

Fight against drugs and crime aims to protect law-abiding people, Philippines tells UN

23 September 2017 – The Philippines' battle against corruption, crime and illegal drugs seeks to protect the human rights of peaceful law-abiding people, the country's top foreign affairs official said today at the United Nations General Assembly.

"The Philippines integrates the human rights agenda in its development initiatives for the purpose of protecting everyone, especially the most vulnerable, from lawlessness, violence, and anarchy," said Secretary for Foreign Affairs Alan Peter Cayetano during the annual high-level debate.

He said that the very principle of 'responsibility to protect' must encompass the vast majority of peaceful law-abiding people who must be protected from those who are not.

As a responsible leader, the country's President, Rodrigo Roa Duterte, launched a vigorous campaign against the illegal drug trade "to save lives, preserve families, protect communities and stop the country's slide into a narco-state," Mr. Cayetano said, adding that the campaign was never an instrument to violate any individual's or group's human rights.

As of August 2017, the drug trade had penetrated at least 24,848 barangays. This is 59 per cent of the total of 42,036 of the smallest government units spanning the country's archipelago.

The Philippines have also discovered the intimate and symbiotic relationship between terrorism vis-à-vis poverty and the illegal drug trade, Mr. Cayetano said.

These terrorists were somehow able to bring together an assortment of extremists, criminals, mercenaries and foreign fighters who attempted to take control of Marawi. The national armed forces will regain full control of Marawi from Islamic State-inspired terrorists.

On regionalism, he said, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, has overcome the divisions, fears, and hostilities of the past, forging regional cooperation in promoting growth, development, and peaceful settlement of disputes.

[Full statement available here](#)

[In a globalized world, 'we must live in each other's shelter, not shadow,' Ireland tells UN](#)

23 September 2017 – Expressing his faith in the United Nations and its commitment to responding to challenges such as the disasters presently plaguing Latin America and the Caribbean, Denis Naughton, Minister for Environment of Ireland, said that and other issues require the UN to “move from debate to action.”

Strong partnerships, he told the General Assembly, would remain at the core of Ireland's approach in working together for a peaceful and prosperous future, and he stressed that as international issues – from climate change to migration – increasingly intersect, “there are not unilateral solutions to these problems.”

The key to tackling global issues collaboratively, he continued, lies in the [2030 Agenda](#) and its attendant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which together have the power and potential to transform the world.

Turning to efforts to reduce threats of violence and nuclear weapons, Mr. Naughton said Ireland unreservedly condemns the series of missile tests by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), urging the country to de-escalate the conflict between the DPRK and the United States.

Part of peacekeeping means providing humanitarian assistance and contributing to international efforts, Conveney said, and explained how investing in youth will ensure a sustainable future. “We have a phrase in Irish [...] which, broadly translated, states “praise the youth and they will come.”

He highlighted the prominence of this statement, particularly relevant to Africa, and expressed commitment to building a partnership with that continent, as well as pursuing other international relationships.

Mr. Naughton concluded his speech with a message on coexistence: “In today's globalized world we must live in each other's shelter, not shadow.”

[Full statement available here](#)

['To deny climate change is to deny a](#)

truth we have just lived' says Prime Minister of storm-hit Dominica

23 September 2017 – Pleading with all countries in the United Nations General Assembly – large and small, rich and poor – to come together to save our planet, the Prime Minister of Dominica, where the landscape, ravaged by back-to-back hurricanes “resembles a warzone,” said his and other islands in the Caribbean need help now to build their homelands back better.

“I come to you straight from the front line of the war on climate change,” Roosevelt Skerrit said in an emotional address to the General Assembly’s annual general debate. But he had made the difficult journey from his storm-battered country “because these are the moments for which the United Nations exists!”

Just two years after powerful tropical storm Erika had ripped through the region – leaving his country, known as ‘nature island’ a land of dirt and dust – he said Dominica, the Bahamas and others had been ravaged by perhaps the worst hurricane season on record, with Irma and Maria leaving loss of lives and livelihoods, and as yet untold damage.

Mr. Skerrit said that warmer air and sea temperatures have permanently altered the climate between the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn. Heat is the fuel that takes ordinary storms – “storms we could normally master in our sleep – and supercharges them into a devastating force.

The most unfortunate reality, he said, is that there is little time left to reverse damages and rectify this trajectory. “We need action and we need it now,” he said.

“The stars have fallen, Eden is broken. The nation of Dominica has come to declare an international humanitarian emergency.”

He concluded by urging ownership and responsibility for perpetuating harm that desperately begs attention: “Let it spark a thousand points of light, not shame.”

[Full statement available here](#)



Darren Allen Henfield, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, addresses the general debate of the General Assembly’s seventy-second session. UN Photo/Cia Pak

In an equally impassioned address, Darren Allen Henfield, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bahamas, expressed his concern with the effects of environmental degradation and climate change on small island developing States, which are “threatening their survivability.”

“With what we have witnessed just recently with the passage of hurricanes Harvey, Irma and now Maria, I cannot underscore sufficiently the importance the Bahamas attaches to combating climate change, and the preservation and protection of the environment,” he said.

Stressing that “climate change is global,” he emphasised the damage that hurricane Irma had in the Bahamian archipelago. Indeed, while the Bahamas had not suffered a direct hit, it was not totally spared. The southern islands experienced serious damage. Additionally, tornadoes inflicted considerable damage on the northern islands of Bimini and Grand Bahama.

Highlighting the election of a new Government for his country the past May, the Minister spoke on its intention of creating the first fully green island in the region, out of the destruction of Ragged Island, which became uninhabitable.

“For the first time in its history, The Bahamas evacuated whole communities to safe quadrants ahead of Hurricane Irma. What’s next: wholesale evacuation of the entire Caribbean?” he asked, calling on the international community to act fast and in a co-ordinated way.

In his address, the Foreign Minister also highlighted the “need to re-evaluate of the measurements used to determine economic well-being” in the country, to allow them to receive development assistant.

[Full statement available here](#)

Djibouti tells General Assembly a reformed UN central to confronting global challenges is needed

23 September 2017 – A reformed United Nations with increased resources must be at the heart of efforts to confront the host of crises threatening the world, from climate change and economic stagnation to stimulating development and combatting terrorism, Djibouti told the General Assembly today.

“All these challenges underline the crucial sustained and resolute collective action in order to confront them,” Djibouti’s Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Youssef told the Assembly’s 72nd annual general debate. “We must mobilize ourselves anew to give new life to multilateralism and emphasize the central place of the UN.

“The task is immense, the responsibility heavy. These challenges demand ambitious reforms and additional resources,” he added, focussing in three key areas – fulfilment of the [2030 Agenda](#) and the Sustainable Development Goals

([SDGs](#)), management reform, and a reformed 'architecture' that enhances the efficiency of the Organization's peace and stability missions.

Conflict is the major obstacle to economic development with enormous costs, including forced displacement, famine, the rise of communicable diseases, acute food insecurity and the rapid deterioration of respect for human rights, he said.

"Our Organization, more than ever, has an increased role to play in the prevention of conflicts and the resolution of differences," he added.

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

[Global challenges 'a litmus test' for leadership, Nepal Prime Minister tells UN Assembly](#)

23 September 2017 – Noting that amid a complex and polarized environment, the global community faces challenges that include terrorism, climate change and mass migration, the Prime Minister of Nepal called for a greater display of wisdom, knowledge and capacity to address pressing issues.

"As we embark upon a path of implementing the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development, [the] challenges are the litmus tests for our leadership," said Sher Bahadur Deuba, the Prime Minister of Nepal, addressing the 72nd annual general debate at the United Nations General Assembly.

Recalling his country's contributions to UN peacekeeping efforts around the world, he said that troop and police contributing countries must be given fair opportunities to serve in leadership positions both in the field and at headquarters. Also on peacekeeping, he stressed the protection of civilians must be prioritized and that the UN must move "from zero tolerance to zero case scenario" on sexual exploitation and abuse.

Also in his address, the Nepali leader urged for greater security for migrants and, in the context of increasing frequency and destruction by natural disasters, called for greater cooperation and coordination in prevention, mitigation and recover efforts.

He also spoke of his country's commitment to human rights, noting that Nepal's Constitution bans death penalty in all circumstances. He also spoke of strengthening of the country's human rights commission as well as protection of the rights of women and other disadvantaged sections of the society.

Prime Minister Deuba also highlighted the recent local elections in his country – the first in 20 years –and said that preparations are underway to hold provincial and federal elections.

Also in his address, he deplored the actions of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) which he referred to as the "continued defiance" by it of repeated calls by the Security Council and the international community, and urged it abide by all relevant Council resolutions.

[Full statement available here](#)