

With world at epic crossroads, UN seems like it's on 'silent' mode, Jordan tells Assembly

21 September 2017 – While the United Nations is “our global conscience,” Al Hussein Bin Abdullah II, Crown Prince of Jordan, said today that for too many in his country and elsewhere trying to do good, it sometimes feels like the world’s conscience is on ‘silent’ mode.

“It’s time to break the silence and start finding answers. In doing so, we can unleash a global current that carries our common humanity to safer shores,” said the 23-year-old Crown Prince, addressing the General Assembly two years after he chaired a Security Council meeting which adopted an historic resolution on ‘youth, peace and security,’ aimed at empowering young people to participate in peace efforts.

“Today, I stand before you [...] as a member of the largest generation of young people in history [with] the world at an epic intersection, driven by the confluence of deepened globalization and disruptive technologies,” he said, and amid such seismic changes, young people are asking, among other questions: In which direction does our collective moral compass point, and can it guide us safely to justice, prosperity and peace for all?

Drawing on the experience of his own country to explore those issues, he noted that Jordan has been affected by border conflicts, as well as by the global financial crisis and the energy crisis. Speaking about the direct cost of the Syria crisis on his country, which has been hosting 1.3 million Syrian refugees, he said that crisis is now consuming more than a quarter of the Jordan’s budget.

“Housing, food, energy, healthcare, education, jobs: all are under pressure,” he added, underlining that the country is not turning its back on people in need, but needs answers for its youth.

“How can it be that a country as small as ours struggles in the face of such crushing adversity, only to be told that its friends are suffering from donor fatigue? Financial institutions often remind us that on a per capita basis, we are a top recipient of aid. Yet, on a per capita basis, few countries have endured as many external shocks or contributed to global peace and security as Jordan has,” he said.

The sad reality is that war economies are thriving to the benefit of a few, while real economies are suffering to the detriment of all. “It just doesn’t add up,” he said, calling on the international community to start asking tough questions, work harder to involve young people in finding the answers to bolster the values that anchor global citizenship today.

[Full statement available here](#)

[Iraq: Security Council voices concern over planned referendum in Kurdistan Region](#)

21 September 2017 – The United Nations Security Council today expressed concern over the “potentially destabilizing impact” of the Kurdistan Regional Government’s plans to unilaterally hold a referendum next week.

In a [statement](#) issued to the press, members of the Council noted that the planned referendum is scheduled to be held while operations to counter Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da’esh) – in which Kurdish forces have played a critical role – are ongoing.

The referendum “could detract from efforts to ensure the safe, voluntary return of over three million refugees and internally displaced persons,” the 15-member body added.

[Secretary-General](#) António Guterres earlier this week voiced similar concerns about the timing of the vote in a [statement](#) issued by his Spokesman, which noted that all outstanding issues between the federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government should be resolved through structured dialogue and constructive compromise.

“The Secretary-General calls upon the leaders across Iraq to approach this matter with patience and restraint. The United Nations stands ready to support such efforts.”

[The world needs ‘a true global partnership,’ Indonesia’s Vice-President tells UN Assembly](#)

21 September 2017 – At the United Nations General Assembly today, Muhammad Jusuf Kalla, the Vice-President of Indonesia, underscored three points to achieve ‘Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet,’ the theme of the 72nd session.

Stating that “peace is never a given,” Mr. Kalla explained that it must be developed and nurtured through dialogue, inclusiveness, peaceful settlement of disputes, and non-use of force. “More importantly, we must develop the UN

as a robust global institution that emphasizes the maintenance of peace, security and stability,” he said, expressing Indonesia’s support for UN reform.

Secondly, the Vice-President pointed out the need for synergies between sustaining peace and the development agenda – stressing that peace and stability must be cultivated to achieve sustainable development. Mr. Kalla noted the Sustainable Development Goals and the [Paris Agreement](#) as among agreed-upon global commitments that must be translated into concrete actions.

The urgent need for a global action plan and partnership to combat terrorism, radicalism and violent extremism was another of his main points. He maintained that root causes must be tackled, citing extreme poverty, illiteracy and massive youth unemployment. Through a combination of “hard” and “soft” power, strengthening the rule of law and fostering community engagement, Mr. Kalla asserted, “we have de-radicalized over one thousand six hundred extremists, in over 72 prisons in Indonesia.”

As global challenges become more complex, it is evident that unilateralism is not a sustainable solution. “The world needs strong partnership [...] A true global partnership,” Mr. Kalla concluded.

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

Russia’s Lavrov backs US view on primacy of sovereignty in international relations

21 September 2017 – Russian Foreign Minister Sergey V. Lavrov endorsed at the United Nations General Assembly today United States President Donald Trump’s affirmation of the primacy of national sovereignty in international affairs.

“The world keeps changing,” he told the 72nd annual general debate, citing last December’s Assembly resolution on the ‘promotion of a democratic and equitable international order,’ which deemed unacceptable interference in the internal affairs of sovereign States, which the US under former President Barak Obama voted against.

“It is gratifying to note, as the US President Donald Trump unequivocally stated from this podium Tuesday, that it is important to comply with the principles of sovereignty in the international affairs; it is necessary to ensure leadership by example and not impose one’s will on other nations,” he said.

“I believe that anyone can sign under these words, especially, if the US

foreign policy is conducted precisely on this basis. Sovereignty, refraining from interference into internal affairs, equality of people and mutual respect – Russia has always adhered to these principles and will continue to uphold them,” Mr. Lavrov underscored.

He lamented that Russia’s Western partners have not reciprocated Moscow’s good-faith efforts to eliminate the legacy of the Cold War, and have instead chosen “the path of reckless eastward NATO expansion and provoking instability in the post-Soviet space and encouraging anti-Russian sentiments. This policy is precisely the root cause of the protracted conflict in South-Eastern Ukraine,” he added.

Turning to the crisis over the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea’s (DPRK) nuclear programme, Mr. Lavrov said Russia resolutely condemns “the nuclear missile adventures of Pyongyang in violation of the UN Security Council resolutions. “However, the build-up of military hysteria is not only a dead-end but also deadly,” he stated. “It goes without saying that all UN Security Council resolutions must be implemented. But all of them, along with sanctions, contain provisions on the need to resume talks.”

[Full statement available here](#)

Sustained engagement vital to address immense humanitarian needs in Syria – UN official

21 September 2017 – Sustained international attention and engagement is vital as the Syrian conflict moves into its seventh year and the suffering of civilians shows no signs of waning, a top United Nations official said today.

“Life-saving humanitarian needs remain enormous and the delivery of assistance through the most direct routes remains critical,” Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Mark Lowcock [told](#) the High-level Meeting on Syria, held in the margins of the General Assembly.

Mr. Lowcock, who is also UN Emergency Relief Coordinator, reported that de-escalation has resulted in calm in some parts of the country. But an increase in operations in the east to combat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL/Da’esh) has caused fresh suffering and displacement.

“From Raqqa, to Idleb, to Deir ez-Zor, civilians continue to face serious protection concerns as fighting and access constraints continue. This year alone, another one million people have been internally displaced,” he stated, adding that all parties to the fighting must be pressured to respect international humanitarian law.

In April in Brussels, some \$6 billion was pledged by over 40 governments for the humanitarian response this year, with a further \$3.7 billion pledged for 2018.

“There was also a clear agreement that the civilians whose lives have been destroyed by years of conflict must remain at the forefront of the international community’s agenda,” said Mr. Lowcock.

“That was expressed by voicing unconditional support to meet humanitarian needs inside Syria and the region; and by highlighting the importance of support for early recovery and resilience-building for displaced Syrians and their hosts.”

Mr. Lowcock stressed the need for all pledges to UN-coordinated appeals for Syria and the region turned into contributions, noting that the humanitarian response plan for inside Syria is only 36 per cent funded, while the regional refugee and resilience plan just 39 per cent funded.

“We can and we must do better for the Syrian people,” he stated. “Ultimately of course, the only sustainable way to address the humanitarian crisis is to end the conflict through a credible political agreement.”

Among the other participants at the meeting were the UN Special Envoy for Syria Staffan de Mistura and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi.