



General Assembly

Seventieth session

21st plenary meeting
 Wednesday, 30 September 2015, 6 p.m.
 New York

Official Records

President: Mr. Lykketoft (Denmark)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Michel Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 6.40 p.m.

Agenda item 8 (continued)

General debate

Address by Mr. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa.

Mr. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Malielegaoi (Samoa): Last Friday ushered in a new era in our search for an innovative plan of action for people and the planet. The significant milestone event was the adoption by the United Nations of the new set of Sustainable Development Goals as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1).

Our 17 Sustainable Development Goals are inspirational and ambitious. They are global in nature and universally applicable to every United Nations Member State, developed and developing alike. Every Goal is important and deserves priority attention. They are interrelated, they carry equal weight and they all matter. Achieving some Goals at the expense of others is not a preferred option. All Goals must be realized, which should be the overriding objective.

In my firm belief in the importance of the work of our Organization, I have tried to attend the annual General Assembly debates as often as possible since becoming Samoa's Prime Minister. I am therefore acutely aware of the diversity and gravity of issues confronting our Organization and the need sometimes to refer to them in one's statement. However, partly in recognition of the new Agenda we have now agreed to implement and as a gesture to the seventieth anniversary of our Organization and the imminent danger of climate change for small island developing States (SIDS), my statement in essence is devoted to Sustainable Development Goal 13, "Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts". That is also a priority goal enshrined in the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the outcome document of the third International Conference on SIDS.

Climate change will continue to be the major preoccupation and priority policy determinant for Samoa well into the future. I think that the same would be true for all our Pacific island countries and the wider SIDS. Thus, to contextualize our perspective on climate

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change, allow me to share with representatives a part of our narrative.

First, here are some givens. Climate change is the single most urgent challenge confronting humankind; it is facilitated largely by human-induced activities driven for the most part by profit motives, with some degree of insensitivity to the consequences of such action on others, particularly those vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, who are usually ill-prepared to adapt and in most cases had barely contributed to the causes of climate change in the first place.

Climate change is not a future phenomenon. It is real, irreversible and is already happening with far more frequency. It is no longer a question of when; rather, it is about the severity of the magnitude of the impacts and the full cost society must bear. Even now in my country, we are suffering drought conditions. These will give way to the onset of the cyclone season, which is predicted to have a high likelihood of severe cyclones in our Pacific region.

As this is a cross-cutting issue, ambitious actions or solutions at the national and international levels to try to address the root causes of climate change will inevitably end up either being compromised, watered down or put aside due to political, social and economic considerations taking precedence over basic climate logic. Climate change is not a concern of small island developing States alone; it impacts every country, but some — such as small island developing States — more extensively like than others because our capacity to respond quickly and effectively is constrained by our realities.

In summary, climate change cannot be wished away. It is real, irreversible and already happening. It has significant security implications and its impact threatens the continued existence and viability of some small island developing States. Even those countries that to date have been in denial of the climate change phenomenon must surely now accept the weight of scientific evidence.

Samoa is a small island developing State of the Pacific, a region recognized and acknowledged as most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Our islands contributed the least to the causes of climate change, yet stand to suffer the most and are least able to adapt effectively to the adverse impacts.

Climate change is a security risk of far greater proportions than many people are prepared to admit. For some of the low-lying Pacific islands, climate change may well lead to their eventual extinction as sovereign States. Just a few months ago, I was privileged to attend the special Security Council open debate on the security concerns of SIDS (see S/PV.7499). It was an important opportunity to highlight in the Council the security threat posed by climate change to all our small island developing States.

Against the backdrop of the existential threat climate change poses, especially to atolls and low-lying islands, SIDS have long advocated for ambitious mitigation efforts to be undertaken by Member States with the capacity to do so, and for a global goal of limiting the rise in average global temperature to well below 1.5°C in order to prevent some of our low-lying islands from being submerged by sea-level rise. We have also consistently called for a loss and damage mechanism to be anchored in a new Paris agreement to be treated separately from adaptation. With the gradual operationalization of the Green Climate Fund, we have asked SIDS representatives on the Green Climate Fund Board to ensure that the spirit and letter of the governing instrument of the Fund, as they relate to those areas that will be beneficial to SIDS, are retained and not compromised.

Our pleas over the years on the 1.5°C and the loss and damage caused by climate change have largely gone unnoticed. At least the countries our messages had been intended for have remained unconvinced, but I hope not uninterested. Part of this, I think, is due to some misguided notion that climate phenomena and related events affect small island developing States only. Some might have concluded already that climate change is not life-threatening and does not affect them, either because their countries are huge in size or have well-developed infrastructure to shield them from any real damage from climate change impacts.

It may also be that there is an implied sense that if the large problems of the bigger, stronger, more populous and well-developed countries are solved, then the solutions to the afflictions of SIDS will automatically follow. As a result, challenges facing SIDS are conveniently viewed by others through the same lens that blurs the distinctions and fails to bring out the truth about the urgency and dire consequences of the problems we face because of climate change.

But times are changing and the world has witnessed in recent months and years an epic outbreak of horrific natural disasters unprecedented in the 70-year history of our Organization. Tsunamis, hurricanes, earthquakes, flooding, bush fires and droughts have resulted in the loss of countless lives and untold sorrow and suffering. Especially noteworthy is the fact that developed countries are no longer insulated from the reach and destructive force of these events. Some countries and regions have been visited by climate-related and natural events like cyclones, bush fires, flooding, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, droughts, tornados, and so on.

What is happening across our planet is quite significant because it discredits the perception long held by some that climate change is a small island developing States concern only. Nothing could be further from the truth. Events of the recent past have demonstrated that climate-related disasters do not discriminate between poor and rich countries, big or small. Climate change affects us all, developed and developing countries alike, although in varying degrees. I submit therefore that this realization should shape our overall approach going forward to the Paris Climate Change Conference in December and beyond. It should, I hope, also help to shift the focus in the relationship, in the specific context of climate change, from that of donor/recipient or donor/victim to one of partner/partner in a joint partnership.

While that may sound overly simplified, its real value lies in the change of perspective which this reorientation should bring and in how we view our respective roles when trying to address climate change. This, I think, should be beneficial to all. Because we are now all affected by climate change in one way or another, that should energize everyone to do their utmost, either as current or future victims of climate change impacts, so as to ensure that we address the root causes urgently and in a decisive manner.

After all, human nature tells us that when we are asked to do something for a friend or someone else, the impact is not the same because there is no sense of obligation, commitment or urgency. But when we have to do something because it will affect us personally, our children or family, nothing will prevent us from doing all that is possible within our power, especially if it affects our own safety and future. I hope that Member States, imbued not just with the projections of science but now with the advanced evidence of actual events,

will be prepared to go the extra mile to do the maximum possible for their own future survival.

Climate change is a societal problem requiring a decisive response from the global community. It is a challenge that should unite us, not divide us. No country can deal with this problem alone. We must work cooperatively in a partnership of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capability if we are to succeed. But true partnerships should be underpinned by trust. Without trust, they cannot be sustained. Apportioning blame for past wrongs would be counterproductive; it would not restore our environment to its pre-industrial state.

Clearly we want leaders who view the world as a single constituency where everyone must work together within the limits of their capacity and capability to be part of the total solution. Sadly, some in our global community have been dismissive and remain unconvinced. Others, through their actions, have been indifferent and unsympathetic. But there is hope, and our whole focus is on Paris. What is needed is principled action. The Paris agreement will require a new brand of cooperation and a broader outlook. The narrow pursuit of self-interests, the use of economic and political expediencies should be set aside and must not be allowed to derail the goal of concluding a universal, ambitious and legally binding agreement.

Climate change is also everyone's job. While acknowledging that historical responsibility is real, allowing it to get in the way of making decisions to reach a comprehensive agreement would be a grave mistake. A durable climate change agreement in Paris will therefore be a test of multilateral solidarity. Time is running out. The impacts of climate change are getting worse daily. Playing the blame-and-shame tactics or waiting to be led but not willing to lead are no longer options, for no single nation, no single group of nations and no single organization on its own can win the war against climate change. The divergent, yet inextricably linked interests of Member States demand that we seal a good deal in Paris.

The Paris agreement should focus on bold national action and the inclusion of all stakeholders; it should be a timely reminder that no action is too small or insignificant. All contributions matter and every action counts, irrespective of the source. Importantly, it must place the responsibility of addressing climate change squarely on every individual leader in terms of

what national actions he or she can commit to deliver as his or her country's contribution to our collective task. Samoa is putting the final touches to its intended nationally determined contributions, which are quite ambitious and will be submitted in due course to the secretariat in Bonn.

Often at times we blame others for our misfortunes and the current status of our development, including by telling others what they should do, by when and how, but rarely saying what we can contribute to make a change. So when my country and our people are continuously exposed to the impacts of climate change, we want to be part of the solution by committing to doing everything possible for the benefit of our people, our generation and those to follow. That must be our universal message, simple and unambiguous.

As for those suggesting that they are implementing bold actions for the sake of our vulnerable small island developing States, they should instead be reminded to take time to inform their constituencies and supporters alike, especially those who deny climate change, that in the final analysis the actions being recommended, if implemented, will ultimately benefit their economies, their own people and the survival of their own countries.

The United Nations remains our last best hope to provide the political will and the commitment necessary to turn the tide against climate change. Samoa calls upon those States Members of our Organization in a position of world leadership to lead the charge in finding and implementing solutions to the causes of climate change. As present custodians of our world's environment, we owe it to our children and future generations to do what needs to be done quickly and decisively before we run out of time. It is therefore imperative to complete the Paris climate agreement in time for the twenty-first session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December to adopt an agreement that is ambitious, universally applicable, effective, binding, capable of swift implementation and universally owned and respected by all Member States.

In the same way that nations in leadership roles are called on to do the right thing for our world, so must all Member States of the United Nations uphold their part of the bargain in the work that needs to be done. Without that cooperation on the part of all Member States, reaching the objectives we all know should be achieved will continue to elude us.

International terrorism is a global menace. It creates an atmosphere of collective fear and intolerance. It preys on the innocent, vulnerable and defenceless, and disrupts any progress towards peace and development. Terrorism in all its forms and manifestations should always be condemned unreservedly. Over the past several weeks, we have witnessed the tragedy of people fleeing their countries mired in the destruction from war and terrorism. Obviously, a credible and long-term response is needed to this grave crisis, which has cost so many lives and affected so many people. The individual actions of States cannot in themselves provide a solution. We must shoulder our responsibility to act together to meet the threat through the concerted multilateral action that underpins the spirit of the Organization. Ideally, it must start in the Security Council, which is entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining world peace.

The coherence of the response of the United Nations depends on the work and cooperative spirit of the Security Council to see the larger picture of the future of our world. The reforms to our Organization must therefore be given priority and take account of the concerns of our full membership. Our world has enjoyed peace and security for 70 years by faithfully observing and following the Charter of our Organization. As world leaders, it is our moral duty and responsibility to ensure that our people continue to live in peace and harmony for many more years to come.

The Acting President: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade of the Independent State of Samoa, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Haider Al Abadi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq.

Mr. Haider Al Abadi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Haider Al Abadi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Al Abadi (Iraq) (*spoke in Arabic*): The seventieth session of the General Assembly is being held amidst the grave challenges the world is facing on more than one level, especially in fighting terrorism, foremost among which is the terrorism of the Islamic State in Iraq and the Sham (ISIS). We in Iraq stand steadfastly and patiently with the world to ward off the monstrosity of those whose actions affect our country, the region and the world. This is happening, while international efforts continue to strengthen the pillars of peace and security, promote communication among the peoples of the world and attain human development. These efforts are all made under the auspices of the United Nations, which has worked tirelessly to uphold its major pillars of health care, education and raising living standards.

Since the United Nations Development Programme launched its first *Human Development Report* in 1990, the countries of the world, including Iraq, have anticipated improvements in their human development levels. We have pursued this goal so that people would become the means and targets of the development process. As a result of the flawed policies of the past dictatorial regime of Saddam Al-Hussein, the standard of human development fell after a series of wars that were fought by that regime and the deprivations and siege that Iraq suffered as a result of international sanctions.

The situation improved after the political regime changed and once a democratic atmosphere was promoted, particularly with the assistance provided by the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other international organizations. Our national institutions tried to bridge the development gap in fulfilment of the Millennium Declaration (resolution 55/2) adopted by the leaders of the world at the General Assembly in 2000 by concentrating on targets that were supposed to have been achieved by 2015.

We in Iraq made tangible progress in decreasing mortality rates, increasing school enrolment, reducing gender inequality and improving living standards. However the ill-will of terrorist groups, foremost among which are Al-Qaida and ISIS, as well as those associated with the old Ba'ath regime who joined them,

obstructed our development process and spread death and destruction on our people and infrastructure. In persisting in their atrocities, those terrorists did not distinguish between an infant and an elderly person, or between a man and a woman. These evil forces terrorized civilians throughout Iraq and pursued a policy of ethnic cleansing, particularly in those areas that they claimed to support. Many people who once lived in the western and northern parts of Iraq are today refugees or displaced internally by these merciless gangsters. They are suffering with those who are still besieged in their villages and cities.

While we highly appreciate the support and solidarity extended to us by the United Nations and the international community in our just war against terrorism, we also recognize the tireless efforts made to restore stability to the regions that have been liberated by our armed forces, the popular mobilization forces and the tribal fighters. We also look forward to an effective contribution on the part of countries and international organizations to repairing our infrastructure and helping our reconstruction efforts.

Despite all this, Iraq is pursuing its democratic policies to promote respect for the Constitution, the peaceful transition of power, freedom of expression, and the elimination of racial ethnic and sectarian discrimination. Despite the challenges, we are aware of public demands and have worked to establish an organizational framework known as the Popular Mobilization Committee, which receives its instructions from the President of the Republic and the armed forces. Thus, the popular mobilization forces operate within the law as they fight terrorists and organized crime, particularly those who carry arms outside the framework of the State. The Iraqi Constitution bans carrying arms outside the legal framework of the State.

The Iraqi security forces protect demonstrators and give them full freedom to express their demands. While we may be in a state of war, many governorates have peaceful demonstrations and there are excellent relations between the demonstrators and the security forces. This is a unique experience indeed. I personally decided to entrust a working task force to follow up the demands of the demonstrators so that we can assist in implementing these demands.

The Iraqi Council of Representatives has enacted the Government's programme of work. The Council represents the Iraqi people. We have adopted a

progressive vision of reform, sanctioned by the highest religious authority. We have listened to the demands that our people expressed over the past two months. We have therefore provided economic, administrative and financial reform packages. We have started working to invigorate the private sector in our country. We have provided financing for small and medium-sized projects, despite the difficulties we experienced after the huge drop in oil revenues, which account for 92 per cent of our income. The reform package was respectfully accepted by our people, who expressed their views in detail. The reform enjoys the support of the highest religious authorities and other stakeholders in society. We are determined to pursue our reform without disregarding our important role in directing the security and military effort to fight ISIS.

On behalf of the Iraqi people, I should like to salute the efforts of the brotherly and friendly countries in the international coalition in our war against terror. Providing more support is very important because it is the Iraqis who are fighting this war. We therefore thank the brotherly countries that have provided assistance, but would request further assistance to address the problems of refugees. Increased logistical and military support would bring us closer to our ultimate victory and promote peace and security in all countries of the world.

Iraq understood the importance of international efforts to draft a new development document to be adopted by the United Nations after the Millennium Declaration. Iraqi experts and national institutions participated in the international efforts made in our region to draft the new Declaration adopted in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). The importance of the Declaration is not limited to the pursuit of development for the human individual. It focuses on sustainability, which includes advocating a clean environment, the preservation of the rights of future generations, the promotion of peace and security, the elimination of poverty and discrimination, improving the health and educational standards of children and achieving wider freedoms, living in peace and bridging the gap between the poor and the rich. These are only some of the reforms that we are trying to attain in Iraq today by bridging these gaps and by redressing the injustice experienced by many sectors in our society and the world.

The important items included in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals and their achievement

by 2030 require us all to work more tirelessly to achieve further cooperation among the peoples and countries of the world, instead of fighting each other. That would provide the United Nations with sufficient opportunity to work constructively in order to expedite the achievement of these objectives and share its expertise through programmes to be undertaken throughout the world. Iraq will earnestly and enthusiastically work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals within the time frame assigned. We know that this development will affect not just Iraq alone but all countries, because no country can achieve sustainable development unless it is enjoyed by neighbouring countries as well.

Iraq expects all countries of the world to implement Security Council resolutions 2170 (2014), 2178 (2014) and 2199 (2015), which call for ending all support, financing and arming to terrorist groups. I also cite General Assembly resolution 69/281, adopted on 25 May 2015 to salvage the cultural heritage of Iraq, the implementation of which would allow Iraq to rebuild its country and achieve development.

The Government and people of Iraq understand the importance of communicating with the peoples and Governments of the world. We are eager to build peace and understanding in our region, and therefore we seek to open prospects for new relations with the countries of the region and to promote such relations without interfering in the internal affairs of others so as to guarantee a bright future for us all.

The political process in Iraq is democratic and governed by the peaceful turnover of power. Five Governments have succeeded each other in Iraq; our Government is the latest of these and therefore takes pride in our democratic processes. However, there are political blocs that have different points of view. We are proud of the fact that others have the right to express their opinions, which shows that there is a political sphere for the free expression of opinion.

Our problem in Iraq is not an internal one. Our problem is that a terrorist group has crossed our border from a neighbouring country. That organization is supported and armed by others, has occupied vast areas of Iraq and killed thousands of Iraqis and violated their rights. ISIS continues to recruit thousands of volunteers from throughout the world, but particularly from countries that have stressed their solidarity with Iraq. This terrorist organization receives assistance and weapons and continues to fight us, so our problem is

really an external one, embodied in the support enjoyed by such terrorist organizations.

While the popular mobilization forces in Iraq are a legitimate organization that is supported by the Iraqi State, ISIS and associated entities are illegitimate terrorist groups that do not respect the State or the law and kill anyone who happens to think differently. Even those who happen to confess the same faith have been killed and displaced by ISIS. More than 3 million people have been displaced by ISIS from the cities they once called home. We are eager to build relations with our neighbouring countries. We respect their sovereignty and do not interfere in their internal affairs. We therefore call on them to promote the same quality of relationship. We want them not to interfere in our affairs and to respect Iraqi sovereignty and our right to uphold the sanctity of Iraqi lives.

In conclusion, I thank the United Nations and other international organizations for supporting Iraq's efforts to achieve development, and salute the efforts of international organizations and all other world leaders and their representatives. It is truly my hope that next year we will meet in better circumstances. I urge all countries of the region to work together to achieve peace instead of killing and destruction. We believe that each and every leader of the region must assume responsibility to stop the bloodshed. The leaders of the region have a responsibility to end this killing, which is an evil visited on humanity at large.

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

Mr. Haider Al Abadi, Prime Minister of the Republic of Iraq, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by Mr. Valeriu Strelet, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova

The Acting President: The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova.

Mr. Valeriu Strelet, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President: I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Valeriu Strelet, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Strelet (Moldova): I am most delighted and indeed honoured to represent my country for the first time at this high rostrum and to address the General Assembly at this anniversary session. The seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations gives us the opportunity to learn lessons from the past and to reflect on the ways and means we need to face today's and tomorrow's challenges and build together a better future for the coming generations.

We are all proud that today the United Nations remains the leader in maintaining peace and security and promoting sustainable development and human rights. The Organization also remains durably at the core of effective multilateralism, the prominent confirmation of which is the outcome document (resolution 70/1) of the United Nations Summit on the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, held a few days ago here in New York.

In that respect, I have great pleasure in highlighting the fact that, throughout the entire preparatory process and during the Summit, the Republic of Moldova advocated the adoption of the new development road map, which bears on the present and future of our planet. The integration of the economic, social and environmental pillars of the new framework Agenda is the key to an old issue that the United Nations has debated for years — the essence of sustainable development and how to put it into practice.

With the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the United Nations and its Member States are engaging in an advanced model of sustainable development for humankind that will address poverty and inequality and combat climate change. We support the United Nations and Member States' initiatives and actions directed at addressing climate change through ambitious measures to promote clean power at the national and international levels. We believe that if everyone put their shoulders to the wheel, we would be more likely to reach the targets and create a better world.

The Republic of Moldova is making its own contribution to the effort. The Sustainable Development Goals constitute an important chapter in the governing programme for the future. Among many of our endeavours, we seek to increase the ratio of domestic renewable energy consumption to 20 per cent by 2020 and to promote a green economy. My country is on track to ratify the Low-Emission Development

Strategies and Plans and, at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in Paris, intends to support the European Union's mechanisms for reaching these goals. Moreover, the implementation of the European Union-Moldova Association Agreement, concluded last year in Brussels along with the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) as its component part, represents the strategic direction that complements our sustainable development efforts.

The European Union agenda and the United Nations commitments go hand in hand and embody our affiliation with the universality of goals and responsibilities for development and peace by way of embracing European core values and principles and strengthening our partnerships in the region. The first anniversary of our Association Agreement with the European Union entitles us to assert that the progress achieved in different fields confirms once again the sagacity of the choice made by the Republic of Moldova on its way forward to European integration. The gradual implementation of the Association Agreement and the creation of the DCFTA zone have brought us politically and economically closer to the European Union and helped us to advance in the development and modernization of the country and of Moldovan society in the spirit of European and universal values.

Although the Republic of Moldova, given its geographical position and dimensions, does not often manage to influence the international agenda, our experience in migration managing, gained during the implementation of the action plan for liberalizing the visa regime and the Mobility Partnership, allowed us to become, *inter alia*, an important voice in the Global Forum on Migration and Development and in the discussions on the United Nations post-2015 development agenda.

Nevertheless, much remains to be done. Reiterating the commitment assumed by the Republic of Moldova to continuing reforms and bringing the country into the big European family, we are fully open to a further efficient dialogue with our European partners on the implementation of our priorities, including macrofinancial stabilization, reform of the judiciary and prosecution systems, the fight against corruption, deepening reform of public administration, education and social areas, and the consolidation of cooperation in ensuring energy security and the interconnection of transport networks. This progress has been achieved

with the help of our development partners, and we are grateful to the European Union and its member States, especially our neighbour, Romania, and to the United States for their continued financial and technical assistance and unprecedented political support.

From the same perspective, in attaining the strategic objectives of European integration and the sustainable socioeconomic development of the country we also count on the support of all development partners and United Nations funds, programmes and specialized agencies. In this respect, the cooperation and assistance programmes of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are of invaluable importance to my country. We firmly believe that, with the support and assistance of our development partners, we will firmly pursue the path of European integration.

The world we live in is becoming increasingly turbulent and unsafe. Illegitimate military force and other forms of violence are widely used by States and non-State actors as a means to promote their interests. Gross violations of international law and a dramatic decrease in trust among States have already undermined the central pillars of the international system.

Regrettably, after a period of relative stability, the system of security and cooperation in Europe has been seriously shaken. The annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation, in flagrant violation of international law, and the outbreak of armed conflict in the eastern regions of the Ukraine have directly challenged international peace and security. These major negative developments have reactivated a fundamental question on our agenda: What should be done to restore order and ensure respect for the norms and principles of international law?

The search for an answer will take time, but this exercise is very much needed. In the meantime, it is critical to bring the military hostilities in the Donbas region of Ukraine to an end. The continuation of the conflict will cause more suffering, more victims and more destroyed infrastructure. There is one simple truth to be kept in mind — the longer a conflict goes on, the harder it is to find a sustainable solution. In this respect, the Republic of Moldova supports the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Donbas in accordance with the Minsk agreements and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Ukraine. We express our solidarity with the Ukrainian people at this difficult time.

The Republic of Moldova has also gone through a conflict. For more than two decades, my country has been divided as a result of the Transnistrian conflict. But in spite of external and domestic challenges, the Republic of Moldova will firmly pursue the peaceful settlement of this conflict. By restoring trust and promoting dialogue, we should move step by step to a comprehensive resolution of the Transnistrian conflict. The solution should be based on respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Moldova, and on identifying a special status for the Transnistrian region within the internationally recognized borders of my country. We express our hope that all our external partners will make efforts to advance the conflict-resolution process towards that goal.

Additionally, we reiterate our firm position with regard to the imperative of Russia's withdrawing its military forces and munitions from the territory of the Republic of Moldova, in accordance with the constitutional provisions of my country and international commitments. In the same context, we believe that the existing peacekeeping operation has fulfilled its mandate and needs to be transformed into a civilian mission with a relevant international mandate.

The Republic of Moldova fully supports all measures taken by the United Nations in the field of combating international terrorism, promoting disarmament and non-proliferation, and pleads for the active participation of all Member States in their implementation. My country has ratified and our delegation has deposited with the Secretary-General its ratification instrument of the Arms Trade Treaty. The Treaty should not only ensure transparency and accountability in transfers of conventional weapons, but should also prevent illicit arms trafficking, especially to unrecognized separatist entities. In the context of the complex security situation in the Eastern European region, this is of vital importance.

Being convinced that the security deterioration in our region calls for an effective mechanism for small arms and light weapons control, we are also engaged in implementing the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, and support the relevant Security Council resolutions. Today, we are pleased to state that during the past three years, with the support of our partners, we have

succeeded in destroying all stocks of cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines in our country.

We also share the international community's concerns about the emergence of new terrorist threats to our democratic values, human rights and world peace. As a sponsor of Security Council resolution 2178 (2014) on foreign terrorist fighters, the Republic of Moldova is in favour of the adoption of appropriate measures for its implementation. In the same vein, apart from the fact that the Republic of Moldova has participated for many years with military observers in United Nations peacekeeping operations in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, the Sudan, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, starting from 2014 our country has contributed a contingent of more than 40 servicemen to the multinational peacekeeping Kosovo Force.

During the past year, important progress has also been made in cooperating with the European Union in the field of a common security and defence policy, particularly by participating for the first time in the European Union-led crisis management missions and operations including the European Union Training Mission in Mali in 2014 and the European Union Military Advisory Mission in the Central African Republic in 2015. Thus, the Republic of Moldova is transitioning from being a security observer and beneficiary to becoming an active participant and contributor to establishing security building, peace and stability in Europe and in the world. As a European Union-associated State, the Republic of Moldova is determined to contribute to the consolidation of the European Union's position as a regional and global actor.

When humankind is confronted with deepening crises, raising increasing human rights implications, and the needs of people are evolving, United Nations expertise and independent assessment are crucial. Especially for that reason, the Republic of Moldova welcomes the innovative approach of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to brief Member States on new developments in a prompt manner, which will contribute to strengthening prevention and early warning. My country stands for universal respect for the principles of international law and human rights that arise from their indivisibility and interdependence, and believes that ensuring the availability of efficient, solid and rapid reaction mechanisms to foster respect for and

promote fundamental freedoms without exception is of crucial importance.

The seventieth anniversary could and should become an influential incentive for further real reforms and for the reaffirmation and strengthening of the role and work of the United Nations. We welcome and support every concrete effort directed at ensuring the reform of all United Nations structures, including the General Assembly, its subsidiary bodies, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, with the purpose of enhancing their efficiency, effectiveness, accountability, transparency and equitable regional representation. Along this line, we particularly reiterate previously expressed positions on the imperative of allocating one non-permanent seat in a reformed Security Council to the Eastern European Group of States and of ensuring equitable regional rotation in the process of the election of the Secretary-General by entrusting for the first time the highest position in the Secretariat to a national coming from an Eastern European country.

Finally, having had this privilege of congratulating the entire United Nations family on the seventieth anniversary of the Organization, we express our conviction that all Member States will further engage by uniting efforts and resources to confront the new threats and challenges, thereby safeguarding peace, humanity and our planet, as the founders of the United Nations urged us to do. Pledging to constructively contribute to the attainment of this noble assignment, my delegation and my country are confident that this anniversary session will lead to the advancement of sustainable peace and development and to environmental and human rights protection for the benefit of the world.

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

Mr. Valeriu Strelet, Prime Minister of the Republic of Moldova, was escorted from the rostrum.

Address by His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid of Morocco

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Royal Highness Prince Moulay Rachid of Morocco.

Prince Moulay Rachid (Morocco) (*spoke in Arabic*): King Mohammed VI has mandated me

to convey his congratulations, his esteem and his greetings. He also asked me to deliver this royal speech to the General Assembly at its seventieth session.

The current session of the General Assembly is particularly important because it has seen the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). It is an opportunity to reiterate our collective commitment to achieving one of the lofty objectives of the Charter of the United Nations and to fulfil the aspirations of peoples throughout the world. This session also coincides with the celebration of the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations establishment at a time when the international community is facing serious, unprecedented challenges and challenges that require joint, efficient and integrated action. The Kingdom of Morocco's position regarding these challenges and the spectrum of regional and international issues will be laid out during the General Assembly's committee meetings and at the ministerial discussions that will take place on the sidelines of the General Assembly.

The preparation of the development Agenda for the next 15 years must be based on an objective assessment of what we have done since 2000. Have we managed to improve the day-to-day life of the poor? Are the results achieved solid and sustainable enough to withstand tensions, wars and social and economic crises? The review of the Millennium Development Goals shows that tangible progress has been made between 1990 and 2015, yet the remaining gaps among regions throughout the world and within certain countries remain a legitimate cause of concern. This situation tarnishes the image of international cooperation and casts doubt on our collective action within the United Nations.

But that does not necessarily mean that we have failed. This situation should rather lead all stakeholders to consider the best means to promote development and to correct the malfunctions that affect international cooperation. In this context, the Kingdom of Morocco hopes that the Sustainable Development Goals will contribute to developing an ambitious Agenda that can improve the situation at all levels — national, regional and international.

However relevant and promising the Sustainable Development Agenda is, its credibility will depend on our ability to find the financing necessary for its implementation. International cooperation therefore has to keep pace with the new international reality.

It needs to shake off the legacy and geopolitical calculations of the past and refrain from imposing near impossible conditions for accessing support. The Ebola crisis showed that besides expressions of solidarity dictated by circumstance, the international support to the countries affected was far from sufficient and did not rise to the level of commitment required by the gravity of the situation.

Development does not come through bureaucratic decisions or by means of technical reports that lack credibility. Development requires the deep understanding of the realities of peoples' existence and their characteristic capacities, as well as an objective analysis of the context in which they live. It also requires serious work to respond to their aspirations and genuine concerns.

I am very familiar with the difficult situation in Africa and I think I know what I am talking about. Many Africans are indeed living in very difficult conditions. The reality is infinitely more cruel and bitter than is indicated in the reports of some international governmental and non-governmental organizations. The life of these Africans is a struggle and subject to daily challenges and scant resources, but at the same time they live with dignity and have a sincere patriotic commitment to a better future.

To address this situation, we must develop an inclusive and consistent mid-term approach with complementary measures. Urgent, practical initiatives are also required because deteriorating conditions and daily pressing needs cannot wait for international bureaucracy to wake up and take the necessary decisions. From that perspective, Africa must be at the heart of international development cooperation in order to help the continent free itself from its colonial past and unlock its potential. Morocco therefore calls on the United Nations and regional and international financial institutions to draft an action plan for the economic transformation of Africa and the provision of steady resources for its financing.

Despite its promise, Africa stands at a crossroads because without substantial and tangible international support, the continent will major inequalities will emerge among its countries. Some countries will progress and develop while others continue to have problems and sink into poverty, ignorance and instability. We call for peace and stability to be made top priorities in order to prevent conflicts, tackle extremism and terrorism, and

resolve the migration problem through an approach that takes into account the dignity of migrants, preserves their basic rights, and addresses the root causes of this phenomenon.

This year in my country, we are celebrating the tenth anniversary of our national human development initiative, which has contributed to reducing poverty, marginalization, exclusion and interregional disparities. It also enabled Morocco to achieve Millennium Development Goal 1 in 2013. International organizations have therefore ranked Morocco third among the five countries in the world to have adopted the best public welfare programmes and initiatives. We are ready to put our experience in this field at the service of our partners, in particular in Africa.

Because of its geographical location and its strategic choices, the Kingdom of Morocco is actively involved in addressing all global issues and concerns, including migration, human rights, climate change, sustainable development and the fight against terrorism. Morocco national response to each has made a sound contribution to international efforts to face these unprecedented global challenges.

Morocco's commitment to addressing these universal issues is reflected particularly in the fight against climate change, one of the most serious threats facing humankind as a whole. We participated in the Rio Summit in 1992 and have since worked to develop a national environmental policy based on involving all relevant stakeholders and on the effective use of financial resources dedicated to climate issues. This policy is reflected in our adoption of a national charter for environment and sustainable development and in the Green Morocco Plan as well as in our ambitious programmes for solar and wind renewable energy, which aim to meet 42 per cent of Morocco's energy needs by 2020.

We are also faithfully meeting our commitments in the field of the environment, and in 2015 officially presented our intended nationally determined contribution. This includes strong and ambitious commitments to its participation in setting up an international environmental order that is fair and solidarity based. In this respect Morocco is proposing to host in Marrakesh in 2016 the twenty-second Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

We should like to take this opportunity to reiterate our support for France's efforts to achieve a global, comprehensive, sustainable, balanced and legally binding agreement at the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Therefore we see the Paris and Marrakesh Conferences as two complementary steps towards making a qualitative improvement in the fight against climate change and avoiding previous failures caused by a lack of coordination and cooperation among stakeholders.

We therefore stress the importance of the call issued on 20 September in Tangier by Morocco, together with President François Hollande of France, for collective, solidarity-based international action on climate change. The choice of Morocco to launch this joint initiative was not incidental but a demonstration of the esteem in which our country is held in its position at the vanguard of the efforts of African nations to adopt efficient national strategies in the field of renewable energy. Consistent with this solidarity-based policy, Morocco will spare no effort to broadcast the voices and concerns of the African continent and the small island developing States, which are the most vulnerable to climate change.

The United Nations is today celebrating its seventieth anniversary and has reached the age of maturity, wisdom and responsibility. Those same principles and values should govern the action of the international community in resolving the regional disputes it faces. The Organization's work must not be a destabilizing factor for countries that contribute to multilateral cooperation and action. Morocco therefore rejects any irresponsible or risky course of action with regard to the regional dispute over the Moroccan Sahara. Indeed, many international Powers fully realize that the unrealistic plans that have been drawn up inside offices and the erroneous proposals that have been made can only undermine the situation in the region.

We have high hopes that the United Nations will maintain its efforts to resolve disputes by peaceful means and remain committed to upholding the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States in order to establish the peace, security and stability to which the peoples of the world aspire.

Address by Mr. Lionel Zinsou, Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Development,

Evaluation of Public Policies and the Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Benin

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): The Assembly will now hear an address by the Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Development, Evaluation of Public Policies and the Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Benin.

Mr. Lionel Zinsou, Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Development, Evaluation of Public Policies and the Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Benin, was escorted to the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I have great pleasure in welcoming His Excellency Mr. Lionel Zinsou, Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Development, Evaluation of Public Policies and the Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Benin, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. Zinsou (Benin) (*spoke in French*): The Organization turns 70 this year, and on this birthday we welcome its call for a "Strong United Nations, Better World". This celebration is an opportunity to welcome and take stock of all the progress made in promoting the fundamental principles of the Charter. The goals and ideals of the Organization today face a globalized and often dangerous world that is experiencing a turbulent time in its history. We are in a multipolar world. Climate change has become tangible in terms of its harmful effects, especially on the least developed countries. Fortunately, there is public opinion and there are peoples with aspirations for a prosperous, long-term future who know how to achieve it.

I commend the President of the General Assembly on his personal qualities. His country, Denmark, where he is a senior leader, continues to be very close to countries such as our own. He is an excellent Ambassador to the United Nations and of the international community's resolve to stand in solidarity.

I also wish to pay tribute to the outgoing President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa from the brother country of Uganda. His personal qualities allowed undeniable progress to be made and strong consensus to be reached on important issues. I pay tribute to him together with the current President.

When it comes to peace, security and human rights — the themes of this seventieth general debate — we are certain that considerable progress has

been made but it is still possible to go further. That is what we want to discuss. Yes, our world has made considerable progress, but the threat of terrorism has been mentioned many times from this rostrum. Just a few minutes ago, we heard about its prevalence in Iraq, but we also know it from our own experience in Africa. There is strong financial instability and crises in Africa — food crises, energy crises, mass youth unemployment — that are affecting the youngest and the oldest in all countries. There are pandemics, that other globalization of the day. There are the rising sea levels and coastal erosion that we feel as a coastal country,.

Clearly everyone has their own challenges, but the United Nations system is at the front line and we are proud and confident in the United Nations action. We also have problems that run deep in all our countries concerning good governance, which sometimes poses major obstacles to development policies and good responses to the challenges of the day. They need to be addressed.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda opens new possibilities of cooperation for Africa in combating the vast international corruption that is hitting us hard with mass tax evasion and illicit financial flows. The struggle against such corruption requires a coordinated judicial effort. We need to counter its harmful, far-reaching effects. It is an obstacle to growth and to investment. We must deny the perpetrators of economic and financial crimes the possibility of taking refuge in the sanctuaries of tax havens. We are pleased that the United Nations system, working with the Group of 20, is coordinating with the full commitment of the African Union to combat this corruption.

But in each of our countries, we know that corruption at the domestic level is also a very important hindrance. Benin has decided to address it and attack it using institutional means by establishing, through a law enacted in 2011, an effective national authority for combating corruption, and in 2015 a general audit office designed to improve administrative practices. With the help of its technical and financial partners and the United Nations system, which has been very vigilant and very effective, Benin seeks justice to find better means to prosecute and eradicate the impunity that often goes with corruption at the domestic level, even in the institutions of the Republic itself.

If we look at things more broadly, we hope that the United Nations, which has helped us in all these subjects, will be ever more effective in conflict resolution. No State, powerful though it may be, can prevent or resolve conflict alone. On our continent, the security issue is ever present. It is a serious obstacle to the development of the countries in the grip of these conflicts. Often it is a reflection on our borders and our territory of conflicts that in reality are cross-border in nature. They are often linked to religious fundamentalism, all kinds of terrorism, human trafficking, drug smuggling, and maritime piracy.

Africa knows these problems. Africa is getting organized but needs the help of the rest of the world. We still need security assistance, which is a primary and critical priority component of development assistance. Our country advocates a comprehensive approach to cooperation among States that is political, economic, legal and diplomatic. We find that such assistance is making solid progress, especially among African countries or between Africa and other continents, with the United Nations system as guarantor and stakeholder.

Similarly, we wish to stand in solidarity and also be an actor. It will be noted that in recent years Africa has increasingly been a key actor in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. I must apologize today for the absence at this General Assembly of the President of the Republic of Benin, Mr. Thomas Boni Yayi, who left a few hours ago. In his capacity as a mediator for the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), he was summoned to finish mediating the internal conflict in Burkina Faso and to help the people of that country in their quest to resolve their internal problems. The President is on his way, ever the optimistic.

That is one example of what we can do, but we also contribute to the task force constituted by the brother countries of Nigeria, the Niger, Cameroon and Chad to fight Boko Haram together in a resolute manner. Eight hundred Beninese soldiers, many of them trained for action and intervention as part of United Nations peacekeeping operations, shall take their place beside to their sisters and brothers in arms.

Conflict prevention is very important. Let me highlight an initiative that the United Nations has strongly supported. We met in Cotonou from 26 to 28 May at a symposium on education for peace and interreligious dialogue. We have the opportunity as

a people to be a nation of peaceful and constructive coexistence for development among our traditional religions and the religions of the Book. That symposium led to the adoption of a manifesto that proposes ways forward to create this harmony and determination to live together that are key elements in preventing future conflicts and threats. I should like to thank the United Nations for its support and call on the international community to draw inspiration from and substantively assist us in following up on this reflection on interreligious dialogue with its roots in African soil.

The President of the Republic of Benin was the driving force behind the coordination of the offer to provide the least developed countries with the services of the Secretary-General. In that regard, I thank the Organization and especially the Secretary-General for their assistance. We have thus been able to improve the plight of the least developed countries. Here, too, it is vital that, in the historic adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, our least developed countries received a certain number of very strong commitments in economic development, earmarked to their specific cases.

In terms of the way the United Nations is evolving, let me just say that Benin is very attached to seeing ever-stronger cooperation with the African institutions. When the President of the Republic of Benin assumed the presidency of the African Union in 2012, we saw in the situation in Mali how perfect coordination between the United Nations and the African Union, with the assistance of ECOWAS, yielded favourable results in terms of stabilization and appeasing an eminently dangerous situation.

Institutionalizing relations between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the United Nations Security Council is obviously a goal that we want to see pursued effectively. In speaking of the Security Council, we clearly share the African position which seeks to remedy the historic injustice of Africa's lack of representation among the permanent members of the Security Council, and sometimes on the Security Council in any guise.

If the Security Council wants to be effective, it is hard to leave more than 1 billion people, who will become 2 billion people in the space of a generation, outside the Council. It is hard to remain committed to privileges dating back to 1945. Those opposed to equitable representation of Member States within the

Security Council need to use the fact that we have entered our seventy-first year to truly modernize the Council. It will make it more effective given the major contemporary political problems before us.

In that respect I should like to say that we believe that major progress has been made on a number of subjects on which we need to move forward on further. We welcome the call for the establishment of an independent Palestinian State, a fully-fledged State Member, living in good relations with its neighbours, Israel. We are convinced that this would create an impetus to ease tensions in that part of the world so that we could then declare the Middle East a nuclear-weapon-free zone the next day.

But we were also very encouraged by the negotiations that ended on 14 July 2015 in Vienna with the resolution of what could have been a very grave conflict, which saw the Islamic Republic of Iran and the five permanent members of the Security Council plus one reaching an agreement on the nuclear issue that maintains the possibility of the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the welfare and well-being of the people while at the same time avoiding the considerable risks that were crystallizing.

We also noted with emotion during this session of the General Assembly to see we are moving towards a complete lifting of the United States embargo on Cuba and the progress made. We want to commend both President Raul Castro Ruz and President Barack Obama for their spectacular courage in being able to wipe the slate clean and being able to build a future of hope for the two peoples. It is vital, and the whole world should benefit from it.

I should like to conclude by returning to the question of good governance and combating corruption. The post-2015 agenda is very demanding, and that is as it should be. With a country like Benin, a least developed country, what we have to do in 15 years is something that humankind has never done. There will be more than 150 million new inhabitants in a few years in Africa, with all that means in terms of the balance of our ecosystems, social equilibrium, needs for education, and for infrastructure in terms of urbanization. What lies ahead, no one has ever done. The goals that we are proposing no one has ever proposed. That is a considerable step forward, and the success of the Millennium Development Goals in many countries and in our own from — all the people — ensured

that significant progress was made on all of them. In Bangladesh they achieved all the goals. That is an extraordinary feat and is rather dizzying because it now faces something even more demanding. We will need all the aid from the international community, but we ourselves will need to draw on our own strengths and the best possible governance.

The President of the Republic of Benin is coming to the end of his two constitutional mandates, in compliance with the Constitution. He is ensuring that the elections to take place six months' time in Benin will follow the example for all previous elections, just like the last two at municipal legislative levels that have just taken place. The democratic changeovers that the country has seen over the past five years should once again be marked with success and dignity.

We are but a small example, but an example of democracy and of governance that knows its limits and shortcomings but is getting better. We are an example of democracy for Africa, and we think that today that is the primary ingredient of any successful development policy given the challenges that lies ahead. We seek to be there in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Development, Evaluation of Public Policies and the Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Benin for the statement he has just made.

Mr. Lionel Zinsou, Prime Minister in Charge of Economic Development, Evaluation of Public Policies and the Promotion of Good Governance of the Republic of Benin, was escorted from the rostrum.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Gilles Tonelli, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Principality of Monaco.

Mr. Tonelli (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): The successful outcome of the United Nations Summit to adopt the post-2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1) coincided with the seventieth anniversary of the Organization and reflected the joint resolve to face up to, over the 15 years, the many obstacles and global challenges that impede sustainable development for all. The Heads of State and

Government adopted a historic agreement whose goals aim at eradicating poverty and restoring dignity to each individual so that all might enjoy their freedoms and rights.

The twenty-first century should meet the expectations of peoples for higher social justice and for shared prosperity and a healthy environment that is respectful of future generations, as was quite rightly underlined by His Holiness Pope Francis in front of the General Assembly (see A/70/PV.3). The proliferation of conflicts and crises and the millions of victims caught up in their destructive wake further strengthen our determination to pursue the transformation of current models, whose ambition is to match the challenges we are facing.

The continuing tragedy in Syria and the barbaric means used by extremist groups, which is being propagated in West Africa and the Middle East, fill us with horror. Such groups indiscriminately target religious minorities, civilians, women and children — the latter always being the most common victims. In addition, the international community cannot remain indifferent in the face of the destruction of our common human heritage, such as the temples in Palmyra. They are a symbol of the Middle East as the cradle of a culture for thousands of years. We therefore strongly support the Secretary-General's "Rights Up Front" initiative and his endeavour to establish a plan of action on preventing violent extremism.

In that regard, I should like to remind members that Monaco co-sponsored Security Council resolution 2178 (2014), on foreign terrorist fighters and combating violent extremism. The Principality of Monaco is already implementing Security Council resolutions on freezing assets and imposing economic sanctions on people who might be connected to terrorist networks. Furthermore, Monaco is currently reinforcing its legal framework in the area of national security. We are also actively participating in the fight against money laundering for funds coming from illicit activities.

We are aware of the importance of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. Monaco therefore continues to support a peaceful solution to the crisis in Ukraine. We did so over the course of the last three months of 2014, when we chaired the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Forum for Security Co-operation,

and we continue to do so today by supporting the work of the OSCE Observer Mission.

The past few months have seen flows of migrants in Europe that have been unprecedented since the Second World War. The dire humanitarian consequences require a coordinated multilateral approach. The European Union plan in that regard provides a timely response. The principle of the responsibility to protect was endorsed by His Serene Highness Prince Albert 10 years ago from this high rostrum; it must be the basis for our collective action in the face of genocide, ethnic cleansing and other crimes against humanity.

The primary responsibility bestowed by the charter of the Security Council to maintain international peace and security brings me to commend the courageous initiative taken by France and Mexico in calling for the voluntary and collective suspension of the right of veto by its five permanent members when dealing with mass atrocities. I take this opportunity today to announce Monaco's official support for that initiative, as well as the one presented by the Accountability, Coherence and Transparency group to develop a code of conduct that would apply to all Member States.

Let me also express our gratitude to those who promote such specific and ethical measures to reinforce the effectiveness of the Security Council and make its decisions more convincing in the face of public opinion. All of the efforts made to promote better representation in the Security Council merit support. My Government welcomes the recent developments in the intergovernmental negotiation process.

In one month's time we will celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, when the results of the global study on its implementation will be released. Unfortunately, we are too sadly familiar with the devastating consequences of conflicts for women, who are often the first victims when they are, however, not responsible for such conflicts. Along with children, they also represent the majority of refugees and displaced persons. Convinced of the importance of the full and active participation of women on an equal footing in preventing conflicts and peacefully resolving them, as well as in peacebuilding and peacekeeping, we therefore call for the implementation of specific measures.

The issues to be tackled by the first humanitarian summit proposed by the Secretary-General are of the

utmost importance, and all the more given that, in addition to the human tragedy I have just mentioned, we must also address the issues of the victims of climate change, natural disasters and a health crisis. In that regard, the international community will have to define a new humanitarian deployment framework that can respond to the growing and complex needs, can support financing and can complement operations by providing planning and long-term development.

Regional consultations have already highlighted the concerns of various stakeholders. They will allow for adequate responses to be found not only that meet the complexity of the humanitarian crises but also the specificity of each of the crises. Monaco has participated actively in that preparatory work, in line with our commitment in the context of our international cooperation policy and as part of the major mobilization by our non-governmental organizations and the Monegasque Red Cross.

The magnitude of the Ebola virus epidemic served once again to demonstrate the absolute need to build effective sustainable health systems that can face up to extraordinary situations. In that regard, Monaco has already expressed its support for the reform that has been begun by the World Health Organization.

The Addis Ababa Action Agenda was developed to facilitate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, with its 17 Goals and 169 targets. The aim is to find an effective way to transform our lifestyles. The technology facilitation mechanism launched during that summit reflects a spirit of collaboration among all development stakeholders for the benefit of developing countries. It also bears witness to the will of the international community to build capacity in a specific manner.

However, those efforts will not be successful without an ambitious and legally binding universal agreement that allows us to fight climate change effectively and to move towards low-carbon and resilient societies and economies. The Principality of Monaco is convinced that the twenty-first Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris, will be part of that trend and will help us to achieve a global climate agreement. Such an agreement is a sine qua non condition for the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

That is why Prince Albert has committed the Principality to reducing its greenhouse-gas emissions by 50 per cent by 2030, as compared with 1990 levels. He has also renewed his commitment to carbon neutrality by 2050. In setting those objectives, the Principality demonstrates its willingness to take a full part in the collective effort needed to face one of humankind's biggest challenges. Despite its low emissions footprint, Monaco will continue to promote innovative means of transportation and consumption, as well as urban planning that is as green as possible.

We cannot talk about the climate without talking about the issue of the oceans, which play a central role in regulating the world's climate. That is the reason that has led the Principality of Monaco to support the 2015 ocean and climate platform of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. Monaco is pleased to see that this is an integral part of the sustainable development programme, which strengthens the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea — a veritable constitution of the oceans. That is the sense behind the personal commitment of Prince Albert and also of his leadership of his Government's actions in favour of healthy and productive oceans and seas. To ensure the implementation of this agenda, Monaco proposes to convene conferences every three years from 2017 onwards.

For small island developing States the ocean is not just a source of economic and social benefit, it is also an integral part of their identity. For that reason, Monaco has increased its cooperation for climate change adaptation and for the preservation of biodiversity as well as for access to water, the development of sustainable tourism and for capacity-building.

In conclusion, I should like to take this opportunity to remind the Assembly that for several years now Monaco has proposed increasing the protection of marine mammals from the growing threat caused by human beings. We hope that this proposal will be included in the omnibus draft resolution on oceans at this current session.

In 70 years, the United Nations has worked to honour the goals bestowed on it by the Charter. It has repeatedly adapted itself to emerging challenges that have transformed the world since its creation. The political will that prevailed during the United Nations Summit to adopt the Sustainable Development Goals

has served to encourage us to further strengthen the Organization by giving it the means to pursue its noble mandate. We have thus reaffirmed the legitimacy of the values and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in today's world. The Principality of Monaco remains more than ever convinced that this is necessary, and it will continue to make its modest but resolute contribution to building a better world while respecting our differences.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Elmar Maharram oglu Mammadyarov, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Mammadyarov (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I should like to congratulate Mr. Mogens Lykkesoft on his assumption of the presidency of the General Assembly at its seventieth session and to wish him every success in fulfilling that highly responsible duty. We are also grateful to Mr. Sam Kutesa for all his hard work in presiding over the Assembly at its sixty-ninth session.

Over the past 70 years, the United Nations has decisively established itself as a universal Organization working for the noble cause of maintaining international peace and security, developing friendly relations among States and achieving international cooperation. The ability of the United Nations to respond to a rapidly changing international environment by constant adaptation is remarkable. It gives us confidence to believe that the Organization will succeed in addressing the challenges it faces.

Azerbaijan condemns terrorism, violent extremism and separatism in all their forms and manifestations. In situations of armed conflict or political crisis involving inter-State relations, no solution can be reached that is inconsistent with international law and legal order — particularly where fundamental norms are concerned, such as the obligation to respect the sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of States.

With a view to contemporary developments, I have to express our deepest concern over the unfolding refugee crises fuelled by the armed conflicts in the Middle East and Africa. We are equally alarmed by increasing cases of religious intolerance, in particular Islamophobia, and attempts to associate religions with terrorism.

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Azerbaijan is making concrete contributions to the activities of the United Nations. For more than 15 years, my country has been participating in United Nations-mandated peacekeeping operations conducted under the command of regional organizations or individual Member States — in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. We look forward to further supporting the United Nations peacekeeping activities, including by providing training facilities in Azerbaijan.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were of key importance in promoting development worldwide. In that regard, we are confident that the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be an effective tool in global efforts to achieve peace, prosperity and growth.

Over the past years, Azerbaijan has achieved impressive results on many MDG targets, especially on eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, ensuring universal primary education and promoting gender equality. Currently, Azerbaijan is adapting its national sustainable development strategy to take into account the SDG targets aimed at developing a more sustainable, inclusive and diversified economy. In recognition of Azerbaijan's outstanding commitment, determination and continuous efforts towards the implementation of the MDGs, my country received the 2015 South-South Award.

Despite the global economic and financial crises encountered by many countries of the region, in the first half of 2015 Azerbaijan registered economic growth of 5.7 per cent, while the growth in the non-oil sector was 9.2 per cent. My country has managed to become one of the crucial players of the global market in energy infrastructure projects, such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, through the construction of trans-Anatolian and trans-Adriatic natural gas pipelines and the Southern Gas corridor, which will connect the energy pipeline networks of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Albania and Italy.

Azerbaijan has also initiated strategic transport infrastructure networks, such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad project, which will connect the railway systems of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, and the new Baku international sea trade port, allowing short and efficient connection between East and West, reviving the ancient Silk Road.

Azerbaijan considers information and communication technologies as a driving force of development and

has initiated the Trans-Eurasian Information Super-Highway within the United Nations, which is designed to provide affordable and reliable broadband connectivity to landlocked countries of Eurasia, including Afghanistan and Central Asian States.

On the human dimension, Azerbaijan continues to promote tolerance, multiculturalism and understanding among peoples. We are proud that the first European Games in the history of the European continent were held this year in Baku, with the participation of more than 6,000 athletes from 50 countries. In 2017, my country will host the Islamic Solidarity Games. We are also planning to hold the seventh Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations in Baku in 2016.

Yesterday the President of Armenia delivered a statement at the general debate (see A/70/PV.17) that was full of the usual set of falsifications, distortions and misinterpretations, and in which he attempted once again to lecture others about principles and values, which in reality his Government disregards and opposes. The international community still recalls brutal massacres by invading Armenian troops on Azerbaijani civilians, including children, women and the elderly, as well as the establishment of the military dictatorship in Armenia after murdering the entire political elite of the country and killing a number of peaceful demonstrators protesting rigged presidential elections.

It is well known that Armenia unleashed the war and used force against my country and occupied almost one fifth of the territory of Azerbaijan, including the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven adjacent districts, carried out ethnic cleansing of the seized areas by expelling about 1 million Azerbaijanis from their homes and committed war crimes and crimes against humanity during the conflict. The international community has consistently deplored in the strongest terms the use of force by Armenia against Azerbaijan and the resulting occupation of its territories.

In 1993 the Security Council adopted resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), condemning the occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan and reaffirming respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of its internationally recognized borders. In those resolutions the Security Council also confirmed that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is part of

Azerbaijan and demanded an immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories of my country.

Other international organizations have adopted a similar position and resolutions. In its landmark judgement in the case *Chiragov and Others v. Armenia*, the European Court of Human Rights held Armenia fully responsible for the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and in violation of the rights of Azerbaijani internally displaced persons. In total disregard for that judgement and the norms and principles of international law, Armenia continues its efforts aimed at further consolidating the status quo of the occupation by altering the physical, demographic and cultural characteristics of the occupied territories and denying the right of hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani forcibly displaced persons to return to their homes and access to their properties.

On 26 September this year, the President of Armenia made an even more remarkable statement, referring to the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan as a part of Armenia. We categorically reject that fallacious and bellicose statement, which testifies to Armenia's apparent disregard of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and represents yet another admission at the highest level of the aggression perpetrated by the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan and demonstrates how the leadership of Armenia is far from engaging in a constructive search for peace. In that statement, the Armenian President even boasted that his country was one of the most militarized areas of the world.

Against that background, Armenia's speculations on confidence-building measures are curious, to say the least. In fact, the real reasons for the lack of confidence are Armenia's overt territorial claims to neighbouring countries, aggression against Azerbaijan, occupation and ethnic cleansing of its territories, denial of its responsibility for atrocious crimes committed in the course of the conflict, opposition to direct contacts between the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, and the reluctance even to cooperate seriously on the issue of missing persons.

In reality, for effective confidence-building, it is crucial first and foremost to implement without further delay the plan of withdrawal of the armed forces of

Armenia from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. As for the ideas of elaborating a mechanism for investigating incidents along the line of contact, we should note that the major cause of those incidents is the continuing unlawful presence of the Armenian troops in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Such an investigation mechanism must be an integral component of the above-mentioned withdrawal. Otherwise, it will serve only for consolidating the status quo, which even the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group co-Chair countries have repeatedly stated to be unacceptable and unsustainable.

The Nagorno-Karabakh region has always been, and will remain, an inalienable part of Azerbaijan. We will never acquiesce to the seizure of our territories. The conflict can be resolved only on the basis of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders.

The military occupation of the territory of my country does not represent a solution, and will never produce a political outcome desired by Armenia. The sooner Armenia reconciles with this reality, the earlier the conflict will be resolved and the countries and peoples in the region, including Armenia, of course, will benefit from the prospects of cooperation and economic development.

Azerbaijan is the most interested party in the earliest negotiated settlement of the conflict. However, if the negotiations fail to bring, as an outcome, the complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops, Azerbaijan will be compelled to use its inherent right of self-defence, guaranteed under Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, to ensure the restoration of its sovereignty and territorial integrity within the internationally recognized borders.

Azerbaijan highly appreciates the principled stance of the States Members of the United Nations that has been repeatedly expressed on issues that are of the utmost importance for my country and pertaining to its sovereignty and territorial integrity. We count on the continued resolve of the international community in defending the purposes and principles of the Charter, as well as its strong solidarity with the just position of Azerbaijan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. José Manuel García Margallo, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain.

Mr. García Margallo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): There is a famous etching by Goya called “The Dream of Reason Produces Monsters”. Goya taught us that when reason deserts us, when it literally falls asleep, it leaves space free for the worst demons of our nature to take hold. Seventy years ago humankind awoke not from a dream, but from a nightmare. The unbridled exercise of power without the check of law or the calmness of reason produced the monsters of the Second World War and of the Shoah.

Law is the reason of States. I am referring to the law expressed through the formal foundations of a democratic, lawful State by the legitimate representatives of national sovereignty. When those foundations are overwhelmed, when the reason of law is flouted, the monsters of Goya are always lying in wait. Seventy years ago, humankind, represented by the United Nations at San Francisco, learned its lesson. The founders of the United Nations reached the conclusion that, just as States have constitutions that govern the norms of coexistence among their citizens, it was necessary for the international community to acquire its own supreme law, its own Magna Carta.

The San Francisco Charter is the constitution of humankind. Its Preamble and its purposes and principles underpin the edifice that is home to us all. Among them, respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States is essential to ensure the maintenance of international peace and security. If those pillars are weakened, neglected or substituted by a will that considers itself above the law, that edifice literally will crumble on top of us and leave us out in the cold.

“A strong United Nations, a better world” is the motto with which we are commemorating the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. There are those who will deny that. For them the United Nations is a weak Organization, one unable to respond to the challenges and threats of our time. I do not think that is true. It is clear that there are reasons for hope.

The nuclear agreement reached with Iran and the restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba and the prospect of a peace agreement in Colombia soon show that situations that have festered for far too long can be resolved. Spain welcomes that. Now we need to take a further step forward so that both Iran and Cuba, proud countries with very defined identities and highly qualified populations, can become

catalysts for change and contribute to stability and progress in their respective regions.

If it is possible to reach agreement in situations that many considered were unresolvable, as Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain, it would be remiss of me not to mention the dispute over Gibraltar, the last colony on European territory. We want to re-initiate with the United Kingdom bilateral dialogue on the decolonization of Gibraltar based on the parameters established by the United Nations and the Brussels Declaration of 1984.

On a different tack, my country hopes that the United Kingdom will respond to the Spanish proposal of establishing a new local cooperation mechanism in the interests of social well-being and the economic development of the region. That would include participation by the local competent Gibraltarian authorities and the competent local and regional Spanish authorities.

Light predominates over the darkness in other areas too. I am thinking of the challenge of climate change. It is true that time is running out, but also that there are well-founded hopes that at the Paris summit in December we will achieve results that will allow us to stop the process of the deterioration of our common home and decisively turn things around. We therefore need a sustainable growth model, one that is equitable and leaves no one behind.

Once again, hopes have begun to turn into reality thanks to the recent adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (resolution 70/1). His Majesty the King, who was present at the Summit where the Agenda was adopted, reiterated the commitment of our country to its implementation — a commitment already translated into acts with the establishment of a Sustainable Development Goals fund, which is initially being financed by Spain but is open to all other States and to the private sector.

I consider myself to be among those who believe that the twenty-first century will be the century of the woman, but that will only be so if we all play our part. For as the President of Chile, Michelle Bachelet Jeria, has said, equality will not happen by itself. That is why Spain has for some time been encouraging the participation and leadership of women in all dimensions of collective life. To that end, our strategic plan for equal opportunities 2014-2016 has been allocated €3.1 billion.

We will be bringing our national commitment to equality to our presidency of the Security Council. During our presidency, on 13 October, we will hold a high-level open debate on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, to be presided over by the President of the Government of Spain. I invite everyone to take part at the highest level, because the occasion merits it.

Terrorism is the main threat to the model of the just, prosperous, equitable and open society that we seek to build for the peace and security of the international community. Spain has been hit hard by both domestic and international terrorism. Back in 1960, 55 years ago, as a result of the explosion of a bomb placed in a railway station by the Euskadi Ta Askatasuna terrorist group, a 22-month-old child, Begoña Urroz, died. Since then 850 human beings — men, women and children — have lost their lives as a result of the terrorist madness. All terrorism is born from hatred and disdain for life and is a crime against humanity. That is the basis that we work on.

But it is also true that evil manifests itself in different forms depending on the circumstances and the historical times. In our lifetime jihadist terrorism is at its most lethal insidious form. Spain too suffered at its hands. On 11 March 2004, 190 people of various nationalities, the majority workers, were killed, and more than a 1,800 people were injured.

In the case of Daesh we are up against a terrorist movement that has sought to control a territorial base from which it seeks to launch attacks and to destroy our model of civilization. Because all of us are targets, we must all form a common front against Daesh. There can be no negotiation with terrorists; they must be defeated — only lawfully, but with all of the law. That is why Spain did not hesitate to join, right from the beginning, the international coalition fighting against Daesh in Iraq at the side of the Government and the people of Iraq.

But military intervention is not enough. It is also necessary to combat radicalization, which leads so many youngsters to fill their ranks. Spain placed at the disposal of this common struggle its own experience in multilateral initiatives such as the Alliance of Civilizations, the Vienna King Abdullah International Centre for Interreligious and Intercultural Dialogue and the Union for the Mediterranean.

From its own experience we know that saving and keeping alive the memory of the victims is vital to prevent a repetition of such horrors. On too many occasions we have seen the victims presented as being the guilty, as though bringing their sacrifice upon themselves. If I may, another personal experience I should like to recall is that until 1997, the year that saw the assassination of Miguel Ángel Blanco, we had to bury our dead virtually in secret. In order for that not to be repeated, and so that the voice of the victims can reach all corners of the planet, on 21 October we will open up the Security Council for the sake of dignity, memory and justice.

To the same end, joining forces to combat radicalization and extremism, the Madrid Club has invited about 100 former Heads of State or Government on 27 and 28 October. Their experience will be incredibly useful to us.

Now let me refer to impunity. Spain and Romania have decided to propose the establishment of an international criminal court against terrorism. We think it is necessary for the United Nations to consider this proposal in all its scope. This would be an international jurisdictional mechanism to combat the crimes of international terrorism using the tools of international law. Such a court would complement the action of the International Criminal Court and would intervene when a State is not in a position to carry out trials itself.

Conflicts in regions such as the Middle East and in parts of Africa are the origin of the most serious migratory crisis Europe has seen since the Second World War. The images of this immense tragedy rightly move our hearts, but it is our reason that can provide solutions. Of course, what is most urgent is the humanitarian response — saving lives, providing shelter, healing and feeding. But it is important also to draw up a comprehensive asylum and integration policy that sets out the concepts of asylum and economic migration and that takes into account the rights and dignity of people who risk their lives to find a better future for themselves and their children. I think that the time has come to begin thinking about a global covenant under United Nations auspices in which countries of origin, countries of transit and host countries would all participate. Migration is a global challenge that we can solve only by working together.

I said earlier that the origin of the current migratory crisis were the festering conflicts, conflicts often

exacerbated by lack of response from the international community and as a result of the brutality of the parties. The paradigmatic case is that of Syria — four and a half years of conflict; 250,000 lives lost; 12 million people in desperate need of humanitarian assistance; 7.6 million internally displaced persons; 4 million refugees in neighbouring countries — the statistics have been calling out to us for too long.

A solution to the conflict is urgent. We must work on two fronts: first, by providing an immediate humanitarian response to assuage the suffering of the Syrian people, and, secondly, supporting the inclusive political process proposed by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura.

There is similar urgency with regard to the conflict in Libya. We support the work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, my compatriot Bernardino León, and we continue with impatience to seek an agreement for the formation of a Government of national accord. We call for courage and for all parties to come together to overcome the fracture of a country divided in two, and where on the horizon we can already see the black flag of Daesh just a few kilometres from our coast. Let me say that the partition of Libya would be the worst possible solution.

Of course, in the Middle East we continue to be committed to an agreement between Israelis and Palestinians that goes via the two-State solution with mutually agreed borders. We must revitalize the peace process. Spain will always be willing to support the parties to return to the path of direct negotiations.

In Africa the situation in Mali, the Central African Republic and elsewhere troubles us greatly. But it is not all darkness in that continent; there are bright spots. The response to the Ebola epidemic and the development and rebuilding plans presented by the countries affected by Ebola fill us with hope. Spain continues to be very optimistic when it comes to Africa's future.

In Europe the main shadow, but with certain bright spots, continues to be the crisis in Ukraine, where it is vital to implement the Minsk agreements and to continue building a climate of trust so as to put an end to a conflict of a different time. We call on the parties to seek that path.

Finally, I am convinced that today the United Nations is stronger in a world that, while it is still far from perfect, is better than that world of 70 years ago.

To keep moving forward towards perfection it is crucial to respect the values and the purposes and principles of the Charter, including territorial integrity. Violation thereof, as history has taught us, is one of the preferred instruments of the monsters of Goya to put us to sleep. To avoid this it is necessary for the reason of law and that the law of reason should remain ever alert. Among the foundations are always dialogue, reconciliation and cohabitation. Without them we will be left out in the cold.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Samuel Rangba, Minister for Foreign Affairs, African Integration and Francophonie of the Central African Republic.

Mr. Rangba (Central African Republic) (*spoke in French*): The Head of State of the Transition, Her Excellency Ms. Catherine Samba Panza, was to have spoken to here at the General Assembly personally in order to thank the United Nations for its extremely valuable support to the process of transition in the Central African Republic. Alas, the resurgence of violence since 25 September in the capital, Bangui, has meant that she has had to return home earlier than intended. She has therefore asked me to give her speech as follows.

It is an honour and great pleasure for me to share with the General Assembly the vision that my country has on the major issues facing the world and to report on developments in the situation in the Central African Republic. The serious situation obtaining today in my country means that I must spare addressing international issues in order to call the attention of world leaders to the new tragedy affecting the people of the Central African Republic.

I should like first of all sincerely to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Mogens Lykketoft on being elected as President of the General Assembly at its seventieth session. He may rest assured of the full support of the delegation of my country for the success of this session, which also marks the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations.

I am also grateful to His Excellency Mr. Sam Kutesa, his predecessor, who by his leadership and example conducted the work of the sixty-ninth session and the preparatory work for the current session. My gratitude also goes to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. I should like to encourage him in his constant commitment to peace, security and development in the

world and congratulate him particularly on his personal involvement in endeavours to resolve the crisis in the Central African Republic.

A year ago, the Head of State of Transition outlined before the Assembly (see A/69/PV.15) the tragic situation in my country while appealing to the international community to mobilize and come to the help of the Central African Republic, beset by the indiscriminate and savage violence by non-regulated armed groups. Given the cruelty of the atrocities and heinous crimes hitherto unknown in the history of my country, the United Nations did not hesitate. The international community unanimously committed to support the Transitional Government, which had just been established. That commitment was reflected in the adoption of several resolutions of the Security Council, one being resolution 2149 (2014), authorized the deployment of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA).

Supported by that commitment from the international community, the Head of State of Transition worked to the utmost to establish dialogue among the various protagonists in order together to find the way to social cohesion and stabilization for the country. It was a question of ensuring a peaceful climate, one of confidence, so that we could live together.

The crisis was far-reaching and complex. It required a vigorous and global response, which the Transitional Government alone was not able to provide. In order to break the deadlock, the Transitional Government, with the support of the international community, drew up a road map with the following priorities: the re-establishment of security and the building of peace; humanitarian assistance; the re-establishment of State authority throughout the national territory; the recovery of the economy and the improvement of the management of public finances; and the organization of free, transparent and democratic elections for a return to constitutional order. Considerable progress has been made in 18 months of transition.

Politically, after the signing of the agreement on the cessation of hostilities in Brazzaville on 23 July 2014, grassroots consultations organized throughout the entire country made it possible to hold a national forum from 4 to 11 May, which brought together all forces in the nation, including the armed groups. That led to the adoption of significant recommendations

and the signing of commitments by the armed groups to renounce violence. The electoral process is taking place normally and the Government has undertaken to organize elections in accordance with the timetable established by the national elections authority, establishing a deadline for the end of December this year. That process is an irreversible one. The people of the Central African Republic are determined to go to the ballot box to choose their leaders democratically.

In 2011, while the country was at peace, the number of registered voters stood at 1,6 million. Today, despite the crisis, the number is 1.59 million registered voters. That shows the desire of the people to return to constitutional order.

As far as security matters go, since the deployment of MINUSCA, on 15 September 2014, until the most recent sad events the situation was becoming progressively more normal throughout the entire country. Bangui began to find once again its charming way of life with the resumption of economic and social activities. While awaiting for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process to begin, a pre-DDR programme was launched via the cantonment of former armed groups, who were employed in community work.

On the humanitarian front, the situation has once again become alarming since the terrible date of 25 September. The number of internally displaced persons had been considerably reduced, but now we see a horrendous spike, which means that there are now more than 30,000 internally displaced people in Bangui. Nevertheless, the number of refugees has decreased from 1 million in 2014 to about 460,000 since the voluntary return policy. The international community has lent very strong support to the Central African Republic in order to help its people go back home.

In economic terms, the growth rate, which had dropped by 37 per cent at the height of the crisis in 2013, grew by 1.3 per cent in 2014. The forecast for 2015 is of the order of 5.5 per cent. That progress is attributable to the support of the international community, which created the necessary conditions to mobilize domestic resources, as well as the contributions from bilateral and multilateral partners.

After a year of untiring efforts by the Transitional Government and the international community, we were able to state happily a week ago that the bad times were over and the Central African Republic was gradually

recovering from its travails and taking its place among the community of nations.

Alas, just as we came to tell the United Nations of those encouraging results of the Transition, which is moving to its end with the organization of elections at the end of this year, the enemies of peace once again dealt a harsh blow to the process on 25 September by savage violence, killings and terrible crimes leading to the loss of many human lives and destruction as well as the massive displacement of people.

That situation clearly shows that peace and reconciliation are still tenuous and require strong supported action in order that my country will not once again be drawn into a vicious cycle of violence, challenging the progress made so arduously during the Transition thanks to the determination of the Government and the people and the constant support of the international community. We ask the international community, in particular the United Nations, to make it possible for there to be a stronger presence in the Central African Republic, stronger action to help to staunch destruction and widespread crime. For 18 months the legitimate aspiration of the people for stability and development has remained dependent on the security situation, which is still very uncertain as proven by the current outbreaks of violence in Bangui.

I am aware that the outbreaks of crisis have multiplied in the world today and that the Organization is facing many challenges on all fronts and resources are diminishing ever more. But remember the thousands of children, women, old people and sick people and other vulnerable groups so hatefully killed in such a cowardly way, raped, humiliated or required to leave their homes to find refuge in unhealthy places under rain without shelter, just because a handful of individuals decided to put into practice their nefarious plans to destabilize an entire country to assuage their hunger for power.

That then is why I call upon the Security Council to reinforce MINUSCA's mandate to better combat these enemies of peace and give hope once again to the sorely tried people of my country. That is why I demand that the Security Council consider lifting the sanctions regime, particularly regarding the training and equipment of our defence and security forces within the framework of bilateral cooperation with friendly countries ready to help the Central African Republic.

Against that backdrop, speeding up the reform of the security sector, the pre-DDR and DDR efforts

are the immediate absolute priorities as we move towards rebuilding a national multi-ethnic army that is representative of all regions of the country and able to lend its support to the actions of the international forces.

I also remain deeply disturbed by the matter of impunity, which continues despite the sanctions pursuant to Security Council resolutions 2127 (2013) and 2134 (2014), pertaining to certain Central African citizens at the root of the crisis today. The failure to implement the provisions of those resolutions is one of the causes of the lasting violence of armed groups and the violence in our country. That is why the Government has established a special criminal court in order to try all those responsible for mass atrocities and the destruction seen in the country today.

This is the right forum to pay tribute to MINUSCA and to all those who have made their contribution in order to give new hope to the people of the Central African Republic, inter alia, the member countries of the Security Council, the African Union, the European Union, the Economic Community of Central African States, the Central African Monetary and Economic Community, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, France, the United States of America and the Kingdom of Morocco.

This seventieth session of the General Assembly is being held against a backdrop of generalized threats affecting all countries that want to see justice and peace, whether we are talking about Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb, Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram or the Islamic State, terrorism remains a threat to the entire world and must grasp the attention of all world leaders, who, regardless of their ideological or religious beliefs, must work to eradicate this scourge.

The Central African Republic is not spared those threats because, in addition to the armed groups slaughtering the civilian population and going unpunished, my country has, for more than a decade, been facing Joseph Kony's Lord's Resistance Army laying waste to the south-east of the country. The porous borders in the north-east and north-west of the country mean that the Central African Republic is a potential sanctuary, indeed a very likely sanctuary, for terrorists in particular from Boko Haram, at present in Nigeria and Cameroon. That is why the re-establishment of security and State authority throughout our country is

of the greatest priority in order to prevent the Central African Republic becoming an area where terrorists can fall back, recruit new members and gain new supplies.

In addition to armed conflict and terrorism we must also face poverty and the HIV/AIDS and Ebola pandemics, which render the situation of the majority of the planet's people ever more precarious. That requires increased international solidarity among countries a sustained partnership between Governments and civil society to bring about eradication.

Another major challenge we face today is that of climate change. This only exacerbates geographical, social and ecological inequalities, with their sad consequences of poverty, the migration crisis and the reduction of resources for future and current generations. My country, which is part of the Congo Basin, contributes by way of its forests preserving the ecological balance in the world. Nevertheless, we are classified as one of the poorest countries in the world, and therefore one of the most vulnerable.

Our development priorities remain adaptation to the negative impact of climate change by means of support from the international community to gain access for southern hemisphere countries to additional funding and the transfer of technology. In that regard, the outcome of the upcoming meeting to be held in Paris in December will send a strong signal to the decision-makers of the planet to work together to provide future generations with a world where it will be good to live. The Central African Republic strongly supports that process and will participate in the meeting.

Other challenges, such as related to respect for human rights, the rule of law and good governance, are preconditions for peace and lasting security. However, respect of human rights must not be an excuse for impunity. There must be a framework of equitable justice, meaning that those responsible for serious crimes can be held to account.

Respecting human rights also means the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for freedom of expression and the preservation of the territorial integrity of States. In that regard, the Central African Republic remains of the belief that conflict prevention and conflict settlement by peaceful means are the best ways to maintain and ensure international peace and security.

That is why my country continues to support the principle of the political settlement of the question of the Moroccan Sahara within the framework of the guidelines defined by the United Nations. My country welcomes the encouraging positions of the Security Council expressed through the several resolutions that have been adopted since 2007, which lay down a credible basis for a political settlement, one mutually acceptable to the various parties. The Central African Republic remains firmly committed to this process under the aegis of the United Nations.

The seventieth anniversary of the United Nations provides us with an opportunity to think about reforming the organs of the Organization to adapt them to the realities of today's world. We therefore have to move towards a new way to achieve world peace and security with a reform of the principal organ, the Security Council, to make it more democratic and more representative of the various continents, as well as more accessible to the countries of the South. The Central African Republic supports the process of such reform, which will mean that it will prove easier for the United Nations to meet the expectations of countries when it comes to responding to international issues. My country also calls for limiting the use of the veto in situations of conflict or disaster where there are risks of mass crimes and crimes against humanity. My country strongly supports the initiative of France and Mexico in that regard.

I wish to express the hope that this seventieth session of the General Assembly will be a historic occasion on which world leaders will unanimously and bravely enter into a commitment to revitalize the Organization with the same determination as their forebears 70 years ago.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the general debate for this meeting.

Before giving the floor to speakers in the exercise of the right of reply, may I remind members that statements in the exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first statement and to 5 minutes for the second and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Abishek Singh (India): It is regrettable that the delegation of Pakistan has once again chosen to misuse the high-level segment of this session of the General Assembly to distort reality and portray a false sense of the picture of the challenges in our region (see

A/70/PV.19). Pakistan claims to be the primary victim of terrorism. In truth, it is actually a victim of its own policies of breeding and sponsoring terrorists. To seek to mask its activities as though an outcome of domestic discontent in the Indian State of Jammu and Kashmir carries no credibility with the world.

It was stated that Jammu and Kashmir was under foreign occupation. It is, except that the occupier in question is Pakistan. In fact, India's reservations about the proposed China-Pakistan economic corridor stem from the fact that it passes through Indian territory illegally occupied by Pakistan for many years. Pakistan apparently regrets that the dispute over Jammu and Kashmir remains unresolved and that our dialogue has not progressed. If that is so, it is because Pakistan has chosen to disregard its commitments, whether under the 1972 Shimla agreement, the 2004 joint declaration forswearing terrorism, or, more recently, the understanding between our Prime Ministers at Ufa. On each occasion, it is India that has extended the hand of friendship. India remains open even today to engage Pakistan on outstanding issues in an atmosphere free of terrorism and violence.

Reference was made to ceasefire violations and the exchange of fire along the Line of Control and the international boundary. The world knows that the primary reason for firing is to provide cover to terrorists crossing the border. It requires no imagination to figure out which side initiates such exchanges. It is not uncommon for States, when confronted with serious challenges, to shift responsibility on to others. That is the case with Pakistan and terrorism, which reflects an inability to recognize that this is a home-grown problem that has begun to bite the hand that fed it. We agree that terrorism has underlying causes: in this case poverty of wisdom and ignorance of consequences.

The heart of the matter is a State that regards the use of terrorism as a legitimate instrument of statecraft. The world watches with concern as its consequences have spread beyond its immediate neighbourhood. All of us stand prepared to help if only the creators of this monster wake up to the dangers of what they have done to themselves.

Mr. Kazhoyan (Armenia): It was not my intention to take the floor today, but I was forced to do so because of the accusations that were made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan.

Let me start with a quote from a favourite band of mine, Iron Maiden:

“Ever had a conversation that you realize you’ve had before? Have you ever talked to someone, and you feel you know what’s coming next? It feels pre-arranged, ‘cause you know that you’ve heard it before, and you feel that this moment in time is surreal, ‘cause you know when you feel *déjà-vu*.”

I was feeling *déjà vu* today, because it seemed that whatever I heard today I went through it a few days ago — yesterday, the day before yesterday, the other day — and it seems to be the same constant accusations. Strangely enough, a few weeks ago was the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*. Surprisingly, the statement that has been delivered at this meeting is exactly from that fairy tale. Everything was vice versa. Everything was confusing. Everything was upside down. I was wondering if that is also the case of “the best defence is good offence”. Probably that is the idea behind all these accusations.

There is probably a problem with short memory. But the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan is not too young to himself remember what happened 20 or 25 years ago — how Azerbaijan initiated the war against Armenia, against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. But it is also not surprising, because no one is left in Azerbaijan to write the truth today. Everybody is behind bars. Any free speech, any journalist, any blogger who is willing to write about the truth in Azerbaijan is immediately arrested.

Let me touch upon a couple of issues that were raised in the statement. Just before coming to New York, and I am from the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, I had a meeting with representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and discussed the issues of the possibility of finally arranging a meeting between the two countries’ committees on missing persons. Armenia has been repeating this appeal through the ICRC to Azerbaijan for the past 10 years, probably constantly. We passed on our request to the ICRC. The response is constant. Unfortunately, the Azerbaijani committee on missing persons has refused to hold the next meeting. That has been the response for the last 10 years.

With regard to militarization, I was simply surprised at the accusations of the Azerbaijani

Minister — again putting everything upside down. The Azerbaijani President's statement recently calling Armenia, including its capital, Yerevan, its own land is simply surprising and appalling. I would simply suggest that the Azerbaijani speech writers have a look at the maps — ancient maps, mediaeval maps, maps of the pre-Soviet Union times, but definitely not the ones that are drawn in Azerbaijan based on the imagination of Azerbaijani scholars, one of whom has declared even that Noah was of Azerbaijani origin. Nowhere is it acceptable, no militaristic rhetoric is acceptable and logical.

Do not frighten us with the possibility of war. It was the result of that war of Azerbaijan trying to annihilate the Armenian population that they lost. Instead of that, think about negotiations based on compromises. Azerbaijan has also probably forgotten the fact of the mujahideen and other mercenaries fighting in the Azerbaijani army against Armenia, and killing peaceful civilians.

Maybe the Azerbaijani Minister is also not aware of hundreds of its citizens fighting among fighters of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, who every now and then also appear on the Armenian border or the border of Nagorno-Karabakh. If Azerbaijan wanted peace in the region, they definitely would be willing to allow international observers along the international border and the line of contact to have an impartial body announce who is responsible for ceasefire violations. But they will not allow that. The Armenian Ministry of Defence has always confirmed its readiness to do it. That says a lot, I think.

Let me, in conclusion, paraphrase the words of the Azerbaijani speaker's statement. Nagorno-Karabakh has never been and will never be part of Azerbaijan, regardless of how many times that is repeated.

Finally, I should also like to address briefly the statement made by the representative of Turkey (see A/70/PV.19). It was mentioned that major conflicts in the greater Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe area remained unresolved, and that a Turkey was determined to continue its efforts to facilitate a peaceful resolution to those conflicts on the basis of respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and the inviolability of internationally recognized borders. What about the people's right to self-determination, I would ask? If that is the position of Turkey, I can assure the Assembly that no one can facilitate a solution based

on a one-sided, biased, predetermined or prejudged approach.

Mr. Mammadov (Azerbaijan): It is indeed regrettable that we need to take the floor at such a late hour. In fact, the slanderous statement by the representative of Armenia prompted us to take the floor. I would appreciate it if the representative of Armenia limited himself to entertaining with fairy tales, rather than trying to mislead the General Assembly here.

As for history, of course we appreciate history in our region. I should just like to remind him that, only 100 years ago, Armenia was a vibrant, multi-ethnic area where Armenians constituted a minority of 4 to 5 per cent of the population, including its now capital, Yerevan.

As for the comments on human rights, a country, half of whose population left, has no right whatsoever to speak on human rights. All major human rights activists left the country. They simply fled the country, including fleeing to Azerbaijan. Just recently one of them came to Azerbaijan.

In terms of the responsibility of Armenia, it is well established, including as noted by my Minister in the recent judgement of the European Court of Human Rights, whose jurisdiction Armenia has voluntarily accepted, and many other international organizations in addition to the United Nations, such as the Non-Aligned Movement, some declarations of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia and so on. Lastly, the President of Armenia himself admitted the fact of occupying Azerbaijan territories.

As for terrorism, Armenia is probably the only country in the world that venerates convicted terrorists, erects monuments to them and receives convicted terrorists at the highest political level, including by Prime Ministers.

Azerbaijan, contrary to what Armenia tries to present, is not against any type of investigation that brings about the truth. Azerbaijan has been pressing for a long time for an investigation into all the violations of international law, most notably war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes against peace. That is something in the interests of Azerbaijan and in the interests of the international community, but not in the interests of the military junta of Armenia, which is led by war criminals. It would be in the best interests of Armenia and the people of Armenia if its Government

puts an end to aggression and engages in good-neighbourly relations with its neighbours, and thus works towards the prosperity and development of its own population and the region.

Mr. Kazhoyan (Armenia): It is difficult to argue with words that basically do not make any sense and, surprisingly, also are harassing. I would call upon the presidency to stop or interrupt meetings when the leadership of a neighbouring country, or any other country, is making some sort of incriminating accusations.

First and foremost, I should like to recall that I represent a country that is home to 12 national minorities who live happily and peacefully in Armenia. Among some of those nationalities are those who do not have their own State but who have all the rights and privileges of the citizens of Armenia; also, no Armenian national is currently residing in Azerbaijan. In Baku — a city that was populated by Armenians, Russians and Jews in the early twentieth century, where the entire oil industry was started by Armenians — is today devoid of a single Armenian. Luckily, with the collapse of the Soviet Union and the demise of the republics, Nagorno-Karabakh was able to declare its independence and became home for the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh and many Armenians who fled from the massacres in Baku, Sumqayit and Kirovabad.

The only international organization that has a real mandate to negotiate a peaceful settlement on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the Minsk Group of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The co-Chairs of the Minsk Group — Russia, France and the United States, are doing a wonderful job. They have been negotiating and mediating very hard among the parties to find a solution based on compromise and the principles of international law, which includes the interests of all parties and those of self-determination, territorial integrity and, first and foremost, the non-use of force or the threat of force.

The best solution is not to engage in counter-attacks, counter-offensives, especially in the artillery fight on the border, but to engage truly and sincerely in negotiation. That, of course, is if the opposing party is really interested in finding a solution, and not continuing its militaristic policy.

Mr. Mammadov (Azerbaijan): The second statement by the representative of Armenia is again full of distortions — or outright lies — and is contrary to the spirit of constructive debate here at the United Nations.

As for statistics, in our day they are widely available: we refer to the official statistics of Armenia. How can a country 99.9 per cent of whose population belongs to one titular nation be called multi-ethnic? It is a mono-ethnic country. While mono-ethnicity is not bad in itself, it has been achieved through ethnic cleansing. That is the point.

As for violations across the front line and the zone, Azerbaijan is for the withdrawal of all illegal armed formations from its own territories, and all foreign military forces that are unlawfully stationed in the territory of Azerbaijan. It would be more appropriate if the representative of Armenia did not misinterpret the substance of the peace process and the proposals of the co-Chairs of the Minsk Group.

The principles that the Armenian representative tried to misinterpret have nothing in common with what they are in reality, including the principle of self-determination — a famous Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe principle that clearly sets forth self-determination in conformity with the territorial integrity of States. In any case, it would be in the best Armenian interests and in the interests of the United Nations and the international community if the illegal use of force against the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan were terminated so that good-neighbourly relations in our region could become a reality.

The meeting rose at 9.55 p.m.