



# General Assembly

Seventy-fifth session

**1**<sup>st</sup> plenary meeting  
Tuesday, 15 September 2020, 3.40 p.m.  
New York

Official Records

*President:* Mr. Bozkir ..... (Turkey)

*The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.*

## Item 1 of the provisional agenda

### Opening of the session by the President of the General Assembly

**The President:** It is my great pleasure and honour to declare open the seventy-fifth regular session of the General Assembly.

## Item 2 of the provisional agenda

### Minute of silent prayer or meditation

**The President:** In accordance with rule 62 of the rules of procedure, I invite representatives to stand and observe one minute of silent prayer or meditation.

*The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silent prayer or meditation.*

### Statement by the President

**The President:** I am deeply honoured to address members for the first time as President of the General Assembly. As a national of a founding Member State, it is a privilege to hold this office for the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, and I want to thank members for entrusting me with this duty.

Next week, more Heads of State will address the general debate than ever before. The crucial high-level meetings over the coming two weeks will guide our work for the session. I am confident that their impact will not be compromised by the circumstances. The

context in which we are working serves to remind us of the necessity of the multilateral system and inspires us all to make use of the Charter of the United Nations to address our collective challenges. I will do my utmost to support and lead, with members' fruitful participation, the high-level meetings to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, a high-level plenary meeting to commemorate and promote International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and the Biodiversity Summit, in addition to the general debate.

During the seventy-fifth session, we will hold two special sessions, one on the coronavirus disease — the first special session convened to discuss a pandemic — and the second against corruption. I will also work with members to successfully implement the various mandates entrusted to me, including but not limited to the review of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, the commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the World Summit for Social Development, preparations for the fifth United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, the high-level meeting regarding water-related goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda, and the Oceans Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14, as well as the revitalization of the work of the General Assembly and Security Council reform.

As long as health conditions allow, I intend to continue physical meetings of the General Assembly, taking the necessary mitigation measures to protect the health and safety of representatives and United Nations

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staff. In our business of diplomacy, there is no substitute for meeting counterparts face-to-face to build a long-term understanding of each other's positions and forge compromise. Now, let us get to work.

I now invite the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. António Guterres, to make a statement.

**The Secretary-General:** It is a pleasure to be with representatives again for the General Assembly. Let me begin by warmly congratulating Ambassador Volkan Bozkir of Turkey on his election as the President of the General Assembly. Mr. President, you can fully count on our support and committed partnership in this common work.

This year will be a critical one in the life of our Organization. We must continue to respond to the immediate impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic by strengthening our systems and supporting the development of equitable distribution of treatments and vaccines. We must also prepare to build a strong recovery based on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change. All the while, the Assembly will continue with its work across the full range of global challenges: peace and security, disarmament, human rights, gender equality and sustainable development. I wish Ambassador Bozkir well in his efforts.

As we mark the seventy-fifth anniversary of the founding of the United Nations, it is clear that the world has high expectations of us as the main platform for multilateralism and cooperation in a rules-based international system. Ambassador Bozkir's emphasis on streamlining the agenda of the General Assembly and balancing the three pillars of our work to achieve concrete results must help meet those expectations. The nature of multilateralism is changing, and I have frequently pointed to the need for a more networked and inclusive multilateralism for the twenty-first century. I therefore welcome the President's pledge to work towards consolidating trust and cohesion among United Nations Member States, major groups of countries and other international organizations. These efforts are essential to the unity and solidarity that we need in this crucial year as we respond to the pandemic, build a strong recovery and implement the Sustainable Development Goals.

I also thank members for their support for the United Nations reform agenda and their commitment to

working closely with my Office and with the Secretariat as a whole. I look forward to working closely with them during the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly to address our shared objectives. The entire Secretariat is ready to offer all of our cooperation and support, and I wish everyone a very successful mandate.

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

### **Agenda item 141 of the provisional agenda**

#### **Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/75/344)**

**The President:** I would like, in keeping with established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/75/344, which contains a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the General Assembly in which he informs the Assembly that four Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I would like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

"A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years. The General Assembly may, nevertheless, permit such a Member to vote if it is satisfied that the failure to pay is due to conditions beyond the control of the Member."

May I therefore take it that the General Assembly takes note of the information contained in document A/75/344?

*It was so decided.*

### **Item 3 of the provisional agenda**

#### **Credentials of representatives to the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly**

##### **(a) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee**

**The President:** Rule 28 of the rules of procedure provides that the General Assembly at the beginning

of each session shall appoint, on the proposal of the President, a Credentials Committee consisting of nine members.

Accordingly, it is proposed that, for the seventy-fifth session, the Credentials Committee should consist of the following Member States: Cameroon, China, Iceland, Papua New Guinea, the Russian Federation, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Republic of Tanzania, the United States of America and Uruguay.

May I take it that the States that I have just mentioned are hereby appointed members of the Credentials Committee?

*It was so decided (decision 75/401).*

**The President:** Delegations are reminded that credentials should be submitted to the Office of Legal Affairs. Additional details are available in the information note contained in document A/INF/75/4.

Before concluding, I would like to inform delegations that the General Committee will meet tomorrow morning, Wednesday, 16 September, at 10 a.m. in the General Assembly Hall to consider the memorandum by the Secretary-General on the organization of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly, adoption of the agenda and allocation of items, issued as A/BUR/75/1.

*The meeting rose at 3.55 p.m.*