

Europe should make voice 'more heard' in today's 'dangerous world,' says UN chief

In an increasingly dangerous world, the European Union (EU) need to make its voice "more and more heard" as a "central pillar" of multilateralism, said the United Nations Secretary-General on Wednesday.

Speaking in the heart of the EU, in Brussels, António Guterres told reporters that climate change, a multiplication of conflicts and the global non-proliferation regime, were challenging all multilateral institutions, and the system of international law.

"We live in a dangerous world. For the first time in many decades, the non-proliferation regime both in relation to nuclear weapons and in relation to chemical weapons are put into question," Mr. Guterres said at a joint press conference with European Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker in Brussels, Belgium.

He flagged that the Cold War was back, but without the mechanisms of dialogue, contact and control that existed in relations between the West and the Soviet Union, to ensure "that things not spiral out of control".

"We have a multiplication of conflicts everywhere, more and more interlinked with each other and linked to a global threat of terrorism that we feel can strike anywhere in the world," he continued.

The UN chief cited climate change as another challenge, saying said that while globalization has brought enormous benefits it has also "dramatically" increased inequalities and impacted the security of the world.

"In this dangerous world, it is absolutely essential to preserve two things: Multilateral governance institutions and the rule of law in international relations," he underscored.

Emphasizing Europe's crucial role in this, the Secretary-General appealed to the EU "to be more and more united, more and more effective, more and more present and for its voice to be more and more heard in international relations as a central pillar of multilateralism in today's world."

He concluded by saying that the UN supports EU efforts "to rescue" the Iran nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, from which the United States withdrew last week, as well as other efforts "to create conditions for a world in which peace, security, sustainable development and climate action are in the frontline of its activities and our common cooperation."