

[At UN Assembly, Turkmenistan stresses importance for greater global cooperation](#)

25 September 2017 – Speaking at the 72nd annual debate at the United Nations General Assembly, Turkmenistan highlighted its efforts to implement the [2030 Agenda](#) and the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) and called for greater cooperation to address the challenges before the globe.

In her address, Aksoltan Ataeva, the Chair of the Delegation of Turkmenistan, noted the importance of transport connectivity and cooperation for the achievement of the global development goals and informed the Assembly of the global conference on sustainable transport held in the country last November.

Also in her remarks, Ms. Ataeva noted the establishment of a training centre in the country to strengthen capacity in relation to the implementation of the [SDGs](#). She also underscored the importance of energy security and in ensuring fair access to energy, including as part of the 2030 Agenda.

She also highlighted the importance of sports as a driver of peace, understanding and human rights, and in that context, recalled the participation of the Refugee Olympic Team at the Rio Olympics 2016.

Further in her address the head of the delegation of Turkmenistan noted the challenges posed by terrorism to all countries around the globe and, welcoming the role played by the UN in combatting the scourge, expressed her support for reforms at the Organization, including review of the method of its work and to react to threats in the modern world.

[Full statement \(in Russian\) available here](#)

[Parties to Afghan conflict show renewed interest in political engagement, UN envoy says](#)

25 September 2017 – Although efforts over the past few years to reach a political solution to the Afghan conflict have led to little progress, the top United Nations envoy in the country today reported a renewed interest in political engagements for peace.

“I am convinced that a political settlement is possible,” Tadamichi Yamamoto,

the Secretary-General's Special Representative for Afghanistan, [told](#) the UN Security Council in his latest briefing, citing progress, still daunting challenges, and opportunities for political engagement.

"We should not let another fighting season begin without progress towards substantive negotiations. Opportunities will be lost, with the cost paid in thousands of Afghan lives and at tremendous financial cost.

"I appeal to the countries in the region to conduct a profound reassessment of their strategic interest and renew work towards a viable peace process leading to an Afghan-owned solution to the conflict. If requested, the United Nations stands ready to assist all parties to achieve this goal."

Mr. Yamamoto said the United States announcement in August of a continuing, conditions-based commitment has removed some uncertainties, while regional countries and key States are actively seeking to promote regional engagements for peace, adding that preparations leading to a peace process are complex and efforts must be pragmatic and flexible.

"The security situation continues to be a major concern," he stressed, citing the persistence of the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL or Da'esh) in the east of the country, with new Da'esh activity reported in the north as well as in Kabul, the capital, making the situation more complex.

"The human cost of this violence is high, disproportionately impacting women and children," he said, noting that current Afghan security planning foresees that by 2020 Afghan forces will reach sufficient strength to reverse recent Taliban gains, while the Taliban continue to resist appeals to negotiate with the Afghan Government.

At the current rate of deaths due to conflict, by 2020 tens of thousands more Afghans will have been killed.

Mr. Yamamoto, who also heads the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan ([UNAMA](#)), reported some progress on key reforms, with the battle against corruption beginning to bear results after many years in which this debilitating issue was ignored.

There has also been progress on the organization of parliamentary and district council elections scheduled for next July. "It is imperative that we hold the elections according to the plan," he stated, noting that timely elections will enhance the credibility of the political system.

[**Uruguay joins other nations addressing**](#)

[General Assembly in calling for stronger, more flexible UN](#)

25 September 2017 – In his speech to the General Assembly’s annual general debate, Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Foreign Minister of Uruguay, said strengthened international coordination bodies are needed more than ever, urging respect for the principle of sovereignty.

“The United Nations must become stronger,” and the General Assembly must gain greater prominence, he said. He noted that Uruguay’s foreign policy is based on the pillars of democracy, human rights, the defence of international law, and pursuit of peace. Such principles retained prominence despite the changes of political power in the country, he said, underscoring Uruguay’s commitment to making its voice heard on the international stage.

More broadly, he noted that unprecedented violence, arms proliferation, and the increase in terrorism, cyberattacks, hunger and climate change require a strong commitment from the international community. Today, millions are affected by armed conflict, with hundreds of thousands killed and millions displaced. “We should not get used to standing idly by,” he stressed.

He urged all countries to increase efforts to combat human trafficking, and ensure development and social growth, citing inequality and the persistence of international forces as drivers of those threats. He expressed support for the [2030 Agenda](#) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, noting that Uruguay had recently presented its Voluntary National Report to the Economic and Social Council’s High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development.

[Full statement \(in Spanish\) available here](#)

[With annual general debate over, time has come for action, UN Assembly President says](#)

25 September 2017 – The United Nations General Assembly wrapped up its 72nd annual general debate today, with its President underscoring prevention of conflicts before they break out, support for UN peacekeeping, sustainable development, and respect for human rights and gender equality among the major priorities raised by the 196 Heads of State, Government and delegations.

“You reaffirmed your commitment to the UN. And to each other. You said we are stronger together, in a system based on dialogue and multilateralism,”

President Miroslav Lajčák declared in the vaulted Assembly Hall before the golden column with the UN logo of a world globe, which served as the backdrop for all 196 speakers.

“And you stressed that any alternative would risk repeating the mistakes of history,” he added, while noting that not all the messages delivered were positive, with many criticizing other countries or the UN.

“But that is part of the package. It is your right to do this. And regardless of size, or population, or economy, all delegations have access to the same platform, for the same amount of time. They can speak freely, without censorship,” he said, summing up the main thrust of the debate whose theme was ‘Focusing on People – Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet.’

“We addressed many challenges over the past week. You talked about their impact on the countries of the world. Importantly, you also talked about their impact on people. We heard about people running from gunshots – or the force of exploding bombs. People living for a week on the same amount some of us spend on a cup of coffee,” he said.

“People forced to make the decision between risking their lives to stay, or risking their lives to flee. People wondering when the next hurricane will hit, or if their village will be under water in a few decades. People who are beginning to lose – or have already lost– hope in international peace processes. And people still waiting for justice and human rights to become a part of their daily reality.”

Turning to the work that lies ahead for the Assembly’s 72nd Session, Mr. Lajčák cited several milestones, including the high-level event on Sustaining Peace, in April, the adoption of Global Compacts related to Migrants and Refugees next September, and the High-level meeting on human trafficking this week.

New lab will boost UN efforts to keep harmful insects at bay

25 September 2017 – The United Nations International Atomic Energy Agency ([IAEA](#)) today opened the doors of a new laboratory to help countries use a nuclear technique to keep harmful insects, such as mosquitoes and fruit flies, at bay.

The modern Insect Pest Control Laboratory (IPCL), located in Seibersdorf, Austria, will boost the Agency’s ability to assist Member States in applying the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) to combat insect pests that spread disease and damage crops.

“With new and modern facilities, the IPCL will in future be able to do even more to help Member States control insect pests that endanger our crops, our livestock and our health,” IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano [said](#) during the [inauguration ceremony](#).

The environmentally-safe SIT, a form of insect birth control, uses radiation to sterilize male insects, which are reared in large numbers and released in a target area to mate with wild females. Since they do not produce any offspring, the pest population is reduced over time, according to the Agency.

Along with additional space to train experts to support the transfer of SIT to countries, the new lab will facilitate research on the application of the technique for different insects, including mosquitos that transmit malaria, Zika and other diseases.

“The IPCL offers a very tangible example of the enormous practical benefits of nuclear science and technology,” noted Mr. Amano.



From left to right, FAO’s Ren Wang, Ambassadors Friedrich Däuble (Germany), Christine Stix-Hackl (Austria), IAEA’s Yukiya Amano, Ambassadors Darmansjah Djumala (Indonesia), and Tebogo Seokolo (South Africa), at the inauguration of new IAEA/FAO Insect Pest Control Laboratory in Seibersdorf, Austria.
Photo: S. Gas/IAEA

Earlier this year, the IAEA, in partnership with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization ([FAO](#)), assisted the Dominican Republic in using SIT to eradicate an outbreak of the Mediterranean fruit fly – one of the most damaging agricultural pests in the world that attacks several types of fruits and vegetables.

Thanks to this assistance, the country was able to eradicate the fly within two years, and to regain access to export markets worth \$42 million a year.