

[‘We bear responsibility for a fruitful future,’ says Argentine leader at UN Assembly](#)

20 September 2017 – Addressing the 72nd annual general debate at the United Nations General Assembly, the Vice-President of Argentina, Gabriela Michetti, set out her vision for the future, expressed her passion for human rights and hope for a prosperous global society.

“A natural disposition to unify,” and “an ability to envision the long-term,” are vital attributes in sustaining an inclusive society, she explained.

Ms. Michetti acknowledged this is a time of much conflict, but this does not come without ample chances for improvement. She said: “The historical time we live in is full of challenges and opportunities.”

Speaking for her country, she said Argentina reaffirms its will to become more globally integrated through building bridges with the international community.

This commitment, she said, is reflected in the plans for Argentina to be the host of the eleventh World Trade Organization ([WTO](#)) Ministerial Conference in December.

Detailing more efforts to improve and expand cross-cultural relationships, the Vice-President underscored the importance in addressing the long-standing dispute between Argentina and the United Kingdom.

In conclusion, Ms. Michetti expressed that the international community carries an “enormous responsibility to sow a fruitful future.”

“Our society should be, without a doubt, a work of love. Because justice and the search for the common good are a manifestation of love in the public sphere.”

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

[Time to translate nuclear test moratorium into legally binding](#)

obligation – UN chief

20 September 2017 – [Secretary-General](#) António Guterres today expressed the readiness of the United Nations to help bring into force the global treaty banning nuclear tests, adopted more than 20 years ago, while noting that the “destabilizing and provocative” actions by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) seek to undermine the global norm against nuclear explosions.

“If there is something I take very seriously it is the fact that, as Secretary-General, I am the depository of the Comprehensive-Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT),” said Mr. Guterres in his [remarks](#) to a biennial conference on facilitating the Treaty’s entry into force, held at UN Headquarters in New York.

“A CTBT that is in force would be a milestone on the road to a world free of nuclear weapons. It has the potential to prevent a nuclear arms race and an escalation of regional and bilateral tensions,” he added.

Since its adoption in 1996, 183 States have signed the Treaty and 166 States have ratified it.

However, for the Treaty to enter into force, it must be ratified by all the 44 States that formally participated in the 1996 session of the Conference on Disarmament and possessed nuclear power or research reactors at the time.

If we want to eliminate the risk of nuclear attacks, we need to stop nuclear testing. If we want to stop nuclear testing, we need a legally binding instrument.

Of the 44 States, China, Iran, United States, Egypt and Israel have signed the treaty but not yet ratified it. DPRK, India and Pakistan have not signed it.

Mr. Guterres noted that for almost 20 years, with the sole exception of the DPRK, all countries possessing nuclear weapons have helped to create a global culture against nuclear testing through their voluntary unilateral moratoria.

“Sadly and dangerously, the destabilizing and provocative actions by the DPRK seek to undermine this norm – and along with it, global stability,” he said, reiterating that it is time to translate this shared norm into a legally binding obligation.

Also addressing the meeting, General Assembly President Miroslav Lajčák [said](#) that when the CTBT enters into force, a complete halt to all nuclear testing will be in even clearer sight.

“Make no mistake: we need this Treaty,” he stated.

“If we want to eliminate the risk of nuclear attacks, we need to stop nuclear

testing. If we want to stop nuclear testing, we need a legally binding instrument. And if we want an instrument, we need political will to achieve it.”

[UN rights chief urges all States to outlaw discrimination against LGBTI people](#)

20 September 2017 – While many governments are moving in the right direction, too many are falling short when it comes to protecting the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people, the United Nations human rights chief said today, urging all States to outlaw discrimination against this community.

Speaking at a ministerial event during the General Assembly’s high-level session, High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al Hussein said that he understood that in many parts of the world this is a difficult topic to broach.

“When pressed, officials sometimes tell me their hands are tied: the public, they say, will never accept equality for LGBTI people. But surely this is back to front. If public opinion is hostile towards LGBTI people, that makes it all the more urgent for governments to act to protect them,” he said.

Reports by his Office ([OHCHR](#)) frequently reveal “a landscape of brutal violence and widespread discrimination, fuelled by negative public attitudes and in many cases actively sanctioned by the State,” the High Commissioner noted.

“We ask all governments to allow individuals to love whom they choose, to outlaw discrimination, tackle hate crimes and the bullying so frequent in schools, and to protect intersex children from harm – including by banning medically unnecessary surgery on intersex infants. The onus has to be on governments to protect and respect rights – and explain to the public why these measures are needed,” he added.

While gay and lesbian people – and to a lesser extent trans people – have seen huge gains over the past 20 years, many of those gains are fragile and face backlash, stated High Commissioner Zeid.

“As always, when rights are rolled back, it’s minorities that are most exposed – immigrants, religious minorities, racial minorities and, of course, lesbian, gay, bi, trans and intersex people. Invariably, those who lose the most are those who have the least to begin with – the least power, money and public support,” he said.

He stressed that governments alone cannot end discrimination and called on all – the media, schools, faith leaders, the business community – to stand up for the human rights of LGBTI people.

Next week the High Commissioner will be launching a new set of global standards, developed by his Office, which highlight the actions that businesses can and should take to end discrimination against LGBTI people, in the workplace and beyond.

“We must push forward and overcome the obstacles to equality – in workplaces, schools, the law-courts and the streets. The time for justice is now.”

[A more flexible UN can have real, positive impact on the ground, Latvia tells Assembly](#)

20 September 2017 – The President of Latvia, Raimonds Vejonis, told the General Assembly today that while the United Nations remains the central forum for multilateralism and a rules-based global order, if the Organization is more transparent and flexible it could “bring positive, real influence to people on the ground.”

Mr. Vejonis noted that for people to fully realize their potential, they need a stable and secure environment – adding that UN resources often go to managing and responding to crises, instead of preventing them. He emphasized that conflict prevention must be at the core of UN action, saying “saving human lives and upholding human dignity must be our common priority.”

He expressed Latvia’s deep concern over nuclear proliferation, strongly condemning all nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches by Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. While saying that a peaceful and diplomatic solution to this situation is a “a priority,” he noted that in the meantime, “all States must fully implement relevant UN Security Council resolutions.” Mr. Vejonis also reiterated Latvia’s call for “long overdue” Council reform and encouraged “especially the veto-wielding members” to move beyond their domestic interests to address global challenges.

He spoke about the rules-based security order in Europe, underscoring the territorial integrity of independent States, and calling Russia’s “unprovoked aggression against its neighbours” a serious breach of international security rules.

The Latvian President concluded by underscoring that all Member States must work together to ensure that the UN adapt to a changing global environment, focus on priorities and deliver results.

[Full statement available here](#)

UN must reform, 'win our trust' by proving it can deliver, UK leader tells General Assembly

20 September 2017 – The world is currently facing a raft of challenges “that test who we are,” the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom told the General Assembly, noting that while many, such terrorism – which struck her country five times this year – did not recognize international borders, they could be addressed by a strong, agile United Nations that upholds global order and values.

Addressing the United Nations General Assembly’s annual general debate, Theresa May noted that climate change is degrading and depleting the planet, and millions were fleeing their homes in search of a better life. Moreover, there are massive inequalities around the world and weaknesses in the global trading system, both of which are pushing some countries towards protectionism.

“As the global system struggles to adapt, some countries are deliberately flouting international rules,” she said, citing the “unforgivable use of chemical weapons by the Syrian regime,” and the threat of nuclear weapons use by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

Calling on countries to defend the international order and the values of fairness, justice and human rights underpinning the multilateral system – including through agreements such as the Paris Accord and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty – she said the international system, with the United Nations at its heart, is the “amplifying force” for those values.

Indeed, “we have to strive harder” to defend and reform the UN, she stressed, and those who flouted the rules and spirit of the Organization must be held to account. Noting that the United Kingdom had long supported the UN, she nevertheless said the Organization suffers from a gap between its purposes and their delivery.

“Member States must embark on the Secretary General’s reform agenda,” she said, calling for better cooperation, improved gender equality and reduced competition on the ground. As an outward-looking, “global Britain” – and the world’s second largest donor – the United Kingdom would continue to support the Organization.

However, said stated: “The UN and its agencies must win our trust” by proving they can deliver. In that regard, the UK would now set aside 30 per cent of

its funding, to be paid only to those parts of the UN that achieve sufficient results.