

[‘No alternative to multilateralism,’ in tackling global issues, Singapore tells UN Assembly](#)

23 September 2017 – Noting that no one country can solve complex issues that transcend national boundaries, Singapore highlighted in an address to the United Nations General Assembly the need for a universal and rules-based multilateral system to confront the global challenges.

“The recent adoption of the [Paris Agreement](#) on Climate Change and the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable Development showed that multilateralism can respond to new challenges, especially when there is political will and collective commitment,” said Vivian Balakrishnan, the country’s Minister for Foreign Affairs, adding: “When dealing with global issues like climate change, there is no alternative to multilateralism.”

In his address at the Assembly’s 72nd annual general debate, he said that model for the global architecture, which his country believes in, is one in which the world is open and interdependent, and characterized by enlightened national interests, win-win collaboration and sustainable development.

“But most of all, we need inclusive economic growth to empower all our people to lead a good and meaningful life,” he noted.

Further, highlighting that the transformation caused by the digital revolution would be positive only if ways are found to share the benefits widely and reduce inequality, the Minister noted Singapore’s efforts, including heavy investments in education and skills training for its people and to give everyone an opportunity to build a meaningful life.

“We want every Singaporean to have a stake in our growth and success as a nation,” he said.

[Full statement available here](#)



Saleumxay Kommasith, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, addresses the general debate of the General Assembly’s seventy-second session. UN Photo/Cia Pak

Saleumxay Kommasith, Minister for Foreign Affairs for Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), joined a chorus of other speakers addressing the Assembly in extending his nation’s “deep sympathy” to the people of Latin America and the Caribbean who have been affected by the recent natural disasters.

Underscoring the importance of the 2030 Agenda, he called for greater collaboration to attain peace and security, and to make progress on UN

reform.

He expressed hope of creating a world without nuclear arms and weapons of mass destruction, reiterating his country's support for the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, saying "settling disputes by peaceful means and through diplomatic solutions is the best way as it is more durable and causes no loss of lives and properties of the people."

The Foreign Minister called "the most remarkable achievement of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ([ASEAN](#))" the maintenance of peace, security and stability in the region, primarily crediting partnerships and cooperation. He announced that his country will participate in the 2018 Voluntary National Review of the High-Level Political Forum on sustainable development – demonstrating its aim to graduate from the list of least developed countries by 2020.

Mr. Kommasith said that despite the challenges of being a least developed and landlocked country, Lao PDR nonetheless seeks to become a high middle-income country by 2030, underscoring that it has pursued greater connectivity with the region to enhance its infrastructure, transport networks, and construction of the North-South and East-West economic corridors. He concluded by calling on the international community increase efforts to ensure that development brings equal benefits to all countries, ensuring that his country is strongly committed to realizing the 2030 Agenda.

[Full statement available here](#)

Maldives at UN Assembly calls for stronger UN to tackle global crises

23 September 2017 – A stronger United Nations is more than ever needed to address the multiple crises facing the world, the Maldives to the General Assembly's 72nd annual general debate today.

"The United Nations is what we all make of it," Foreign Minister Mohamed Asim said. "It is made up of us, the Member States. Its successes and its weaknesses are determined by how much we put into it."

"My country, the Maldives, envisions a United Nations that is fair, that is representative of its diverse membership, that takes into account the views and opinions of all, and forms consensus, based on compromise and dialogue. A United Nations that commits and delivers."

As the representative of a State made up of low-lying islands, he underscored the dangers of global warming climate change. "There is no bigger global threat than that of climate change," he said.

“Island nations, including the Maldives, are the first to be devastated by these impacts. But, we are not the only ones. Today, climate change is becoming a reality for the rest of the world – whether we choose to believe it or not,” he added, citing the intensity of the recent hurricanes to hit the Caribbean and the United States, and the Pacific islands last year.

[Full statement available here](#)

At UN Assembly, Saudi Arabia pledges to press ahead in combat against terrorism, extremism

23 September 2017 – The threat of terrorism is among the most serious challenges facing the international community, Adel Ahmed Al-Jubeir, Minister for Foreign Affairs told the United Nations General Assembly today, stressing that his country would continue to work to counter the scourge, as well as extremism in all forms and manifestations.

The crisis in Qatar had jeopardized his country’s policy of cutting off funding to terrorists and extremists. Doha’s financial support of terrorism, and dissemination of violent hate speech, was unacceptable, as was its policy of providing safe haven to those who violated the law. The position taken by the four States was meant to demand that Qatar follow the principles of international law in fighting terrorism, he explained.

Pledging in the United Nations General Assembly to continue providing aid to members of the Rohingya minority fleeing Myanmar, Saudi Arabia today urged the Government of Myanmar to protect its population from discrimination.

“My country is gravely concerned and condemns the policy of repression and forced displacement carried out by the government of Myanmar against the Rohingya minority,” he said.

He said the “human tragedy” runs counter to all human rights, humanitarian values and international laws, and urged the Government to bring about an end in line with the UN principles.

The Foreign Minister said that Saudi Arabia will disperse \$15 million in assistance to host some 500,000 peoples, while also personally intervening with neighbouring countries and Bangladesh to ensure safe passage and house families in decent living conditions.

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

[Small island nations in Pacific urge global action to fight climate change](#)

23 September 2017 – Leaders from Pacific island nations addressing the United Nations General Assembly today urged Governments to implement the [Paris Agreement](#), and contribute to fighting climate change and supporting sustainable development efforts.

“Micronesia expresses grave concern that some countries have chosen to break with the international community and neglect the Paris Agreement, contrary to all of the best scientific advice,” the country’s Vice President, Yosiwo George, said in the UN General Assembly Hall in New York.

Agreed by 195 nations, the 2015 Paris Agreement seeks to combat climate change and unleash actions and investment towards a low carbon, resilient and sustainable future. Its main aim is to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius and to drive efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

In addition to implementing the Agreement, Mr. George urged world leaders to support the [Green Climate Fund](#) which aims to finance “green” investments in developing countries.

He voiced concerns about lack of ambition in face of mounting threats to the health of the oceans, urging a special provision to be created for small island developing states within the UN Law of the Sea Convention on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological areas.

Fishing rights in exclusive economic zones are of particular concern, Mr. George said, urging the international community “to remain steadfast in our efforts to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in all its forms.”

[Full statement available here](#)



Prime Minister Peter Paire O’Neill of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, addresses the general debate of the General Assembly’s seventy-second session. UN Photo/Ariana Lindquist

The head of Government in Papua New Guinea expressed similar concerns, noting that the global fish stocks are being “decimated” and “people are being forced to abandon their traditional homes because they have to jobs or food.”

Peter O’Neill told the UN General Assembly that the problem of unsustainable

use of natural resources is part of the bigger issue of climate change and its adverse impacts, which include seawater flooding in coastal communities, extreme tropical storms and severe droughts.

“In Papua New Guinea, and around the world, our people are dying as a consequence,” Mr. O’Neill said. “Living standards are being eroded and opportunity denied.”

“The world needs increased action now, to make further commitments to reduce emissions, and to help communities respond effectively to the climate change challenges,” he added.

Noting the challenges facing [refugees and migrants](#) around the world, Mr. O’Neill also called for a “more sensible and humane” approach to mobility, noting that more people will be dislocated in the future by natural disasters and the loss of livelihoods.

[Full statement available here](#)



John Silk, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Marshall Islands, addresses the general debate of the General Assembly’s seventy-second session. UN Photo/Cia Pak

In the same vein, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Marshall Islands underscored that the science behind climate is very real and urged that global confidence in the Paris Agreement must not waver in the face of any short-term challenges.

“The Paris Agreement is only as strong as the political confidence which stands behind it – and it is beyond imperative that, even in these early moments, committed nations are starting the challenging task of pushing ourselves to do even more,” said Minister John Silk.

In his address, the Minister also underscored the importance of the Sustainable Development Goal, and in particular, Goal 14, on the conservation and sustainable use the oceans, seas and marine resources.

Also in his remarks, Mr. Silk expressed condemned the recent nuclear and missile tests conducted by the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), adding that he is appalled by the threat of an atmospheric nuclear test over the Pacific Ocean.

[Full statement available here](#)

[In General Assembly address, Bahrain calls for strong, stable Middle East](#)

23 September 2017 – Bahrain reiterated its support for a strong Middle East in its United Nations General Assembly address, underscoring the need for strong and common political will to guarantee positive relations with other countries, support for the principles of non-interference in others internal affairs, and reaffirmation of the fight against terrorism and its sponsors.

“As partners, we can work together to preserve the security of the Gulf region, to combat terrorism and to provide protection for international navigation and commerce routes,” said the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Al-Khalifa, addressing the world body in New York.

He also urged compliance with international conventions and instruments to address the greatest challenge facing the international community – terrorism.

“Terrorism is no longer confined to terrorist organizations that can be confronted and eliminated. Rather, that menace has become a tool in the hands of States determined to create crises in other countries in pursuit of their own agenda” he said, adding that it is no longer acceptable to allow rogue countries to occupy others’ territories, violate the sovereignty of States, threaten international peace and security, support terrorism and spread hate and anarchy.

[Full statement available here](#)



Yousuf bin Alawi bin Abdallah, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman, addresses the general debate of the General Assembly’s seventy-second session. UN Photo/Cia Pak

In his address, Foreign Minister Yousef bin Alawi bin Abdullah of Oman highlighted his country’s adherence to UN principles. “We call upon all states to exert more efforts to help the United Nations restore its pivotal role in international relations.,” he said.

“The Sultanate of Oman invites the United Nations and the International Community to take up their responsibilities and strive to achieve peace, prevent conflicts and wars and settle difference, through dialogue and peaceful means. In this respect, my country renews its readiness to work with the United Nations to build a new world of security and stability.”

[Full statement available here](#)