

DECLARATION ON THE COMMEMORATION OF  
THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

We, the Heads of State and Government representing the peoples of the world, have gathered on September 21, 2020, to commemorate the seventy-fifth anniversary of the United Nations. We do so with a sense of awe and deep respect for the founders who created this Organization. There is no other global organization with the legitimacy, convening power and normative impact as the United Nations. No other global organization ~~that brings~~ gives hope to so many people for a better world and can deliver the future we want. The urgency for ~~the all~~ countries ~~around the world~~ to come together, to fulfill the promise of the nations united, has rarely been greater.

Born out of the horrors of ~~a world war~~ World War II, the United Nations was established to save ~~future succeeding~~ generations from the scourge of war. Even in times of great global challenges and tension, ~~as during the Cold War~~, our Organization has catalyzed decolonization, promoted freedom, shaped norms for international development and worked to eradicate disease. The United Nations has helped mitigate dozens of conflicts, saved hundreds of thousands of lives through humanitarian action and provided millions of children with the education that every child deserves. It has worked to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the equal rights of women and men. Through its Charter, which is the cornerstone of international law, it has determined that all nations – whether large or small – should be treated with sovereign equality and with respect for their territorial integrity, political independence and the right to self-determination of peoples. It has affirmed the principles of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States and the resolution of international disputes by peaceful means in conformity with the principles of justice and international law. The achievements are many, and we owe the United Nations and its personnel much gratitude and respect, not least to those who have paid the ultimate price in the line of duty. Over the years, more than one million women and men have served under the UN flag in more than 70 peacekeeping operations. Every day, countries, citizens, private sector and ~~civic actors~~ civil society representatives use the platform provided by the United Nations to make life better for all humanity ~~and the planet~~.

However, the United Nations has had its moments of disappointment. Our world is not yet the world our founders envisaged 75 years ago. It is plagued by growing inequality, poverty, hunger, complex conflicts ~~armed conflict~~, terrorism, insecurity, climate change, and pandemics. People in different corners of the world are forced to make dangerous journeys in search of refuge and safety. The least developed countries are falling behind, and we still have not achieved complete decolonialization. All this is a call for greater action, not less. When Member States lend their will and their resources to the collective efforts of the Organization, powerful results have been seen. Through the Global Conversation launched by the Secretary-General this year, we have listened to the concerns and the aspirations of the peoples. We are here to respond.

Our challenges are interconnected and can only be addressed through reinvigorated multilateralism. As we meet, the COVID-19 pandemic continues to reverberate around our world. In a matter of weeks, the pandemic manifested itself as the largest global challenge in the history of the United Nations. It has not only caused death and serious illnesses, but also global economic recession, ~~increasing~~ increased poverty, ~~societal~~ anxiety and fear. It has put enormous pressure on ~~all of our~~ societies, ~~our~~ economies, and ~~our~~ health systems. While none of us have been left untouched, ~~the~~ persons in vulnerable situations and the most vulnerable ~~persons and nations~~ countries have been the hardest hit. The COVID-19 pandemic has reminded us in the most powerful way that we are closely interconnected and only as strong as our weakest link. Only by working together and in solidarity can we eradicate the virus and effectively tackle its consequences. Only together can we build resilience against future pandemics and other global ~~crises~~ challenges. Multilateralism is not an option but a necessity and in the national interest of each and every State. We must build back better for a more equal, more resilient and more sustainable world. The United Nations must be at the center of our efforts.

Strengthening international cooperation is in the interest of both nations and peoples. The three pillars of the United Nations – peace and security, ~~sustainable~~ development and human rights – are equally important, interrelated and interdependent. We have come far in 75 years but much more remains to be done. We have ~~all the~~ tools ~~we need~~ and now we need to use them. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is an obligation and our roadmap and its implementation a necessity for our survival. Urgent efforts are

required. Therefore, we are not here to celebrate. We are here to take action. Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter, we are here to ensure the future we want, and the United Nations we need.

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We will leave no one behind. The next ten years, which ~~has~~ have been designated as the Decade of Action, will be the most critical of our generation. It is even more important as we build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. We need a strong UN development system and effective collaboration between the United Nations and the ~~Bretton Woods Institutions~~ international financial institutions. We support the Secretary-General's efforts in this regard. We are determined to implement the 2030 Agenda in full and on time. There is no alternative. The peoples have to be at the center of all our efforts. Particular attention must be given to ~~vulnerable groups~~ persons in vulnerable situations. Humanitarian access to those in need of assistance must be granted without obstacle or delay. We are guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and international human right treaties and will ensure everyone's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We will protect our planet. Without more determined action we will continue to impoverish our planet with less biodiversity, ~~less and fewer~~ natural resources, ~~We will see~~ more environmental threats and ~~more~~ climate related ~~crises~~ challenges, including drought, desertification, food shortages, water scarcity, widespread wildfires, sea-level rise and depletion of the oceans. The time to act is now. Many countries, not least small island developing states ~~and~~, least developed countries, ~~are~~ and landlocked developing countries, are already among the most affected. We need to adapt to the circumstances and take transformative measures. We have a historic opportunity to build back better ~~from COVID-19 and~~

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~~greener.~~ We need to immediately curb greenhouse gas emissions and achieve sustainable ~~production~~ ~~and~~ consumption ~~and production~~ patterns in line with the Paris ~~agreement~~Agreement and the 2030 Agenda. This cannot wait.

We will ~~work to ensure~~promote peace and ~~security~~prevent conflicts. The ~~increase~~ ~~in~~ongoing complex ~~armed~~ conflicts must be urgently resolved through peaceful means. Rules governing the use of force must be respected. International arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament agreements and ~~structures~~their architectures need to be upheld. The United Nations must better address ~~new~~all forms and domains of threats ~~including cyberattacks~~. Terrorism is among the most critical threats to international peace and security. The diplomatic toolbox of the Charter needs to be used to its full potential, including preventative diplomacy and mediation. We call on the Secretary-General to enhance this toolbox to ~~avoid~~prevent the outbreak, escalation and recurrence of hostilities ~~on~~On land, at sea ~~or~~, in space ~~and in cyberspace~~. We fully support and promote the Secretary-General's initiative for a global ceasefire. ~~Humanitarian access to those in need must be granted without obstacle or delay in accordance with international~~International humanitarian law ~~must be fully respected~~. To build, keep and sustain peace ~~in societies emerging from conflict~~ is now one of the main responsibilities of the United Nations.

We will abide by international rules~~law~~ and ~~norms~~ensure justice. The purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law remain timeless, universal and an indispensable foundation for a more peaceful, prosperous and just world. We will abide by the international agreements we have entered ~~in to~~into and the commitments we have made. We will continue to promote respect for democracy and human rights, to enhance democratic governance and the rule of law by strengthening transparent and accountable governance and independent judicial institutions.

We will place women and girls at the center. Conflicts will not be resolved, and sustainable development not occur, without the equal and active participation of women ~~Sustainable development will not occur without the engagement of women~~ at all levels. Human rights can never be fully upheld unless they are also ~~apply to~~enjoyed by all women ~~and girls~~. Persistent gender inequalities ~~and abuse, including sexual and gender abuse and based~~ violence, have deprived us of a more just and better world. We will accelerate action to achieve ~~women's participation and~~ gender equality, women's participation, and the empowerment of women and girls in all domains.

We will build trust. Growing inequality within and among countries is jeopardizing our efforts to ensure the future we want. Inequality leads to mistrust between countries, and to peoples' mistrust in institutions of governance. It also contributes to acts of xenophobia, racism, intolerance, hate speech,

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disinformation, terrorism and violent extremism conducive to terrorism. We condemn all such acts. We will address root causes of inequalities, including violence, human rights abuses, corruption, marginalization, discrimination, poverty and exclusion, as well as lack of education and employment. It is our responsibility

~~We will promote the use of new technologies for the benefit of all. We will improve digital cooperation.~~ Digital technologies have strong potential to accelerate the profoundly transformed society. They offer unprecedented opportunities and new challenges. When realization of the 2030 Agenda. However, when improperly managed or maliciously used, they can fuel divisions within and between countries, increase insecurity, undermine human rights and exacerbate inequality. Shaping a shared vision on digital cooperation and a digital future that show the fill potential for beneficial technology usage, and addressing digital trust and security, must continue to be a priority as our world is now more than ever relying on digital tools for connectivity and social-economic prosperity. Digital technologies have a potential to accelerate the realization of the 2030 Agenda. We must ensure safe and affordable digital access for all. The United Nations can be a platform for such deliberations in partnership with relevant actors.

We will upgrade the United Nations. The world of today is very different from what it was when the United Nations was created 75 years ago. There are more countries, more people, more challenges but also more solutions. Our working methods need to keep pace and adapt. We support the ongoing reforms by the Secretary-General. They are creating a more agile ~~and~~, effective and accountable organization that can deliver better in the field and adapt to crises like the COVID-19 global challenges. We commit to instil new life in the discussions on the reform of the Security Council and continue the work to revitalize the General Assembly and strengthen the Economic and Social Council. The review of the peacebuilding architecture has our full support.

We will ensure sustainable financing. None of our aspirations will ~~be~~ realized unless there is sustainable and predicable funding of the organization. We will pay our assessed contribution in full and on time. Measures to better ensure this should be explored. ~~Implementation of the~~ We will further enhance transparency, accountability and efficient use of resources. The full and timely implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development is key for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Joint public-private financing plays a central role in our efforts to make the United Nations deliver better on its purposes.

We will boost partnerships. Today's challenges require cooperation not only across borders but also across the whole of society. We have to make the United Nations more inclusive and engage with all relevant stakeholders, including regional and sub-regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, ~~youth~~, civil society, the private sector, academia and parliamentarians, to ensure an effective response to our common challenges.

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We will listen to and work with youth. Youth is the missing piece for peace and development. As we benefitted from the foresight of the founders of the United Nations, young people today will have to live with the consequences of our action and inaction. For too long, the voices of youth have been sidelined in discussions about their future. This has to change now [through meaningful engagement with youth](#).

We will be prepared. The COVID-19 pandemic caught us off-guard. ~~It has served a wake-up call for improving our preparedness for not only health related crises but also other challenges and crises.~~ We need to [strengthen international cooperation, coordination and solidarity. It is important to](#) learn, share experiences and information ~~in order to~~ [reduce risks and](#) make our systems more resilient ~~and coordinate better in future crises.~~ While improving our global crisis prevention and response systems, there is an urgent need to accelerate the development, production and equitable global access to new ~~vaccine~~[vaccines, medicines](#) and ~~medicine~~[medical equipment](#). We applaud all healthcare and other frontline workers who put their own safety at risk when saving others. ~~We will invest wisely in, and pledge to put~~ the ~~safety of us all,~~[people at the center of our response.](#)

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What we agree today, will affect the sustainability of our planet as well the welfare of generations for decades to come. Through reinvigorated global action and [by](#) building on the progress achieved in the last 75 years, we are determined to ensure the future we want. To achieve this, we will mobilize resources, strengthen our efforts and show unprecedented political will and leadership. We will work together with partners to strengthen coordination and global governance for the common good of present and future generations.

We request the Secretary-General to report back before the end of the seventy-fifth session of the General Assembly with recommendations to advance our common agenda and to respond to current and future challenges. We commit to take this declaration to our citizens, in the true spirit of We the Peoples.

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