

# Global Goals promise to ‘leave no one behind’ warrants special attention for middle-income countries, Belarusian minister tells UN Assembly

In spite of the criticism levelled against the United Nations, there is no other such platform for cooperation or a multilateral mechanism based on “equal and respectful attitude towards each and every country and their needs,” the foreign minister of Belarus told the General Assembly.

“The search for answers to global challenges, the quest for ways to address common objectives clearly points out the following – no country can solve them alone,” asserted Vladimir Makei, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the land-locked eastern European nation.

“Individual headway is impossible without collective progress.”

In his address, Minister Makei also underlined the unique position of middle-income countries when it comes to implementing the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#) – adopted by UN Member States, in 2015 – noting that while they offer the greatest potential for economic growth and are home to nearly three-quarters of the global population, middle-income countries also account for an overwhelming majority of the world’s poor.

This group of countries, he continued, are also the most vulnerable to global economic fluctuations, effects of conflicts, natural and man-made catastrophes, impact of climate change and epidemics, “which all combine to threaten social and economic stability and widen inequality.”

Further in his address, the Belarusian Minister underlined urgency of bring to an immediate end the “unwinding spiral” of geopolitical chaos that has plagued the international community over the past three decades.

To that end, he called for States retaining their role as the primary international actors and that ensuring the respect for State sovereignty; strengthening the State and its role in domestic affairs; and a willingness among States to dialogue, listen to arguments and embracing reasonable compromises.

“We are convinced that only dialogue can help resolve the deep crisis of trust in international relations and produce mechanisms conducive to peace and International security, as well as to sustainable development,” he concluded.

[Full statement available here.](#)

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## At UN, Somali Minister outlines country's ongoing transformation; urges new partnerships

Even though Somalia has made “huge strides” in political and economic transformation, the country continues to grapple with terrorism, the nation’s Foreign Minister told world leaders gathered at the United Nations General Assembly on Saturday.

Solving that problem once and for all requires a multi-faceted approach, said Ahmed Awad Isse, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Somalia.

Working with its partners, the nation has dismantled terrorist networks and hideouts. It is also engaged with religious leaders, community elders, women, youth and the civil society to “turn the tide against the twisted ideology of hate and religious intolerance,” said the Minister, addressing the UN Assembly’s annual debate.

“The silver lining is, young men and women are not joining terrorist groups,” he added.

He went on to note that the ideologies presented by Al-Shabaab or Al-Qaida are no longer appealing, and the groups no longer have new recruits. In addition, leaders and members are surrendering along with so-named ‘technicals’ (improvised attack vehicles) and weapon caches.

In that context, the Minister called on the UN Security Council to lift the arms embargo on his country, stressing that stronger fighting capacity will help national security forces fully dismantle terrorist groups in a shorter time.

In his address, Minister Isse thanked the African Union Mission for Somalia (AMISOM) and its personnel for their sacrifice and keeping Somalis safe, noting that the country “remains indebted to them.”

Alongside that, gains in security, as well as the Mission’s support to Somali security institutions will enable the country to gradually take over responsibilities from AMISOM, he said.

The Somali Minister highlighted that the country’s reformed, inclusive electoral model has been approved at both central and provincial levels.

He also informed the General Assembly of the country’s economic development goals, building upon its productive capacity, natural potential and international trade.

“We are seeking to strengthen alliances with our core partners to promote trade and investment opportunities even as we widen our scope in our quest for broader, far-reaching economic cooperation,” said Minister Isse.

“We are ready for business,” he said.

[Full statement available here.](#)

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## **Tackling climate change is ‘global responsibility of our time,’ Dominica Foreign Minister tells UN Assembly**

Climate change results from “an economic calculus” that pushes global destruction, Francine Baron, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Dominica told the United Nations Assembly on Saturday, stressing that “it must be accepted as the responsibility of our time.”

Noting that poverty, inequality and violence are also shared responsibilities, she maintained that “their modern-day manifestations are wrapped up in climate change.”

Saying that it arises from activities that support and reflect inequalities, she emphasized that “it is the poor who suffer most.”

“Much violence stems directly from climate-change-induced scarcity of things, like water, or productive lands,” she elaborated, citing climate change as “the main symptom of our world’s broken economy, society and humanity.”

Ms. Baron noted that the global community has neither agreed on an implementation plan for the [commitments made in Paris](#) in 2015, nor mobilized the agreed-upon \$100 billion annually to assist the most vulnerable in adapting and mitigating against harmful climate change effects.

“While we have failed to live up to these commitments, arctic ice shelves continue to melt at an alarming rate,” she explained. “The oceans continue to get warmer; hurricanes and storms continue to develop and threaten our countries, drought becomes more severe and flooding more pronounced.”

The Foreign Minister warned against perpetual pontification on the subject while punishing rains wreck lives and livelihoods – but urged instead to use our collective efforts to arrest it.

“It is no secret that the lack of motivation by some countries to take the required actions, is rooted in this economic truth: that those who gain most from the activities that create climate change, remain the most removed from

its dire consequences,” Ms. Baron underscored.

Last year, she said that Hurricane Maria unleashed 180 miles per-hour winds that brought Dominica to its knees. Immediately afterwards, “our people, raised their battered and wounded selves and began the daunting task of search and rescue, clearing roadways and quickly moved thereafter into a rebuilding mode.”

After international experts completed Dominica’s post-disaster needs assessment, they concluded that in a few hours, a single hurricane “caused loss and damage equivalent to 226 per cent of our country’s GDP [gross domestic product],” while “a mere two years prior, a tropical storm, had wiped out the equivalent of 90 per cent” of it.

The cost of building a resilient nation, “comes with a price tag far in excess of what small developing States, like Dominica, are able to meet singlehandedly,” she flagged.

“As I speak to you this minute, dangerous storms are gathering in the western Atlantic,” she said. “As climate change warms the seas and feeds the rainstorms, the risk of future loss and damage grow.”

Arguing that climate change is not “a freak of nature,” but man-made, she encouraged the global leader to let history record what was done, not what was said; what efforts were made to globally end climate change and to reduce local vulnerabilities.

“We, together, must grasp this moment,” concluded the Foreign Minister.

[Full statement available here.](#)

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## **Niger tells Assembly UN alone can solve its problems of climate change, migration, poverty and terrorism**

From the podium of the General Assembly, Niger – victim of the quadruple scourge of climate change, migration, poverty and terrorism – gave a ringing endorsement of the United Nations on Saturday as the “irreplaceable” Organization capable of resolving these and a host of other problems.

“My country gives the choice spot to the multilateralism and federating role of the UN,” Foreign Minister Kalla Ankourao told the Assembly’s annual general debate on its fifth day.

He denounced the “abject practice” of human trafficking involving African

migrants in the sub-Saharan Sahel region of which Niger is part and welcomed the meeting in Morocco in November to launch the [Global Pact on Migration](#) that seeks international cooperation for a structure process. “As the prime example of a transit country, Niger will be there,” he said.

He stressed that equal imperative of global cooperation to address climate change, which threatens to expand the desertification of already arid Niger and worsen the already grinding poverty of its people.

As for terrorism and the activities of Boko Haram in the country’s northern Lake Chad area, Mr. Ankourao highlighted the importance of the G5 Sahel, a military task force comprising Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger to fight terrorism in sub-Saharan, noting the need provide a reliable source of international funding beyond the one year agreed at a meeting in Brussels in February.

“The major concern of this force is to make its means of action permanent,” he stressed

He also noted that the challenge in the region has become much more a socio-economic than one of security.

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

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## [At UN Eritrea’s Foreign Minister says peace deal with Ethiopia ends ‘dark chapter,’ paves way for development](#)

Osman Mohammed Saleh, Eritrea’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, told the United Nations General Assembly that the recently signed Peace Agreement between Eritrea and Ethiopia “brings to an end the dark, two-decades-old, a chapter of war, constant tension, and strife.”

“This historic achievement – even if belated by almost 16 years – will allow both countries to funnel their resources, potential and positive energy solely towards much-needed development,” he said on Saturday.

Apart from infusing hope and optimism on both countries, he called the positive dividends for regional peace and security “palpable.”

“This is indeed attested by new frameworks of all-round cooperation that have been set in motion in the past two months or that are on the offing at the regional level,” stated the Foreign Minister.

He then brought up the “perplexing injustice,” of “unwarranted sanctions that

were imposed on Eritrea in December 2009 and 2011 respectively.”

“The transgressions perpetrated against Eritrea are, in many ways, symptomatic of the hubris and perverse power games that have primarily governed international relations in our contemporary times,” Mr. Saleh said.

“When the rule of law is suppressed and supplanted by the logic of force; when global power balance is compromised, the inevitable outcomes are intractable crises and escalating wars,” the Foreign Minister asserted.

He enumerated a list of “forces and factors” that brought about sanctions against Eritrea that encompassed previous United States administrations and systemic flaws in the UN Security Council.

The sanctions imposed on Eritrea “have entailed considerable economic damage to the country and unnecessary hardships on its people,” he said, including “immeasurable damage” to the country’s reputation, which has also impacted its investment potential, and instability at the regional and national levels.

Mr. Saleh noted that over the past six decades, Eritreans have struggled to advance justice and foster a climate conducive for mutual security and stability in the region.

“Through characteristic resilience and hard toil, they have now vanquished the injustices perpetrated on them,” he asserted.

As the people of Eritrea have not committed a crime or transgression that impels them to seek clemency, they are not only calling for the immediate rescinding of sanctions but also asking for “amends for the damages incurred and opportunities forfeited,” concluded the Foreign Minister.

**[Full statement available here.](#)**