twenty-first century. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, we are convinced that Africa will succeed in that regard and take up the challenge, since it has the capacity and the determination.

The main instruments of that great ambition for African integration are, in particular, the implementation of the regional and continental priority projects listed in Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want; the establishment of partnerships among African States; the implementation of internal policies to encourage private investment, particularly by improving the business climate; the diversification and industrialization of national economies; and the peaceful settlement of disputes between States within the framework of the continent's own institutions and mechanisms, in accordance with the principle adopted by the African Union, which is that African problems should have African solutions.

Based on that principle, the United Nations Charter and the principle of subsidiarity, since my accession to the current chairmanship of the African Union I have been working to facilitate the settlement of the dispute between Egypt, the Sudan and Ethiopia over the operation of the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam, built by the latter on the Blue Nile.

To that end, I took the following steps: the organization of the Kinshasa negotiations last April and my direct consultations with the highest authorities of three countries during my diplomatic tour in June to their respective capitals. That approach made it possible to identify the few points that still need to be

agreed among the parties in order to conclude a fair and binding agreement that takes into account the interests of each of them and fosters a climate of mutual trust, which is essential if that major dam is to become an instrument of regional economic integration and unity among Ethiopia, Egypt and the Sudan. Those points were communicated to the three countries, and talks will resume in the near future.

I remain confident, since the leaders of the three countries not only are committed to resolving their dispute through dialogue within the framework of the African Union but also constantly reiterate their confidence in the Union's facilitation. I take this opportunity to thank them for that and to reassure the observers and any State or institution accepted by the parties that their support will be welcome.

In recent times, political crises have erupted in some African States. Those crises cannot overshadow the enormous progress made by the majority of African countries in terms of democracy and good governance. I would like to reassure the community of nations that the democratization process in Africa remains irreversible. The current upheavals are merely the result of a democratic process that is certainly arduous, but which is built over time and piece by piece. The African peoples will no longer tolerate military or autocratic regimes. The Congolese people are therefore continuing their noble and inspiring struggle against dictatorship, autocracy and the negative values that still shape our actions.

In that context, as soon as I became President, I undertook actions and deep political and economic reforms. I fiercely opposed all attempts to perpetuate the prevailing negative values based on greed and human rights violations. That led to the institutional adjustments of December 2020 and the first quarter of 2021, to the great satisfaction of my compatriots, who have never ceased to demand radical change in our country's governance.

On the economic front, the Democratic Republic of Congo signed a programme with the International Monetary Fund last June and is benefiting from World Bank assistance to carry out major social projects and to develop basic infrastructure. Thanks to the implementation of bold reforms, economic growth has increased to more than 5 per cent annually, inflation has slowed and the national currency, the Congolese franc, has stabilized on the foreign exchange market.

Since increasing domestic revenue is one of our priorities, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been undertaking, since I assumed the presidency of the country, a rigorous policy to combat corruption, the misappropriation of public funds and impunity. The results can already be seen in the substantial increase in revenue as of the second trimester of this year.

We are constantly crisscrossing Africa and the world to rekindle multilateral and bilateral cooperation and invite investors to the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to create wealth and jobs for our young people. To that end, the Government of the Republic has already concluded partnership agreements with several countries and groups of private investors. We are determined to further strengthen the return of confidence in our country.

However, a heavy burden weighs on those encouraging achievements and jeopardizes the victorious march of the Congolese people towards their well-being: that is, the insecurity in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has been plagued for the past two decades by murderous attacks and recurrent raids by a multitude of armed groups, including Islamist terrorists. It is no secret that those attacks have caused thousands of deaths and internally displaced persons, women have been raped and there have been mass violations of human rights.

Facing that persistent cancer, which is undermining the country in the north-east, and the difficulties encountered by the troops of the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) in the theatre of operations, I have decided to declare, in accordance with article 85 of the Constitution, a state of siege to bring an end to the insecurity in one of the strategic regions of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Given this exceptional constitutional status, the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC) are assuming all responsibility for the administrative and security management of the provinces concerned at the same time as they conduct military operations.

As a result of the state of siege, important progress has been made. In particular, several hundred militiamen have been neutralized; numerous members of those armed groups have surrendered; numerous weapons and ammunition have been recovered by the FARDC; several networks of illicit trafficking in

arms, ammunition, minerals and various supplies to armed groups have been dismantled; numerous areas in the east of the country that were formerly occupied by rebels have been recovered; numerous hostages formerly held by armed groups, including the Allied Democratic Forces, have been released; important major roads that were previously under the control of negative forces have been reopened; and there has been a significant decrease in incursions against civilians.

Those results present an opportunity that should be capitalized on and should serve to mobilize all of us — the international community, leaders and the Congolese people — to put an end once and for all to the vicious cycle of violence imposed by the negative forces in the north-east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and to build on peace, security and stability in the Great Lakes region. That is why the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is maintaining and increasing pressure on armed groups and their accomplices, and why the state of siege will be lifted only when the circumstances that motivated it are no longer present.

Furthermore, it is essential that there be a lifting of the requirement, imposed by paragraph 5 of Security Council resolution 1807 (2008), that the Democratic Republic of the Congo notify in advance the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1533 (2004) concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo of all importation of military goods by my country's Government or any provision of assistance, advice or training related to military activities of the armed forces and security forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, especially since the Government has the constitutional mandate to ensure the security of persons and property throughout the national territory.

Serious and exemplary sanctions must be taken against all mafia networks, whether they are in countries of transit or destination, and against multinationals that illegally exploit my country's minerals and, in exchange, supply the armed groups with weapons and ammunition, thereby perpetuating the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Great Lakes region.

The withdrawal of MONUSCO must be progressive, responsible and orderly in accordance with Security Council resolution 2556 (2020). Pursuant to that resolution, a joint committee of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and MONUSCO, expanded to

include other United Nations agencies and civil society, has been established to define the strategy and elaborate the road map for MONUSCO's definitive withdrawal from the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My country's Government endorses the transition plan for the phased, responsible and sustainable withdrawal of MONUSCO, which was drafted by the joint committee in collaboration with civil society.

During the transition period, which expires in 2024, the Democratic Republic of the Congo expects the United Nations and the Security Council to provide all the necessary resources to MONUSCO and its Force Intervention Brigade so that they can fulfil their respective mandates and missions in accordance with the aforementioned resolution. That means ensuring that the troops deployed there have the required capabilities and means, including the necessary training to meet the requirements of the reality on the ground and the asymmetric warfare currently being waged by armed groups and terrorists whose existence in the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot be disputed.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, as elsewhere in the world, nothing can be built without peace and security. Peace and security are sine qua non conditions for the progress of nations. The Congolese people need them for its prosperity and to build its democracy, which is still fragile. That is why I am devoting all my energy and attaching great interest to putting an end to insecurity, massacres and looting and the establishment of lasting peace throughout the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That will further contribute to the organization of free, transparent, inclusive and credible elections, which are scheduled for 2023.

I cannot end my statement without recalling, once again, the age-old issue of the reform of the United Nations and the representation of Africa within the Security Council. It cannot be repeated often enough — this is a question of the effectiveness of the United Nations and of justice to be rendered to a continent and to an entire segment of humankind, whose role in the conduct of international affairs is growing every day. Indeed, the revitalization of the United Nations, which we have chosen as a topic of our discussions during this session, is also at stake. The United Nations would make a serious political mistake by maintaining the framework of the power relations of the Second World War of 1940-1945, which ended 76 years ago.

In that regard, I reiterate the common African position established by the Heads of State and Government and contained in the Ezulwini Consensus and the Sirte Declaration. Africa must be represented by two additional seats in the category of non-permanent members and two seats in the category of permanent members with the same rights, including the right of veto, and the same privileges and obligations as those of the current permanent members.

On behalf of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, I wish the General Assembly every success in its work during its seventy-sixth session.

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

Mr. Félix-Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran to introduce an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Abdollahian (Islamic Republic of Iran): I have the honour to introduce the pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex IV and see A/76/332).

The President returned to the Chair.

Address by Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echenique, President of the Republic of Chile

The President: I give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Chile to introduce an address by the President of the Republic of Chile.

Mr. Allamand (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): I have the honour to introduce the statement by His Excellency the

President of the Republic of Chile, Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echenique, who will address the General Assembly in the general debate of its seventy-sixth session from our capital, Santiago de Chile.

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

A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex V and see A/76/332).

Address by Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea

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

Mr. Moon Jae-in, 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. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Moon Jae-in (*spoke in Korean; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): Standing before members again two years later at the General Assembly, I am keenly reminded of the precious normal daily life that has been lost. Guided by the leadership of Mr. Shahid, who assumed the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session, I hope the international community will gather its wisdom and work in partnership to tackle global crises.

For the past five years, Secretary-General Guterres has worked tirelessly to revitalize and reform the United Nations. I extend my sincere congratulations and respect to the Secretary-General on his re-appointment. I am most certain that he will make greater strides in the key agendas dearest to his heart, such as peacekeeping operations, the response to climate change and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). I hope that this year's session will impart to the people of the world a message of hope that we will emerge victorious from the pandemic and the climate crisis and attain sustainable development.

By nature, humans build and live together in communities. By resorting to collective intellect and mutual aid in those communities, humankind has prevailed over myriad infectious diseases and has lived in coexistence. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic will also be surmounted by love of humankind

and by solidarity and, at its centre, the United Nations shall stand.

In our fight against the coronavirus, borders were crossed to share genomic information, vaccines were successfully launched through close collaboration and therapeutics are also being developed at a rapid pace. A triumph over COVID-19 demands that we break down barriers. The horizons of our lives and thoughts have extended from villages to countries and from countries to the entire planet. I believe that that is the dawn of an era of global community.

In this era of global community, we employ one another and work with one another. We gather our wisdom together and we act together. To date, countries with advanced economies and more power have taken the lead in the world. Yet, from now on, all nations will be called upon to move in tandem with their best possible goals and approaches in the pursuit of sustainable development. As the pivot of such cooperation and action, the United Nations will be asked to take on a larger role than it now plays.

Having experienced the scourge of two World Wars, the founders of the United Nations aspired to establish an order for world peace. The United Nations has now been requested to recommend a new set of rules and goals, as it ushers in this era of global community. To facilitate mutually beneficial cooperation within the framework of the multilateral order, the United Nations must become an institution that builds trust among nations. It must be an institution that brings together the commitment and capabilities of the community of nations to galvanize action. The Republic of Korea will take active part in the international order of solidarity and cooperation, led by the United Nations.

As a newly independent State after the Second World War, Korea was able to build a democracy and a strong economy with the support of the United Nations and the international community. Now, as a responsible member of the international community, Korea is determined to step up its efforts to help countries prosper together and embrace one another. Korea will take the lead in putting forward a vision for partnership and coexistence that can be shared among developed and developing countries alike.

A most urgent task for the global community is delivering an inclusive recovery from the coronavirus crisis. Low-income families, the elderly and other vulnerable groups were left most widely exposed to the

threat of the virus. Socioeconomic problems that had accumulated over the years were brought to the fore by the pandemic. Poverty and hunger have deepened. From income and jobs to education, gaps widened across gender, class and countries. For years, the United Nations had already called for the reduction of such inequalities and had outlined the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It is now incumbent upon all Members of the United Nations to work with greater vigour to realize the SDGs. Korea will stand together with others to help all people, in every country, live without the fear of coronavirus. We will deliver on our \$200 million pledge to the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access Facility Advance Market Commitment. As one of the global vaccine production hubs, we will strive for an equitable and expeditious supply of COVID-19 vaccines. Korea will also stand at the vanguard of the endeavours to achieve the SDGs.

In a bid to defeat the pandemic and make a new leap forward, we are pushing ahead with the Korean New Deal policy. Notably, we are reinforcing employment and social safety nets and expanding investment in people, under the New Deal, to realize an inclusive recovery that puts people first. Our policy experience from the Korean New Deal will be shared with the rest of the world. To help developing countries make progress in achieving the SDGs together, Korea plans to scale up its official development assistance, in particular in green energy, digital technology and health care — areas that have seen a surge in demand during the pandemic.

Another pressing task for the global community is responding to the climate crisis. Even as we speak, our planet is getting hotter faster than anticipated. The community of nations must join forces in closer concert to push forward carbon neutrality. Last year, Korea made a commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050 and legislated its vision and implementation framework by enacting the Framework Act on Carbon Neutrality and Green Growth. By next month, we will finalize our 2050 carbon neutrality scenario and unveil our enhanced 2030 nationally determined contribution at the twenty-sixth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in November.

We have shut down coal-fired power plants earlier than scheduled and ended public financing for new

overseas coal-fired power generation, with efforts under way to ramp up the generation of new and renewable energy. Carbon neutrality can be achieved only when each and every country is engaged in continued cooperation, and action plans must also be sustainable. Under the New Deal, Korea is turning its carbon neutrality commitment into opportunities to cultivate new industries and create jobs. Many Korean businesses are voluntarily joining the RE100 campaign and expanding their investment in hydrogen and other new and renewable energy, while pushing forward environmental, social and governance management and carbon neutrality with greater force.

For its part, the Government will firmly back the private sector in technology development and investment. Korea will scale up its climate official development assistance and establish a green new deal trust fund, with a view to supporting the work of the Global Green Growth Institute and sharing its technologies and capacity for carbon neutrality.

We will stand ready to help developing countries build their capacity to tackle the climate crisis. Moreover, building on our experience as host of the Seoul Partnering for Green Growth and the Global Goals 2030 Summit in galvanizing global commitment to climate action, Korea seeks to host the twenty-eighth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2023. We aspire to play a more vigorous role in the faithful implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

The most ardent dream of the global community is to create a life that is peaceful and secure. The birth of the United Nations transformed the paradigm of international relations based on competition and conflict into one of coexistence and shared prosperity. The United Nations has endeavoured to replace the incomplete peace maintained by the balance of power with sustainable peace grounded in cooperation, thereby promoting freedom for all of humankind.

To ensure complete and lasting peace that begins firmly to take root on the Korean peninsula, Korea remains fully committed to doing its part. In envisioning a denuclearized and co-prosperous Korean peninsula, the Government of the Republic of Korea has steadily carried forward the peace process on the Korean peninsula. Furthermore, with the support of the international community, we have achieved historic

milestones — the Panmunjom Declaration for Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula, the Pyongyang Joint Declaration of September 2018 and the military agreement resulting from the Inter-Korean summit, as well as the Singapore Declaration from the United States-North Korea summit. Peace on the Korean peninsula always begins with dialogue and cooperation. I call for a speedy resumption of dialogue between the two Koreas and between the United States and North Korea. I hope that the Korean peninsula will prove the power of dialogue and cooperation in fostering peace.

Two years ago in this very Hall, I declared zero tolerance for war and advocated mutual security guarantees and co-prosperity as the three principles in resolving issues related to the Korean peninsula (see A/74/PV.3). Last year, I proposed a declaration to end the war on the Korean peninsula. More than anything, an end-the-war declaration will mark a pivotal point of departure in creating a new order of reconciliation and cooperation on the Korean peninsula.

Today I once again urge the community of nations to mobilize its strength for an end-the-war declaration on the Korean peninsula and propose that the three parties — the two Koreas and the United States — or the four parties — the two Koreas, the United States and China — come together and declare that the war on the Korean peninsula is over. When the parties involved in the Korean war stand together and proclaim an end to the war, I believe we can make irreversible progress in denuclearization and usher in an era of complete peace.

This year marks the meaningful thirtieth anniversary of the simultaneous admission of South Korea and North Korea into the United Nations. Following the joint accession to the United Nations, the two Koreas recognized that they were two separate nations with different systems and ideologies. However, that was never meant to perpetuate the division. Only when we acknowledge and respect each other can we set out on a path towards exchange, reconciliation and unification. When the two Koreas and surrounding nations work together, peace will be firmly established on the Korean peninsula and prosperity fostered across the whole of North-East Asia. It will be referred to as the Korean peninsula model, in which peace is attained through cooperation.

For its part, North Korea must brace for changes that befit the era of global community. I expect that

the international community, together with Korea, will remain ready and willing to reach out to North Korea in a cooperative spirit. Heeding the calls of the members of separated families, already advanced in age, we must waste no time in pressing ahead with their reunions.

When South Korea and North Korea are engaged together in regional platforms, such as the Northeast Asia Cooperation for Health Security, a more effective response to infectious diseases and natural disasters will become feasible. As a community bound by common destiny on the Korean peninsula and as members of the global community, the South and the North, I hope, will come together to join forces. I will make unyielding efforts to build a Korean peninsula that promotes shared prosperity and cooperation until my very last day in office.

The recent situation in Afghanistan serves as a stark reminder of the crucial role that the United Nations plays in advancing peace and human rights. Korea will host the United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Conference in December. To ensure safer and more effective United Nations peacekeeping missions, Korea will make use of that opportunity to encourage closer cooperation in the international community.

Korea will also increase its fair share of contributions to United Nations initiatives in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We will make a bid for a seat as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the 2024 to 2025 term. We stand ready to play an active role in building sustainable peace and supporting thriving future generations. I look forward to cooperation with, and the support of, members in that regard.

Even in the darkest hours of adversity, humankind has never lost hope for the future. Trusting one another and working side by side, we have changed that very hope into reality. Even in the face of the COVID-19 crisis, we are again sowing the seeds of hope. To build back better, we are gathering our greatest strengths. If humankind is united as one and never loses sight of today, we will surely be able to build a better tomorrow. As humankind embarks on a new journey to usher in the era of global community, I count on the United Nations to lead the way with a spirit of solidarity and cooperation.

The 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. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey

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

Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, 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. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Erdoğan (*spoke in Turkish; English interpretation provided by the delegation*): On behalf of myself and my nation, I wholeheartedly greet the General Assembly. I hope that the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly will be beneficial to our countries and the entire human race.

I am very pleased to be here at the General Assembly again after two years to address members. In the past two years, humankind has experienced painful times. We lost 4.6 million people, including our friends, relatives and loved ones, to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which is described as the worse health crisis of the last century. Despite all our efforts and the progress made in the area of vaccination, we continue to see the negative ramifications of the pandemic.

That is the context in which we hold the seventy-sixth session of the General Assembly. I believe that the messages of solidarity and cooperation that we will convey here will not only support the fight against the pandemic, but also increase the hope of billions of people who are experiencing very challenging times.

The General Assembly needs to be strengthened so that the international community can contribute more effectively to solving global issues. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Volkan Bozkır, President of the General Assembly at its seventy-fifth session, for his fruitful work in that direction. I believe that Mr. Abdulla Shahid, who recently assumed the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session, will carry the flag to greater heights. Turkey will continue to fulfil its responsibilities so that the

General Assembly can carry out its activities in the most efficient way.

On this occasion, I congratulate Mr. Guterres, who has been reappointed as Secretary-General for a second term, and wish him continued success.

It is extremely fitting that the theme of this year's General Assembly is "Building resilience through hope — to recover from COVID-19, rebuild sustainably, respond to the needs of the planet, respect the rights of people and revitalize the United Nations". First of all, I would like to express a fact, no matter how painful it may be to hear. Regrettably, during the pandemic, which again reminded us that humankind is one large family, we failed the test of solidarity. That was particularly true in the case of underdeveloped countries and poor segments of societies, which were left to their fate in the face of the pandemic. The distorted structure of the global system, which creates problems instead of solutions, deepens problems and leaves them unresolved, is also somewhat responsible for the increased loss of life around the world.

At a time when millions of people have lost their lives and tens of millions of people are suffering in the grip of the virus, it is a disgrace for humankind that vaccine nationalism continues in various ways. It is clear that a global disaster such as the COVID-19 pandemic can be overcome only through international cooperation and solidarity. It is impossible for any country to survive safely on its own before all countries are free from the pandemic. We hope that the will demonstrated in the General Assembly will constitute a turning point in understanding that fact.

In addition to the importance of global cooperation during the pandemic, we had the opportunity to observe the high level that medical science has attained. We took pride in the fact that the first vaccine approved by the World Health Organization was developed by two scientists of Turkish origin living in Germany. Turkey has tried to share the capabilities at its disposal with our friends and brothers and sisters around the world from day one, in line with our belief "let the people live so that the State can live".

While providing the best health service to our citizens on one hand, on the other hand we also sent medical aid to 159 countries and 12 international organizations. On this occasion, I would like to inform members that, in the near future, we will offer our national vaccine, Turkovac, for the benefit

all of humankind. We support initiatives towards strengthening the World Health Organization and preparing a convention against pandemics. We also emphasize in particular that a reasonable balance should be established between the protection of public health and the continuation of social and economic life.

The events we have witnessed remind us of some truths. Our joys, as our sorrows, our sufferings, as our achievements, and our problems, as our solutions, are all common. When one acts with a fair logic, humankind as a whole pays the price, not just the developed countries.

Recently in Afghanistan, we witnessed in a painful way that problems cannot be solved by imposing methods that do not take into account the situation on the ground or a country's social fabric. The people of Afghanistan were abandoned to the consequences of instability and conflict that have lasted for more than four decades. Regardless of the political process, Afghanistan needs the help and solidarity of the international community. We hope that peace, stability and security will be established in the country as soon as possible and that the Afghan people will find relief. We in Turkey will continue to fulfil our fraternal duty towards the Afghan people during this difficult time.

Ten years have elapsed in the humanitarian tragedy in Syria, which has led to the deaths of hundreds of thousands of people and the displacement of millions as the world looked on. While our country has welcomed close to 4 million Syrians, on the ground we are also battling terrorist organizations that have drowned the region in blood and tears. We are the only NATO ally that has fought Da'esh corps-à-corps and defeated the terrorist organization.

With our presence on the ground, we were able to stop the massacres and ethnic cleansing atrocities committed by the Kurdistan Workers' Party terrorist organization's extensions in Syria. As a result of our efforts, and at the expense of our martyrs, we were able to ensure the voluntary return of 462,000 Syrians to the areas in which we provided security. Similarly, thanks to our presence in Idlib, we have saved the lives of millions of people and prevented them from being displaced.

The international community cannot allow the Syrian crisis to last another 10 years. We need to display stronger will to find a political solution to the problem, based on Security Council resolution 2254

(2015) and in a way that will meet the expectations of the Syrian people.

We welcome the extension of the United Nations mechanism for humanitarian assistance delivered to north-western Syria via Turkey for another 12 months. We hope that the conciliatory approach displayed on the issue will also be emulated in order to move forward the political process and ensure the voluntary, safe and dignified return of asylum seekers.

I would like to reiterate here in the Assembly that making any distinction between terrorist organizations in the region and using such organizations as subcontractors on the ground is unacceptable. Acts of terrorism in various countries of the world over the past 10 years have shown that terrorism is not only our common enemy, but that of all mankind. We will remain committed to our fight against terrorist organizations that threaten the territorial integrity of Syria and our national security.

In our country, with the exception of Syrians, there are in excess of 1 million migrants under various statuses. Because of developments in Afghanistan, we are faced with the possibility of an influx of migrants from that country. As a country that saved human dignity in the Syrian crisis, we no longer have capacity to host additional migrants. On the basis of fair burden- and responsibility-sharing, it is high time for all stakeholders to do their part on the issue. A firm attitude now needs to be displayed against those who violate the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and international humanitarian law.

Thanks to our strong support for international legitimacy in Libya, a ceasefire was declared, and then the Presidency Council and the Government of National Unity were formed. We will continue to support the efforts of the Government of National Unity to provide public services, unify all institutions and organize elections in a timely manner. I reiterate my call to the international community to stand by the legitimate Government, which represents all regions of Libya.

One of the most important problems that fuels instability and threatens peace and security in our region is the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. As long as the persecution of the Palestinian people continues, lasting peace and stability in the Middle East is not possible. For that reason, occupation, annexation and illegal settlement policies must absolutely and immediately be brought to an end. We will continue to stand up against

the violation of the international status of Jerusalem, which is based on resolution 181 (II), adopted in 1947, and against violations of the sanctity of Al-Haram Al-Sharif and the rights of the Palestinian people. The peace process and the vision of a two-State solution must be revived without further delay. The establishment of an independent and contiguous Palestinian State, with Jerusalem as its capital, on the basis of the 1967 borders, continues to be one of our primary objectives.

Important steps were taken recently with regard to promoting stability in the Caucasus. By exercising its right of self-defence, Azerbaijan has ended the occupation of its own territory, which is the subject of various Security Council resolutions that have not been implemented for many years. That development has also enabled the opening of new windows of opportunity in the region for lasting peace. We are determined to support every positive step taken by the parties involved.

We attach importance to the protection of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine, including Crimea, whose annexation we do not recognize.

Within China's territorial integrity perspective, we do believe that more efforts need to be displayed regarding the protection of the basic rights of the Muslim Uyghur Turks.

We maintain our stance in favour of solving the ongoing problem in Kashmir, which has lasted for 74 years, through dialogue between the parties and within the framework of relevant United Nations resolutions.

We also support ensuring the safe, voluntary, dignified and permanent return of Rohingya Muslims, who are living in difficult conditions in camps in Bangladesh and Myanmar, to their homelands.

A fair, lasting and sustainable solution to the Cyprus issue is possible only through a results-oriented, realistic approach. The leader of only one of the two peoples on the island, whom the United Nations considers as equal, can address the General Assembly. It is not fair that the other leader cannot make his voice heard on this platform. Any solution must reaffirm the sovereign equality and equal international status of the Turkish Cypriot people, who are the co-owners of the island. We therefore support the new vision put forward by the Turkish Cypriot people as a solution. I hereby call on the international community to consider the

views of the Turkish Cypriots with an open mind and without prejudice.

The continuation of a calm environment in eastern Mediterranean is in our common interest. We hope that the problems regarding maritime boundary delimitation will be resolved within the framework of international law and good-neighbourly relations. To that end, we must first abandon the mentality in which Turkey, the country with the longest coast in eastern Mediterranean, is completely disregarded in the region. Our proposal to organize an eastern Mediterranean conference for dialogue and cooperation, in which all actors in the region take part, is still on the table.

Similarly, we believe that the problems in the Aegean Sea should be resolved through bilateral dialogue.

We also maintain our determination on the European Union membership process.

We are also in full solidarity with the African continent and the African Union today, drawing on the strength of our deep-rooted ties with Africa, which date back centuries. With that understanding, we continue our efforts to hold the third Turkey-Africa Partnership Summit in Turkey in the upcoming period.

With our Asia Anew initiative, we are consolidating Turkey's unifying position between Europe and Asia. Likewise, we attach great importance to developing our relations with Latin America and the Caribbean region through bilateral and multilateral platforms. Turkey will continue to remain engaged with every step taken towards a safer, peaceful, prosperous and equitable world for everyone.

While the Earth embraces millions of living species on its soil, it expects us only to respect the balance of nature in return for that generosity. Unfortunately, in its pursuit of progress and development throughout history, humankind has recklessly exploited the resources the Earth offers. At the end of this process, which has gone on for centuries, we are now facing threats entirely caused by humans, outside nature's own balance. The problems, which we may classify under headings such as climate change, air pollution, water and food security and loss of biodiversity, have reached such an extreme that it is steering the future of humankind into uncertainty.

Among those topics, we should focus in particular on climate change. Aside from being an environmental problem, it will lead to irreparable consequences and

uncertainty. Greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, which have increased by 50 per cent as compared to the pre-industrial period, literally raise the world's temperature. Indeed, for some time now, disasters have been occurring all over the world due to an increase of 1.1°C as compared to the pre-industrial period. We are experiencing unusual events such as floods in Asia and Europe, hurricanes in America, drought in Africa, fires in the Mediterranean basin, rainfall on the peak of Greenland and snowfall in deserts.

Those disasters not only cause damage to the environment and the ecosystem, but also threaten people's lives and properties. In many places, people are collectively preparing to go to other places — to migrate. However, the world has still not found a solution to the refugee problem caused by conflict-prone crisis regions, such as Syria and Afghanistan. At this time, we do not know how to deal with the migration of hundreds of millions of people due to factors such as drought, food shortages and meteorological events.

The greatest impact of climate change will be observed on the populations living in the centres of large cities. For example, the city of New York, where we are now, recently experienced very challenging days due to giant hurricanes within only a two-week timespan, which, in turn, caused rainfalls witnessed only once every 500 years. The destruction caused by rains affecting Western Europe has yet to be repaired. Although Turkey produces the most rapid and effective solutions in that regard, we too have experienced our share of challenging days.

A significant part of the world's infrastructure is a product of the past two centuries of human progress. It is not possible to handle the ramifications of climate change with the existing infrastructure. The continued rise in global temperatures and the concomitant expectations for more intense rainfalls, must steer us all towards new pursuits. For example, it has become mandatory for urban planning to take into account the impacts of climate change.

Another danger awaiting our world is that forests, being among the most important carbon sinks, are now facing extinction due to land use, on the one hand, and fires on the other.

Another area affected by the increase in temperature is our seas. Expanding water and melting glaciers have raised sea levels by 20 centimetres over the past

century. This figure is the fastest increase during the past three thousand years. If effective measures are not taken and greenhouse gas emissions continue to increase, sea levels are expected to rise by more than one metre by the end of the century. Such a rise means that an important part of coastal cities and island States will be completely wiped out. Of course, that situation would also be accompanied by new and massive waves of migration.

I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that all these problems are due to an increase of only a 1.1°C increase in temperature. Consider what would happen if that increase were to hit 1.5°C, 2°C or more.

After all these developments, as the States of the world, we came together in 2015 to fight climate change and agreed on the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the aim of which is to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C by the middle of the century. Current trends show, however, that this goal is not possible if precautions are not taken.

For that reason, first and foremost, countries historically responsible for the emergence of problems that led to climate change, to own up to that responsibility. It may be possible to prevent the coronavirus pandemic with the vaccines we have developed, but it is out of question to find such a laboratory-manufactured solution to climate change.

For that reason and to address climate change, we take every opportunity to repeat our motto — “the world is bigger than five”. The countries that have done the most damage to nature, our atmosphere, our water, our soil and the Earth, and those that have wildly exploited natural resources, should also make the greatest contribution to the fight against climate change. Unlike the past, this time no country has the luxury to declare “I am powerful so I refuse to pay the bill”. Climate change will treat humankind equally. It will treat everyone exactly the same — European, Asian, American, African, rich and poor. The duty for us all is to take measures against that enormous threat with fair burden-sharing and to duly and immediately meet our obligations.

For its part, Turkey acts with that mentality. We are among the first countries to have signed the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. However, we had not yet ratified it due to the injustices related to stated obligations and burden-sharing. Here from the General

Assembly, I would like to announce to the whole world the decision we took following the recent progress made within this framework. We plan to present the Paris Agreement on Climate Change for approval to our Parliament next month within the framework of Intended Nationally Determined Contribution and in conformity with the positive steps that will be taken. Before the United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Glasgow, we envisage completing the ratification phase of the Agreement, which seeks carbon neutrality targets. We consider this process, which will lead to radical changes in our investment, production and employment policies, as one of the main elements of our 2053 vision.

Of course, we have also taken other measures to combat climate change. We prepared the action plan needed for harmonization with the European Green Deal and put it into effect in the past month. With the zero-waste project led by the First Lady, my wife, Her Excellency Mrs. Emine Erdoğan, we increased our recycling rate by nine points in three years. We increased our carbon sink areas by increasing our forest assets from 20.8 million hectares to approximately 23 million hectares. We increased the share of renewable energy resources in our electricity generation capacity to 53 per cent. We have been promoting the steps that will restructure our industry in accordance with cleaner production activities for a better future. We are determined to bring these efforts forward by receiving the necessary financial support. Turkey is not indifferent to any global problem, crisis or call and will also do its part on climate change and environmental protection.

Before I conclude my remarks, I would like to reiterate our belief that a fairer world is possible, despite the difficulties we face. In that vein, we continue to view the United Nations as the unique platform for solving issues that concern the entire human race. Located straight across from this building, our new Turkish House building, which we inaugurated yesterday, is a testament to our trust and confidence in the United Nations system. As one of the top five countries with the largest diplomatic networks, Turkey has a strong presence in the field and at the table for reach conscientious and fair solutions for large geographic areas.

Together, we can build a world of peace, stability, prosperity and happiness. I once again greet one and all on behalf of my nation and wish the General Assembly

success in its seventy-sixth session. I wish everyone good health.

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

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

Address by Mr. Guy Parmelin, President of the Swiss Confederation

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

Mr. Guy Parmelin, President of the Swiss Confederation, 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. Guy Parmelin, President of the Swiss Confederation, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President Parmelin (spoke in French): For most of my professional life, I have been a winegrower. Winemaking has taught me patience, perseverance and confidence. A vine takes years to grow and produce. Improving grape varieties to produce the best wines is a subtle science. One must respect nature and work in harmony with it.

Why am I speaking about this here in the sanctuary of the United Nations? The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic is a bit like hail or frost that can suddenly ravage vines — unexpected and destabilizing. Good winegrowers live with that risk and know how to recover from such twists of fate.

The pandemic is a human, social and economic catastrophe that is also affecting international peace and security. Our thoughts are with all the victims, direct and indirect. Recent events have made us realize that we must anticipate future crises, be prepared to deal with them and show solidarity in order to build a resilient world. Too often we get carried away by short-term thinking and the prospect of rapid gain. We need to rediscover a sense of anticipation and the awareness that fate may strike at any moment. What will happen next? Scientists work to identify future threats and alert us to them. They also provide us with

information and data as elements of the solution. The proper management of that data is critical.

That is why Switzerland is proud to host the next United Nations World Data Forum in Bern in October. We know the risks; we must prepare for them and invest in prevention. We must give ourselves the means to do so. Research, education and vocational training, especially for girls and women, must be at the heart in order to develop access to knowledge, promote innovation and enable action. More broadly, access to knowledge and skills gives us the tools to anticipate and prepare for the future. When hail or frost strikes, Swiss winegrowers help one another, and they reach out to the insurance companies they have paid into. When a crisis affects entire regions or even the planet, there must be global solidarity and joint solutions.

The United Nations is the place where knowledge and resources are pooled. The organization itself arose from lessons learned from past crises. Let us continue to defend rules-based multilateralism. Switzerland is committed to an effective and efficient United Nations and supports reforms aimed at improving conflict prevention, strengthening the United Nations development system and modernizing management methods. Switzerland has much to contribute to the challenges facing the world. Twenty years after joining the United Nations, we are ready to contribute to the work of the Security Council for the term from 2023 to 2024.

The COVID-19 pandemic has accentuated existing protectionist tendencies and highlighted the lack of resilience in global production and supply chains. Policies to promote reshoring and investment controls are gaining momentum. With the continuous acceleration of our economic processes, made possible by technological change and digitalization, our societies have become complex. As the adverse weather and fires of recent months around the world painfully reminded us, it is clear that human activity is disrupting the climate and is threatening the biodiversity of our planet. Power rivalries are intensifying and armed conflicts are raging on almost every continent. International humanitarian law and human rights are violated on a daily basis, sowing the seeds of future conflicts.

It is our responsibility to find answers before we crash. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development already provides the framework we need to achieve that

goal. In view of these challenges, Switzerland would like to emphasize five points.

First, in order to defeat the pandemic, we must ensure that vaccines are accessible to everyone worldwide. Switzerland is committed to ensuring fair and affordable access to vaccines, treatments and diagnostics. Our country contributes \$155 million to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and the Gavi COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility Advance Market Commitment initiative for low- and middle-income countries. As the host country of several international health organizations, including the World Health Organization, Switzerland provides resources and promotes reforms that enable effective action in this area.

Secondly, the crisis revealed the interdependence of our modern societies and the importance of global value chains, particularly with regard to the provision of essential goods. We need to strengthen their resilience without resorting to protectionist measures that threaten the global economic recovery. The legal framework for international trade must work to enhance legal certainty and predictability even in times of crisis. The World Trade Organization has a key role to play in that regard.

Thirdly, technological progress and digitalization offer solutions to many of the challenges we collectively face. Switzerland works closely with universities and the private sector to find innovative technological approaches for development and poverty-reduction projects. Yet there are risks involved. The virtual world is not a lawless zone. In the General Assembly, Switzerland works to promote responsible State behaviour and the application of international law in cyberspace. It also participates in efforts to combat cybercrime. Geneva serves as a global centre for digital policy and networking for the actors involved.

Fourthly, let us take climate change seriously. *Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis*, the latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, shows that human activity can still determine the future course of climate. I will personally be present in Glasgow at the twenty-sixth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to reaffirm Switzerland's commitment to the effective and consistent implementation of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. At the national level, Switzerland

is committed to reaching climate neutrality by 2050. It is implementing concrete initiatives, such as infrastructure projects that promote the modal shift from road to rail transport. I call on all countries to aim for climate neutrality by 2050 at the latest and to submit ambitious climate targets for 2030. Switzerland is also committed to the preservation of biodiversity.

Fifthly, in a polarized world, it is more important than ever to return to dialogue. True to its tradition, Switzerland's International Geneva provides a neutral platform for discussion. Earlier this year, one of the events it hosted was the Libyan Political Dialogue Forum, which resulted in the appointment of a unified executive authority — a first for the country since 2014 — tasked with organizing national elections. Switzerland is very concerned about the plight of the Afghan population. It welcomes the humanitarian conference on Afghanistan convened by the Secretary-General last week in Geneva. Switzerland is also working hard to promote international law, including humanitarian law, in order to prevent conflicts or mitigate their effects. Switzerland is proud to have prepared its report on the implementation of international humanitarian law. I call on all States Members of the United Nations to do the same. Such reports enable States to assess their good practices and the challenges to be faced.

Hail and frost will continue to ravage the vines in my country from time to time. Our world will continue to face crises in future. Let us create the means to face them together in a spirit of cooperation and solidarity. Let us work to make the world more educated, innovative, resilient and just. Let us be inspired by Saype's land art painting, "World in Progress II", currently on display on the North Lawn. Let us take a cue from the two children building the world as they imagine it. And let us cultivate this world of ours just as I have learned to tend my vines.

The 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. Guy Parmelin, President of the Swiss Confederation, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Address by Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of China to introduce an address by the President of the People's Republic of China.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): It is my honour to introduce a pre-recorded statement by His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China.

The President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the President of the People's Republic of China.

A pre-recorded video statement was shown in the General Assembly Hall (annex VI and see A/76/332).

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate for this meeting. The fourth plenary meeting to continue with the general debate will be held immediately following the adjournment of this meeting.

The meeting rose at 3.35 p.m.

Annex I

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

Dear Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Dear Mr. Secretary-General,

Dear colleagues, Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

That at least, some of you can meet in person after two complicated pandemic years fills me with some optimism. Optimism that science can and does offer solutions — and that if we respect scientific recommendations, we will overcome the challenges ahead.

Indeed, we are in a much better place than a year ago. Vaccines offer a clear path out of the pandemic — but where the scientists have succeeded — in sequencing the virus or producing safe vaccines — the politics are still failing.

A year ago, we made promises and pooled resources. More than 5 billion vaccine doses have been administered across the world — but nearly 75 per cent of them are in just ten countries. Fifty countries have less than a 5 per cent vaccination rate, with half of them just a 1 per cent rate. This is a failure of politics projected onto the world stage in real-time.

Vaccine egoism will only delay the pandemic's end and lend time to new more lethal mutations. Solidarity should be our binding principle, not an option. Vaccines must be accessible to all and Slovakia will continue supporting the COVAX effort.

Even as we get close to defeating COVID-19, let us not rush into business as usual, just because we can. Our memory of how things were must be complemented by our reflection on whether they were right.

Secretary-General Guterres rightly said that we have our common agenda. Slovakia fully subscribes to the priorities laid out in this report.

Simply put, our common task is saving our planet. Previously, the Earth was whispering but now she is screaming that she cannot hold us any longer, that humankind is too heavy a burden to carry. Saving the planet is not a promise we make today for our successors to implement it later.

We have hesitated for so long that we have run out of generations of political leaders who can talk the talk but do nothing. This task is upon us today.

Saving our planet means accelerating our response to the climate crisis. The findings of the recent IPCC report might be shocking. Yet, they are just stating facts. In less than six months, we were able to strike a deal on global fair taxation. We must equally strike a deal to prevent global carbon leakage. The upcoming COP-26 in Glasgow must set the pace for a much swifter adaptation and radical emissions cuts.

Slovakia will reduce our emissions by 55 per cent by 2030 and become climate neutral by 2050, along with the rest of the European Union. By 2023, coal will no longer be used to produce electricity and heat. In the coming years, we will spend almost 6 per cent of our GDP on economic recovery: one-third of that will go into our green transition.

None of this will be easy. Per capita, Slovakia is the biggest car producer in the world. Clean mobility, locally developed and produced greener batteries will decarbonize transport in Slovakia and elsewhere. We are ready to share our solutions — and learn from the best.

We must decouple economic growth from the degradation we have been causing to the planet — and support those most affected, those forced out of their homes by floods or drought, or those losing jobs as we close down the most polluting factories. The Green Climate Fund must be properly funded and accessible.

At the Kunming summit, we must all play our part to protect biodiversity. In Slovakia, half of the national parks' territory will be free of human intervention by 2025. In 10 years, this will be three-quarters of our national parks.

Excellencies,

Unless we stop global warming, future generations will suffer. Our failure will damage multilateralism and spur violence.

Saving our planet, therefore also means upholding a rules-based international order and the rule of law, at home and abroad. Violation of these rules endangers everyone, not only those directly affected in Ukraine, Syria, Myanmar or the Sahel region.

It is the UN Security Council's main responsibility to maintain international peace and security. Too often, we see it unable to act. Stopping violence and providing humanitarian access is not something to bargain about — it must be our utmost priority.

We must make our own democracies more resilient and support those demanding their basic rights — including the freedom of speech or assembly — are respected. These rights are not a menu for governments to choose from. Citizens must exercise them freely: in Belarus where 650 people are prosecuted on political grounds, such as the social scientist Valeria Kostyugova — or in the occupied Crimea, or Venezuela, Russia or Xinjiang.

Distinguished Assembly,

The developments and lessons learnt from Afghanistan will be high on our agenda, and rightly so. This reflection is necessary. But we must also urgently provide humanitarian assistance to the people in Afghanistan, 40 per cent of whom are facing acute food insecurity.

Over the past two decades, girls and women in Afghanistan could exercise their legitimate rights. These must not be taken away. Together with the Prime Minister of Iceland, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, and other women political leaders we launched a call to support Afghan girls and women. I invite you to join forces to ensure this turns into concrete steps.

My final point is about inclusiveness. We cannot save our planet if we leave out the vulnerable — the women, the girls, the minorities. The silent pandemic of gender-based violence can prove lethal to the health of our societies. Our long-term strategies, however brilliant, will become short-lived history if we do not involve young people.

To conclude, let me recall the words Pope Francis addressed to our youth during his recent visit to Slovakia: “Do not be dismayed or yield to those who tell you that nothing will ever change.”

We can change the world around us for the better. Let us start now.

Thank you.

Annex II

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

[Original: Russian]

Mr. President, Mr. Secretary-General, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, let me congratulate Mr. Abdulla Shahid of the Maldives on his election as President of the General Assembly at its seventy-sixth session and wish him success in his important position. I would also like to thank Mr. Volkan Bozkir of Turkey for his efforts as President of the Assembly at its seventy-fifth session. Kyrgyzstan supports the theme of our current debate, which encompasses all the most pressing issues on the international agenda.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thirty years ago, Kyrgyzstan gained its sovereignty and became a full participant in and subject of international law. Our multinational people celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of our republic's independence very recently, on 31 August.

I think that many will agree with my view that our republic's main achievement in a period that is short by historical standards is our establishment of democracy as a model for the development of the State and a strong civil society. I want to assure the Assembly that we will not deviate from the democratic path. That is the demand of our freedom-loving people.

We will soon see the anniversary of the start of the well-known events of October 2020 in our country, which marked the beginning of a new stage in its modern history. In one year, we have succeeded in restoring sociopolitical and socioeconomic stability and earning society's faith and trust. The results of previous presidential elections and the constitutional referendum were also recognized by the international community, including the observers of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ahead of us are the next elections to our national Parliament, scheduled for 28 November. I invite the States Members of the United Nations and international organizations to send their observers. We will ensure that all the conditions are in place for them to do their work fully and safely. We hope that by the time of the elections are held the epidemiological situation in our country will be completely normal.

Mr. Secretary-General,

On 2 March 2022 we will also celebrate the thirtieth anniversary of Kyrgyzstan's joining the United Nations. During this period, our republic has been an active Member State, fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and a consistent advocate of strengthening the authority and role of the United Nations in international affairs, which have unfortunately been characterized by tension and conflict in the past few decades. Our country is committed and always ready to contribute to international efforts to solve humankind's common problems. It was those considerations that led Kyrgyzstan to put itself forward as a candidate for the Human Rights Council for the period from 2023 to 2025 and for non-permanent membership in the Security Council for the period from 2027 to 2028. I urge all States Members to support us in the elections.

Next year, the thirtieth anniversary of entry into the United Nations will also be celebrated by our respected neighbours in the region, with whom we share a common history and what I am sure will be a common future. I want to emphasize that in its centuries-long relations with its neighbours, Kyrgyzstan has always supported the importance of dialogue on an equal footing, mutually beneficial cooperation and the settlement of all disagreements exclusively through negotiation. Given the significance of this date, we propose to hold a Central Asia-United Nations summit in 2022 so that together we can take stock of the results of mutual cooperation and outline joint plans for the future development and security of Central Asia. We propose to organize the summit during the next Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of Central Asia. I ask the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to consider including their participation in it in their work schedules for next year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Due to their geographic location, the States of Central Asia have functioned as a bridge connecting the East-West and North-South routes since ancient times, from the days of the Great Silk Road to today. Our region is unquestionably becoming one of the world's most important trade hubs despite its lack of direct access to the sea. The countries of Central Asia are consistently expanding their network of international roads and railways, creating logistical centres and transport terminals.

For its part, Kyrgyzstan is actively developing its road transport infrastructure as part of the international transport arterial network. In particular, we will soon complete the construction of a new alternative North-South highway. We are also participating in the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway project and supporting the modernization of Eurasia's railway infrastructure. Kyrgyzstan is already capable of ensuring a satisfactory time frame and cost for the delivery of goods in transit between the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union, Central Asia, the People's Republic of China and the European Union to the seaports of Karachi, Bandar Abbas and the Black Sea. I invite international logistics businesses to work with us in multifaceted cooperation, including in the area of multimodal transportation.

However, I would like to draw the Assembly's attention to the fact that the successful implementation of investment projects and new transport corridors will not bring the maximum possible benefits if barriers to the crossing of State borders continue. In that regard, we support the creation of conditions conducive to international transport and the prevention of delays in inter-State freight traffic, as well as the removal of barriers to economic cooperation and the simplification of border crossing and transit procedures between countries and regions.

Colleagues,

I should not fail to note our concern about the latest events in Afghanistan. We can give 500 young Afghans the opportunity to study at our universities, as well as providing humanitarian assistance to citizens in need, especially the ethnic Kyrgyz of the Little and Greater Pamirs of Afghanistan. Given the ongoing evacuation of United Nations agencies from Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan is offering to move them temporarily to Bishkek. I appeal to the Secretary-General to consider our proposal in that regard. At the same time, the question of security in Central Asia is once again a major issue because of the current situation in Afghanistan. We hope to see social and political stability and law and order established there as soon as possible.

For its part, Kyrgyzstan is working comprehensively to combat terrorism and extremism, through its conscientious implementation of the provisions of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the relevant Security Council resolutions and the recommendations of the Counter-Terrorism Committee Executive Directorate. For example, Kyrgyzstan has already introduced a system for advance passenger information and passenger name records for tracking terrorists' movements internationally. We are also relying on support from the United Nations and interested States in repatriating our citizens, women and children, from Syria.

At the same time, we call for intensifying international efforts not only in the fight against terrorism and extremism but also against transnational organized crime involved in illegal activity in the areas of drug and arms trafficking, human trafficking, money-laundering and cyberspace. Within the framework of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Kyrgyzstan is working on launching a centre for countering international organized crime in Bishkek.

In general, we believe that regional bodies that come under the definition in Chapter VIII of the Charter should play an important role in confronting the current challenges and threats to international security and preventing conflicts. For its part, Kyrgyzstan, either as a member or a participant, is collaborating fully within the frameworks of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has become a serious challenge for humankind, producing huge numbers of casualties, severely and unprecedentedly testing national health systems and causing a recession in the global economy. We hope that thanks to the ongoing development of drugs and methods of treatment, a complete victory over this evil virus is already very close. It is vital to ensure that this antiviral medical know-how then becomes generally available.

As for the situation in our country, I should point out that the authorities are taking the necessary measures to protect the life and health of our population, especially medical workers. The vaccination of citizens is in full swing, and we are conducting a social educational campaign on vaccination. We already have vaccines from various global manufacturers, and I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere gratitude to the leadership of China, Russia, Kazakhstan and Sweden, which have provided us with vaccines as a humanitarian act on a bilateral basis and within the framework of the World Health Organization's COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access programme, COVAX.

The coronavirus disease pandemic is also one of the reasons why Kyrgyzstan has not been able to implement the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in a timely manner and in full. We have been forced to divert funds programmed for the SDGs to combat the pandemic and pay down external debt. In that regard, we call on bilateral and multilateral lenders to support initiatives to ease external debt in exchange for vital sustainable development projects in Kyrgyzstan. These projects are primarily aimed at preserving the integrity of our unique mountain ecosystem and its biological diversity and glaciers, which are rapidly collapsing as a result of climate change. Most unfortunately, we have seen cases in Kyrgyzstan where unscrupulous investors,

in pursuit of large profits and abusing the public trust, have failed to take due care that their activities do not harm the environment. In accordance with our national laws, the Kyrgyz authorities have been putting a stop to such illegal activities but have then been forced to deal themselves with environmental consequences such as the safe disposal of hazardous waste and the management of dumps and tailings.

For three decades, Kyrgyzstan has actively promoted the interests of landlocked mountainous States in the international arena in order to address problems of sustainable development and the impact of climate change. On our initiative, resolution 53/24 declared 2002 the International Year of Mountains, the first Global Mountain Summit was held in Bishkek the same year and 2018 saw the organization of the Fourth World Mountain Forum. During the current session of the General Assembly, through the Group of Friends of Mountainous Countries we are launching an initiative to once again declare 2022 the International Year of Mountains, approve a five-year sustainable development programme for mountainous regions and convene the Bishkek+25 Global Summit in 2027.

Mr. Secretary-General,

In the past few years, both the environment and population of our country have begun to feel the negative consequences of climate change quite seriously. We will certainly give voice to our vision and position at the upcoming 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Glasgow. However, allow me to take advantage of this important rostrum to make a few remarks. One of mountainous Kyrgyzstan's priorities and pressing problems is climate change adaptation. We consider the protection and enhancement of mountainous forest areas vital, since along with their natural function of absorbing carbon dioxide they also play an extremely important role in the conservation of water resources. In that connection, we support the development and adoption, under the auspices of the United Nations, of a special targeted programme for mountain forests and their preservation, restoration and afforestation.

As I noted earlier, the centuries-old glaciers, rivers and biodiverse mountain ecosystems in Kyrgyzstan are also at risk of extinction. This year at UNESCO we are initiating a resolution on the preservation of mountain glaciers while at the same time continuing to work with international partners to implement the provisions of resolution 75/271, entitled "Nature knows no borders: transboundary cooperation — a key factor for biodiversity conservation, restoration and sustainable use", introduced by Kyrgyzstan and adopted earlier this year by the General Assembly. We are already seeing encouraging results. For example, thanks to joint work with habitat countries and international organizations, we have succeeded in preventing the extinction of an animal as noble as the snow leopard.

At the same time, Kyrgyzstan will try to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050. The Kyrgyz economy is gradually greening, with more and more carbon-free energy sources coming into operation, above all hydroelectric power plants. In order to ensure energy security, Kyrgyzstan is intending to gradually implement on its territory a number of hydropower plant construction projects, which are environmentally friendly energy sources. Access to modern, clean and affordable energy services in developing countries is crucial to achieving the global development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We believe that through implementing hydropower plant construction projects in Kyrgyzstan we can meet the Central Asian countries' hydropower needs and thereby create the conditions necessary for

the sustainable development of our entire region. I invite investors to participate in mutually beneficial cooperative efforts in hydroelectricity, including those based on the principles of public-private partnership, in the spirit of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

To sum up, I should point out that Kyrgyzstan is counting on special attention, support and assistance from the world community, the United Nations and international financial institutions in solving the problems of mountainous countries' ecosystems, especially those that are landlocked. In that connection, we believe that the time has come to create a special global fund within the United Nations to support mountainous countries in implementing targeted programmes for sustainable development and climate-change adaptation and prevention, for mountain forests and biodiversity, and for dealing with natural disasters and supporting mountain communities.

Mr. Secretary-General,

In conclusion, I want to note that the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and its socioeconomic consequences, the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the Paris Climate Agreement should continue to be the top priorities of the united efforts and actions of the international community. It is essential that we ensure that no one is left behind, including landlocked developing mountainous countries.

As we stand together to confront today's challenges and threats, the role of the United Nations is growing significantly. In that regard, I urge all of us to fully support and strengthen our Organization with the aim of collectively solving global problems for the sake of sustainable development.

Thank you for your attention.

Annex III

Address by Mr. Shavkat Mirziyoyev, President of the Republic of Uzbekistan

[Original: Russian]

President Abdulla Shahid, Secretary-General António Guterres, Heads of Delegations, ladies and gentlemen,

I would first like to sincerely congratulate Mr. Guterres on his reappointment to the post of Secretary-General.

Today humankind is at a turning point in its development in which the nature of international relations is radically changing. Transnational threats to peace, security and sustainable development are worsening, climate change is intensifying, mass migration flows are increasing and traditional values are being lost. I believe firmly that in this difficult situation the role and importance of the United Nations and its specialized agencies are growing. In these important processes, which are linked to the fate of the whole world, it is the United Nations that is called on to continue to play a leading role, imbuing its activities with qualitatively new content. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General aimed at strengthening solidarity and unity in the international relations system and increasing the effectiveness and transparency of the Organization's activities.

Colleagues,

Today the focus of our attention continues to be the sociopolitical as well as the socioeconomic consequences of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, which has become a disaster on a planetary scale. We fully endorse the United Nations approach creating opportunities for equitable access to and equitable distribution of vaccines based on the principle of leaving no one behind. I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to our foreign partners for the practical assistance they have provided within the framework of the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access, COVAX. We support further strengthening the coordinating role of the World Health Organization in effectively combating pandemics and ensuring the international recognition of vaccination results. The text of a code on voluntary commitments by States during a pandemic, developed by the Republic of Uzbekistan and distributed as an official document of the General Assembly, is our practical contribution to that work.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Today the large-scale and dynamic democratic reforms that have been carried out in our country in the past few years have become irreversible. Our democratic transformations are founded on the provision and protection of human rights, freedoms and legitimate interests. We are taking decisive steps to ensure freedom of speech and media, freedom of religion and belief, gender equality and interethnic harmony. For the first time in its history, Uzbekistan was elected a member of the Human Rights Council.

In order to ensure that our reforms continue on their course, we have developed our Strategy for a New Uzbekistan. The Strategy's essence lies in strengthening the role of civil-society institutions, protecting human rights, reducing poverty, providing every citizen with a guaranteed source of income and achieving sustainable

environmental development. Our main goal is to become a country with an above-average per capita income by 2030. We should emphasize that this aim is in line with the Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

We propose holding an international conference in Tashkent dedicated to the study of the problems of global economic recovery and best practices for reducing poverty in the post-COVID period. It is well known that our country successfully organized the World Youth Rights Conference on Involving Youth in Global Action. We are continuing our efforts in that direction by holding the Global Education Forum in Uzbekistan's ancient city of Samarkand as part of the regular dialogues on human rights held there.

Friends,

In future we will continue to strengthen the new political atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect, good-neighbourliness and strategic partnership in the Central Asian region. Our primary task is transforming Central Asia into a prosperous and steadily developing region and a space of trust and friendship. We therefore consider it a priority to strengthen our cooperation with neighbouring and other nearby regions. We have taken the initiative to work for the adoption of a special General Assembly resolution on enhancing mutual connectivity between Central and South Asia.

I want to emphasize once again that Afghanistan is an integral part of Central Asia. It is not just we, Afghanistan's neighbours, that are interested in establishing peace and tranquillity there but the whole world. Uzbekistan has consistently been providing the Afghan people with every possible form of assistance. We recently opened the Uzbekistan-Afghan border and resumed deliveries to Afghanistan of essential products such as food supplies, petroleum products and electricity.

In this current difficult time, we cannot abandon Afghanistan to isolation and leave it to deal with its enormous problems alone. As the Assembly is aware, last year, from this rostrum, we proposed creating a permanent action committee on Afghanistan at the United Nations. I believe firmly that the role of the United Nations regarding the Afghan question should be strengthened and that its voice should sound louder than ever.

The growing threats, conflicts and transnational challenges in the world demand the further strengthening of international cooperation. That will undoubtedly be facilitated by the holding in Tashkent, in November of this year, of an international conference on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of the Joint Action Plan within the framework of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy. Within the framework of the event, held jointly with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the signing of a regional programme for the countries of Central Asia for the period from 2022 to 2025 will lay a solid foundation for work in this area. As a continuation of our efforts, we intend to work with UNODC to develop a joint anti-drug action plan encompassing the countries of Central and South Asia.

Colleagues,

Uzbekistan pays serious attention to the issues of combating climate change, protecting the environment and preserving biodiversity. That is our human duty to our current and future generations.

I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to Member States for the General Assembly's adoption in May of this year of resolution 75/278, declaring the Aral Sea a region of ecological innovations and technologies.

We are determined to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change and are taking concrete measures to switch to renewable energy sources. Specifically, by 2030 we plan to double the our economy's energy efficiency, increase the share of renewable energy sources to 25 per cent and develop environmentally friendly transport. By 2025, we plan to bring into production new solar and wind power plants with a total capacity of 2,900 megawatts. In 2022, in the city of Nukus in the Aral Sea region, we intend to collaborate with the United Nations in holding a high-level international forum on green energy.

We support the adoption of a global framework for biodiversity as soon as possible, and we are ready to hold one of the meetings of the parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in our country. Besides that, in order to discuss the priorities of global environmental policy in detail, we propose holding the sixth session of the high-level United Nations Environment Assembly in Uzbekistan under the auspices of the United Nations in 2023. Participants in the Assembly will have the opportunity to familiarize themselves directly with the difficult situation in the Aral Sea region, which has become the epicentre of an environmental disaster as a result of the drying up of the Aral Sea, and will be able to draw their own conclusions. We also intend to launch an initiative at the Assembly to develop a world environmental charter designed to lay the foundations for a new environmental policy for the United Nations.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Uzbekistan is ready to develop mutually beneficial, long-term and multifaceted partnerships with every country and global organization in the world.

I am confident that we will continue to strengthen our close cooperation, aimed at ensuring safe and sustainable development and building a prosperous future.

Thank you for your attention.

Annex IV

Address by Mr. Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Praise is due to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds, and His Peace and Blessings be upon Muhammad and His Pure Household and His Select Companions

Mr. President,

At the outset allow me to extend my congratulations to Your Excellency for your election as the chair of the seventy-sixth session of the UN General Assembly.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Iran is the land of culture and civilization. The land of knowledge and spirituality. The land of perseverance and independence. The Iranian people are monotheist and patriotic. They have their unique identity and love to explore the world.

For hundreds of years, our nation have safeguarded their right to self-determination and freedom against the hegemonists and have made their country the most progressive in the election-based political system in the west of Asia. The Islamic Revolution was indeed a great leap for the fulfilment of national and Islamic ideals of Iranians including freedom, independence and religious democracy.

I, as the elected President of the great people of Iran, am honoured to be their representative to convey to the world at large the message of rationality, justice and freedom which are the three most fundamental principles of the life of the contemporary man. However, those three principles that all the Abrahamic religions have in common will not be able to attain their purpose without spirituality.

Freedom and justice as two sacred and innocent words that are too broad to define, are indeed very tough and intricate when it comes to practicing. Freedom means the right to think, decide and act for all the human beings. Peace and lasting security are tied to the administration of justice and, basically, the divine prophets emerged so that people would demand justice and exercise their rights. Justice and freedom may be achieved only when the rights of all nations are fulfilled. As a matter of fact, any violation of the rights of nations will, more than anything, endanger global peace and security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This year, two scenes made history: one was on 6 January when the US Congress was attacked by the people and, two, when the people of Afghanistan were dropped down from the US planes in August. From the Capitol to Kabul, one clear message was sent to the world: the US hegemonic system has no credibility, whether inside or outside the country.

What is seen in our region today proves that not only the hegemonist and the idea of hegemony, but also the project of imposing Westernized identity have failed miserably. The result of seeking hegemony has been blood-spilling and instability and, ultimately, defeat and escape. Today, the US does not get to exit Iraq and Afghanistan but is expelled. And, at the same time, it is the oppressed people, from Palestine and Syria to Yemen and Afghanistan, as well as the US taxpayers, who have to pay for this lack of rationality.

Today, the world does not care about “America First” or “America is Back”. If rationality prevails in the minds of the decision-makers, they have to realize that nations’ perseverance is stronger than the power of the superpowers. Over the past decade, the US has been making the mistake of modifying its “way of war” with the world instead of changing its “way of life”. An erroneous path cannot be brought to fruition by merely adopting a different method.

Sanctions are the US new way of war with the nations of the world. Sanctions against the Iranian nation started not with my country’s nuclear program; they even predate the Islamic Revolution and go back to the year 1951 when oil nationalization went underway in Iran, which in turn led to a military coup backed by the Americans and the Britons against the then government of Iran that was elected by the people. Sanctions, especially sanctions on medicine at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, are crimes against humanity.

The Holy Quran introduces the destruction of nature and mankind as a major characteristic of the tyrants. The Islamic Republic of Iran proposes that any kind of sanction-induced restriction or disruption in the supply of good health and environment as two humanitarian issues, be declared forbidden. Moreover, I, on behalf of the Iranian nation and millions of refugees hosted by my country, would like to condemn the continued illegal US sanctions especially in the area of humanitarian items, and demand that this organized crime against humanity be recorded as a symbol and reality of the so-called American human rights.

Despite the fact that the Islamic Republic of Iran was keen from the outset to purchase and import COVID-19 vaccines from reliable international sources, it faced inhumane medical sanctions. Therefore, from the very beginning, we started to sustainably produce vaccines domestically.

In addition to peaceful nuclear and satellite technologies, Iran is the medical hub of the region and numerous Iranian physicians and scientists, such as Avicenna, shine in the history of humankind. Knowledge that is beneficial to humanity cannot be sanctioned. We ourselves have been able to produce fuel for the Tehran research reactor which makes radiopharmaceuticals for more than one million cancer patients in Iran. We have also made astonishing progress in the area of biotechnology and stem cells in spite of all sanctions. And today despite all sanctions targeting human rights, we have become one of the manufacturers of COVID-19 vaccines.

Cooperation amongst the countries of the world in the realm of health and especially on vaccines is tantamount to helping the spirit of humanity and the policy based of divinity-humanity in international relations. The Coronavirus is a wake-up call for the whole world, reminding us once again that the security of all human beings are interdependent. Crises in human societies, such as violence, poverty, unemployment, moral and economic corruption, collapse of family foundations, regional wars, organized terrorism and environmental crises are all the result of inattention to the principles of rationality, justice and freedom.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The strategic thoughts of the Islamic Republic of Iran are rooted in the ideas of the founder of the Islamic Revolution, the late Imam Khomeini (May His Soul Rest in Peace) as well as in the genuine concepts of true Islam, i.e., rationality, prudence and pondering and have resulted in the resistance in line with the national interests of countries. Speaking about the rights of nations without speaking of the

obligations of their governments cannot bring about the fulfilment of their rights, as the independence of a nation is its freedom. The Islamic Revolution supports this kind of freedom and, hence, obstructs extremism. And this is the nature of the true strength of the Islamic Republic of Iran which does good to all.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is inspiring and, as such, the power emanating from it creates security. The security-making model of the Islamic Republic of Iran is based on forming intra-regional mechanisms through diplomacy that is pivoted on and free from outside interferences.

It has been our policy to strive for the preservation of stability and territorial integrity of all the countries of the region. If not for the power and role of Iran alongside the governments and peoples of Syria and Iraq as well as all the selfless efforts of Martyrs Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis and General Qassem Soleymani, today ISIS would be the Mediterranean neighbours of Europe. And, of course, ISIS will not be the last wave of extremism.

The new drive to come up with Cold War-esque divisions will not help foster the security of humans by isolating independent countries. An arbitrary attitude is not the way to solve terrorism because terrorism has its roots in various crises such as identity and economy. The fact that modern lives have become devoid of meaning and spirituality as well as the spread of poverty, discrimination and oppression have helped the rise of terrorism. The increasing growth of indigenous terrorism in the West bears witness to this bitter truth. Even more bitter is the use of terrorism as an instrument for foreign policy because you cannot fight terrorism with double standards. You cannot make a terrorist group, such as ISIS, in a certain place and claim to fight it somewhere else.

After seeking the grace of the Almighty God, the solution to skirmishes and conflicts in our region lies in the following.

Making the will of nations rule over their own destiny by referring to the results of public vote. But in order for this to materialize, two basic preconditions need to be met: 1- halting the aggressions of the outsiders and occupation, and 2-sincere cooperation of governments to counter terrorism.

The military presence of the US in Syria and Iraq is the biggest hindrance to the establishment of democracy and will of nations. Freedom does not fit in the backpacks of soldiers coming from outside the region.

If an inclusive government having an effective participation of all ethnicities shouldn't emerge to run Afghanistan, security will not be restored to the country. And like occupation, paternalism is also doomed to failure.

The humanitarian crisis in Yemen is very worrying and the world needs to break its silence towards crimes against humanity. The solution? The speedy and unconditional stop to the Yemeni aggression, opening of channels for providing humanitarian aid, and facilitation of constructive talks between Yemeni groups.

The occupier Zionist regime is the organizer of the biggest state terrorism whose agenda is to slaughter women and children in Gaza and the West Bank. Today, an all-out blockade has turned Gaza to the biggest prison in the world. The so-called "deal of the century" failed just like any other deal forced on Palestinians. There is only one solution: holding a referendum with the participation of all Palestinians of all religions and ethnicities including Muslims, Christians and Jews. This solution

was set forth by the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran many years ago which is now registered as one of the official documents of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

Today, the whole world including the Americans themselves have admitted that the project of countering the Iranian people, which manifested itself in the form of violating the JCPOA and was followed by the “maximum pressure” and arbitrary withdrawal from an internationally recognized agreement, has totally failed.

However, the policy of “maximum oppression” is still on. We want nothing more than what is rightfully ours. We demand the implementation of international rules. All parties must stay true to the nuclear deal and the UN Resolution in practice. Fifteen reports released by the IAEA have attested to the adherence of Iran to its commitments. However, the US has not yet discharged its obligation, which is lifting sanctions. It has encroached upon the agreement, withdrawn from it and levied even more sanctions on my people.

The United States mistakenly believed it would render us desperate and devastated, but our perseverance has yielded results and will always do, for the smart and dynamic resistance of the Islamic Republic of Iran comes from our strategic rationality. And we don’t trust the promises made by the US government.

It is the strategic policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran to consider the production and stockpiling of atomic weapons as forbidden based on the religious decree by His Eminence, the Supreme Leader, and Nukes have no place in our defence doctrine and deterrence policy. The Islamic Republic considers the useful talks whose ultimate outcome is the lifting of all oppressive sanctions.

While decisively defending all its rights and the interests of its people, Iran is keen to have large-scale political and economic cooperation and convergence with the rest of the world. I seek effective interaction with all the countries of the world especially with our neighbours and shake their hands warmly.

A new era has begun.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is ready to play its part for a better world. A world brim-full of rationality, justice, freedom, morality and spirituality.

Thank you all for your attention.

Peace and Mercy of Allah be upon you

Annex V**Address by Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echenique, President of the Republic of Chile**

[Original: Spanish]

We are living in times that will mark future generations. Those of us who are opening this General Assembly today have a mission to fulfil and a responsibility to those future generations. Today's decisions or omissions will shape the course of humankind for decades to come.

We are in the midst of the most severe pandemic in the past 100 years. In addition, there is a serious climate crisis, a severe social and economic crisis and the undermining of democratic institutions. Added to that is a multilateralism under stress and the urgent need to reform the international architecture.

However, we cannot simply bemoan the situation. On the contrary, the times call for a calm analysis and, above all, the wisdom, will and courage to take the effective and urgent action that we need.

CORONAVIRUS DISEASE PANDEMIC: Triumph of science, failure of politics

Mr. President.

Despite repeated scientific warnings that pandemics were potential threats, the international community and States chose to ignore them. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic therefore took us by surprise, with no early warning mechanisms, no information-sharing systems and fragile health systems, even in the most developed nations, which could not always respond to all those who were ill, and, most seriously, without vaccines or drugs to combat COVID-19.

Medical personnel in Chile and around the world worked tirelessly, without hesitation, to deal with the emergency, putting their own lives at risk to protect ours. Today I want to pay a heartfelt tribute to them for their selfless and committed work and for their professionalism, perseverance and resilience.

The pandemic showed us that, when the forces of innovation, technology and creativity are unleashed, we can achieve unimaginable things. In the space of only 10 months, we went from facing a virus about which we had no information to having a range of safe and effective vaccines to combat it. That is an unprecedented achievement in human history. We should remember that the typhoid vaccine took more than 130 years to be approved, the tuberculosis and dengue vaccines came 45 and 110 years after the diseases first appeared. We have indeed witnessed a great triumph of science.

However, that triumph contrasts with a failure of politics, since even today, while some countries have doses to vaccinate their populations several times over, there are countries that do not have the vaccines or equipment to protect their populations.

Science triumphed, but politics failed. In science cooperation prevailed, in politics individualism. In science, information-sharing reigned, in politics secrecy. In science teamwork prevailed, in politics individual effort. We must also draw lessons from that failure.

The first is humility, as the world suddenly found itself on its knees before a microscopic enemy. The second is solidarity to accompany and support the most vulnerable. The third is collaboration, indispensable to solving global problems. And the fourth is the willingness to listen to the voice of science and expert opinion.

In Chile, applying those principles, we built the health protection network, which allowed us to integrate the public and private health systems, triple the number of available intensive care unit beds and look after patients according to their needs, regardless of their social and economic situation.

We also expanded our diagnostic network early on, now bringing it to 180 laboratories with a capacity to process approximately 90,000 polymerase chain reaction tests a day and more than 21 million in total.

An essential pillar of our strategy was the early identification of the most promising international laboratories developing vaccines. On the basis of scientific criteria and without political considerations, together with the firm decision to promptly reach agreements and contracts, we were able to secure the necessary vaccines to protect the lives and the health of our entire population.

Today Chile has almost 90 per cent of its target population fully vaccinated; and we have already started vaccinating children and booster doses for those who are vulnerable.

During the most critical moments of the pandemic and when supplies were scarce, we also collaborated by donating medicines and some of our vaccine stock to facilitate the inoculation of the medical personnel of other Latin American countries. In the same spirit, together with the World Health Organization and more than 50 countries, we are supporting a treaty for pandemic preparedness and response.

No one can guarantee that such pandemics will not happen again, but we must ensure that when they occur, we will be better prepared.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CRISIS: Sensitivity to needs and responsibility for decisions

Mr. President.

The pandemic has also brought about an unprecedented social and economic crisis, which has caused a huge loss of income and jobs for families, the bankruptcy of many businesses, especially small and medium-sized ones, an increase in poverty and the deprivation of the middle classes.

The crisis has also led to exponential growth in fiscal deficits and public and private indebtedness, which threaten macroeconomic stability. Those misfortunes have hit the most vulnerable countries and sectors hardest, particularly women, widening gender gaps.

Some of the causes of that situation were already present before the pandemic: a trade war between the major Powers, an upsurge in protectionism and a weakening of rules-based free trade.

With that clear diagnosis, it is essential that public policy decisions be based on serious and responsible macroeconomic, fiscal and monetary policies and that progress continue to be made in liberalizing trade, incorporating the new technologies

of the digital revolution, which will make the difference between those who board the train of progress and those who watch it pass by from the station.

The pandemic and the digital revolution have built on each other. Advances in digital technology have undoubtedly enabled us to better cope with the pandemic. For example, it would be difficult to imagine how we would have dealt with the pandemic without recent advances such as the Digital Hospital, the Virtual Police Station and Chile Serves. At the same time, the pandemic has expedited the introduction of the digital society, which has changed the way in which we work, learn, inform ourselves and interact in society — changes that are here to stay.

Chile is doing its best to board that train. That is why we have free trade agreements with countries that account for more than 90 per cent of the world's gross domestic product (GDP). That important integration network, coupled with years of fiscal and monetary responsibility, has allowed us to deliver one of the largest social aid packages in the world during the pandemic, amounting to 20 per cent of our GDP.

The social protection system that we built has channelled more than \$35 billion in direct transfers, which have meant help and relief for small and medium-sized enterprises and for some 16 million citizens.

Such measures have allowed us to restore economic activity and investment levels to those prior to the pandemic. After a 5.8-per-cent downturn last year, this year our economy will grow by approximately 10 per cent. We have also managed to recover 1.9 million jobs, equivalent to 80 per cent of the total number of jobs lost.

ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS: The environmental crisis has not been under quarantine

Mr. President.

The coronavirus disease pandemic has forced us to limit our freedoms and enact quarantines. But climate change has not been under quarantine. Its advance continues relentlessly, more rapidly and with more severe effects than expected. Most serious, some of its consequences are already irreversible. Indeed, it is no longer a matter of climate change; we are already facing a climate crisis.

Science, through the report of the United Nations panel of experts, has spoken loud and clear. Citizens demand, as a moral imperative, that we change the course of history. And technology gives us the tools to prevent an environmental catastrophe.

The time for analysis has passed. It is time for action, with a strong will and a sense of urgency. We have a historic responsibility to both present and future generations. We are the last generation that can prevent the current climate crisis from becoming an environmental catastrophe.

Chile is a small country, contributing less than 0.25 per cent of total greenhouse gas emissions. But we are determined to shoulder our responsibilities and do our part in this war against the climate crisis.

To achieve that, we have accelerated the decarbonization of our energy supply. By 2025, we will have closed two thirds of our coal-fired power plants and by 2040, 100 per cent. In addition, we are working to ensure that by 2030, 70 per cent of our energy supply will be based on clean and renewable energies, a figure that will increase to almost 100 per cent by 2050.

As proof of that commitment, I would like to share with Member States the fact that by 2021, we will have inaugurated more solar and wind energy capacity in Chile than we have ever built in our entire history.

However, it is not enough to reduce our carbon footprint. We must be more ambitious and ensure that our efforts to produce clean and renewable energy go beyond our borders and help other countries to meet their own decarbonization goals. To that end, we are developing green hydrogen, a clean and renewable energy whose production process harnesses the advantage of our geography: the high and consistent solar radiation of our deserts and the strong and constant winds of Patagonia. Nature therefore provides us with the potential to produce more than 70 times the energy that we need today, preventing the release of millions and millions of tons of carbon dioxide a year. Green hydrogen is the energy of tomorrow, which we are producing in Chile today.

In addition to those initiatives are:

First: the electrification of our public transport system. Today, outside China, Santiago is the city with the highest number of electric buses in the world.

Secondly: the protection of the oceans and their biodiversity, including the first marine protected area on the high seas and a marine protected area in the Antarctic.

Thirdly: the protection of forests, including the planting of more than 230,000 hectares of forests in 10 years, prioritizing native species.

And, fourthly: the circular economy, which includes banning the use of bags and other plastics and shifting from a throwaway culture to a recyclable one.

Each generation has its own agenda. Preventing the climate crisis from becoming an environmental catastrophe is our generation's task. It is a matter of life and death because the survival of the human species on planet Earth is at stake. We cannot forget that 99 out of every 100 species that once existed no longer exist today. We do not want to add the human species to that grim list.

History, our children, our grandchildren and those to follow will judge us not by our good intentions but by our attitudes, actions and outcomes in the face of this challenge.

THE EROSION OF DEMOCRACY: A new threat

Mr. President. In recent years, democracies have experienced a process of steady and progressive deterioration. All international benchmarks reflect that regrettable situation. The analysis is one and the same but the reasons for it are manifold.

In Latin America, in addition to the usual reasons — low economic growth, widespread poverty, persistent inequality and State corruption and inefficiency — there are the coronavirus disease pandemic and other equally deadly and lethal diseases for democratic and freedom-loving societies, such as the virus of populism, the cancer of polarization and the plague of political fragmentation.

The virus of populism functions by promising manipulative and fanciful solutions that it knows it cannot deliver. And, in exchange for short-lived present satisfaction, it always ends up sacrificing the future by weakening progress, democratic institutions and the rule of law.

There is polarization, which leaves no room for agreements and compromises. That true cancer contaminates the social fabric, infects institutions and feeds intolerance into all areas of societal life.

Finally, there is fragmentation, which is a trend towards the politics of individual or small-group identities and causes, rendering it impossible to coordinate and address different social visions and demands and hindering consensus and governability.

A new form of threat to democracy has also emerged in our region, which is no longer external but comes from within. For many years, the threats were military or subversive actions to wrest power from the legitimate and democratically elected authorities. Today the main threat comes from democratically elected Governments, that is to say, Governments enjoying constitutional legitimacy that manoeuvre to remain in power forever, suppress the independence of the other branches of Government, monopolize the bodies responsible for overseeing electoral processes and crush the opposition, thereby engaging in an openly unlawful exercise of power.

Thirty-two years ago, Chile witnessed an exemplary transition to democracy. During the past three decades, we have achieved high economic growth and human development, with a decrease in poverty and inequality, always respecting the freedoms and human rights of all citizens.

However, Chile has not been immune to such threats. The social unrest of 2019 included legitimate social demands, but also a wave of irrational, unprecedented and unacceptable violence.

Despite the difficulties, in accordance with its long and fine democratic tradition, Chile was able to channel that social unrest and its legitimate demands through a peaceful, lawful and democratic process within our Constitution and the rule of law because we are convinced that the cure for the above-mentioned misfortunes is greater and better democracy.

Today, after a transparent and participatory referendum, we have a democratically elected Constitutional Convention, made up of men and women on an equal basis and with the presence of representatives of our native peoples. The Convention will have to propose a new constitution to the citizens, which will have to be ratified or rejected by the citizens through a referendum.

The majority of Chileans hope that the Convention will propose the text of a new constitution, which, by improving and rectifying everything that needs to be amended, includes greater equity and social justice, protects our freedoms and reflects our national tradition and the values of our society.

INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE: The urgent need for reform

Mr. President.

Another challenge is whether the current institutions that make up the international architecture have adjusted to the new global reality and meet the current and future challenges.

Since the establishment of the current international organizations in the middle of the previous century, the world has radically changed. Globalization, the technological and digital revolution and the emergence of the knowledge and information society have drastically changed the way in which we live, work, learn

and relate to each other. However, the strength of multilateral organizations has remained stagnant.

Today international institutions require major adjustments and profound restructuring.

International organizations must combine two principles: the broadest possible participation for their legitimacy and a decision-making system that is not distorted by opposition, vetoes, deadlocks or consensus that is very difficult to achieve. We must find new mechanisms to strike the right balance between those two values. Multilateral action is essential to protect democracy and security, to achieve the development and well-being of our peoples, to protect the environment and to deal with pandemics.

At the same time, public knowledge of its procedures, debates and decisions and clarity in the appointment of its officials are necessary for transparent functioning. After all, there is no better policeman than street lighting and no better disinfectant than sunlight.

WOMEN/AFGHANISTAN

I could not end these words without a reflection on what the triumph of the Taliban regime means for the women and girls who will have to live under its yoke.

Mr. President:

Afghan society is facing very difficult times. However, the women of Afghanistan are in a particularly dangerous situation: Today, now, at this very moment, those who in the recent past wanted to forbid them education, impose forced marriages, ensure impunity for those guilty of sexual abuse against them and deny them their freedoms and human rights have returned to power — those who believe that the world of women should be one of submission and resignation.

The aggression against women in Afghanistan is an aggression against all women in the world. Knowing that, we cannot, the United Nations cannot, stand idly by, paralysed by bureaucratic constraints or political divisions in the Security Council.

We must work together to protect them and restore their full freedoms and rights. The cause of the women of Afghanistan is the cause of all humankind.

FINAL WORDS: Chile's contribution to the international community

I would like to end this address by expressing our satisfaction at Chile's contribution to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the cornerstone of our civilization, and our active promotion of democracy, freedoms and human rights throughout the world. We are also proud of our contribution to the care of Antarctica, the largest freshwater reserve and the last pristine bastion of the planet, to the protection of the oceans and to the fight against climate change.

We are also proud to host more than 70 per cent of the world's astronomical observation capacity and to be pioneers in the research and development of the potential of green hydrogen, a clean energy that will be essential to combat the climate crisis.

Chile is, and will continue to be, a free and welcoming nation, endowed with a noble and supportive soul, which will overcome difficulties and maintain its identity thanks to the wisdom, moderation, determination and courage of its people.

Chile will continue to honour all its international commitments and contribute to bequeathing a better world to future generations. Chile will also continue to be a good country in which to be born, grow up, raise a family, work and grow old in an environment of freedom, justice and peace.

Many thanks.

Annex VI**Address by Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China**

[Original: Chinese and English]

Mr. President,

The year 2021 is a truly remarkable one for the Chinese people. This year marks the centenary of the Communist Party of China. It is also the 50th anniversary of the restoration of the lawful seat of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations, a historic event which will be solemnly commemorated by China. We will continue our active efforts to take China's cooperation with the United Nations to a new level and make new and greater contributions to advancing the noble cause of the UN.

Mr. President,

A year ago, global leaders attended the high-level meetings marking the 75th anniversary of the UN and issued a declaration pledging to fight COVID-19 in solidarity, tackle challenges together, uphold multilateralism, strengthen the role of the UN, and work for the common future of present and coming generations.

One year on, our world is facing the combined impacts of changes unseen in a century and the COVID-19 pandemic. In all countries, people long for peace and development more than ever before, their call for equity and justice is growing stronger, and they are more determined in pursuing win-win cooperation.

Right now, COVID-19 is still raging in the world, and profound changes are taking place in human society. The world has entered a period of new turbulence and transformation. It falls on each and every responsible statesman to answer the questions of our times and make a historical choice with confidence, courage and a sense of mission.

First, we must beat COVID-19 and win this decisive fight crucial to the future of humanity. The history of world civilization is also one of fighting pandemics. Rising to challenges, humanity has always emerged in triumph and achieved greater development and advancement. The current pandemic may appear overwhelming, but we humanity will surely overcome it and prevail.

We should always put people and their lives first, and care about the life, value and dignity of every individual. We need to respect science, take a science-based approach, and follow the laws of science. We need to both follow routine, targeted COVID-19 protocols and take emergency response measures, and both carry out epidemic control and promote economic and social development. We need to enhance coordinated global COVID-19 response and minimize the risk of cross-border virus transmission.

Vaccination is our powerful weapon against COVID-19. I have stressed on many occasions the need to make vaccines a global public good and ensure vaccine accessibility and affordability in developing countries. Of pressing priority is to ensure the fair and equitable distribution of vaccines globally. China will strive to provide a total of 2 billion doses of vaccines to the world by the end of this year. In addition to donating \$100 million COVAX, China will donate 100 million doses of vaccines to other developing countries in the course of this year. China will continue

to support and engage in global science-based origins tracing, and stands firmly opposed to political manoeuvring in whatever form.

Secondly, we must revitalize the economy and pursue more robust, greener and more balanced global development. Development holds the key to people's well-being. Facing the severe shocks of COVID-19, we need to work together to steer global development toward a new stage of balanced, coordinated and inclusive growth. To this end, I would like to propose a Global Development Initiative:

- Staying committed to development as a priority. We need to put development high on the global macro policy agenda, strengthen policy coordination among major economies, and ensure policy continuity, consistency and sustainability. We need to foster global development partnerships that are more equal and balanced, forge greater synergy among multilateral development cooperation processes, and speed up the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- Staying committed to a people-centred approach. We should safeguard and improve people's livelihoods and protect and promote human rights through development, and make sure that development is for the people and by the people, and that its fruits are shared among the people. We should continue our work so that the people will have a greater sense of happiness, benefit and security, and achieve well-rounded development.
- Staying committed to benefits for all. We should care about the special needs of developing countries. We may employ such means as debt suspension and development aid to help developing countries, particularly vulnerable ones facing exceptional difficulties, with emphasis on addressing unbalanced and inadequate development among and within countries.
- Staying committed to innovation-driven development. We need to seize the historic opportunities created by the latest round of technological revolution and industrial transformation, redouble efforts to harness technological achievements to boost productivity, and foster an open, fair, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for the development of science and technology. We should foster new growth drivers in the post-COVID era and jointly achieve leapfrog development.
- Staying committed to harmony between man and nature. We need to improve global environmental governance, actively respond to climate change and create a community of life for man and nature. We need to accelerate transition to a green and low-carbon economy and achieve green recovery and development. China will strive to peak carbon dioxide emissions before 2030 and achieve carbon neutrality before 2060. This requires tremendous hard work, and we will make every effort to meet these goals. China will step up support for other developing countries in developing green and low-carbon energy, and will not build new coal-fired power projects abroad.
- Staying committed to results-oriented actions. We need to increase in-put in development, advance on a priority basis cooperation on poverty alleviation, food security, COVID-19 response and vaccines, development financing, climate change and green development, industrialization, digital economy and connectivity, among other areas, and accelerate implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, so as to build a global community of development with a shared future. China has pledged an additional \$3 billion of

international assistance in the next three years to support developing countries in responding to COVID-19 and promoting economic and social recovery.

Thirdly, we must strengthen solidarity and promote mutual respect and win-win cooperation in conducting international relations. A world of peace and development should embrace civilizations of various forms, and must accommodate diverse paths to modernization.

Democracy is not a special right reserved to an individual country, but a right for the people of all countries to enjoy. Recent developments in the global situation show once again that military intervention from the outside and so-called democratic transformation entail nothing but harm. We need to advocate peace, development, equity, justice, democracy and freedom, which are the common values of humanity, and reject the practice of forming small circles or zero-sum games.

Differences and problems among countries, hardly avoidable, need to be handled through dialogue and cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect. One country's success does not have to mean another country's failure, and the world is big enough to accommodate common development and progress of all countries. We need to pursue dialogue and inclusiveness over confrontation and exclusion. We need to build a new type of international relations based on mutual respect, equity, justice and win-win cooperation, and do the best we can to expand the convergence of our interests and achieve the biggest synergy possible.

The Chinese people have always celebrated and striven to pursue the vision of peace, amity and harmony. China has never and will never invade or bully others, or seek hegemony. China is always a builder of world peace, contributor to global development, defender of the international order and provider of public goods. China will continue to bring the world new opportunities through its new development.

Fourthly, we must improve global governance and practice true multilateralism. In the world, there is only one international system, i.e. the international system with the United Nations at its core. There is only one international order, i.e. the international order underpinned by international law. And there is only one set of rules, i.e. the basic norms governing international relations underpinned by the purposes and principles of the UN Charter.

The UN should hold high the banner of true multilateralism and serve as the central platform for countries to jointly safeguard universal security, share development achievements and chart the course for the future of the world. The UN should stay committed to ensuring a stable international order, increasing the representation and say of developing countries in international affairs, and taking the lead in advancing democracy and rule of law in international relations. The UN should advance, in a balanced manner, work in all the three areas of security, development and human rights. It should set common agenda, highlight pressing issues and focus on real actions, and see to it that commitments made by all parties to multilateralism are truly delivered.

Mr. President,

The world is once again at a historical crossroads. I am convinced that the trend of peace, development and advancement for humanity is irresistible. Let us bolster confidence and jointly address global threats and challenges, and work together to build a community with a shared future for mankind and a better world for all.