

## [Djibouti tells General Assembly a reformed UN central to confronting global challenges is needed](#)

23 September 2017 – A reformed United Nations with increased resources must be at the heart of efforts to confront the host of crises threatening the world, from climate change and economic stagnation to stimulating development and combatting terrorism, Djibouti told the General Assembly today.

“All these challenges underline the crucial sustained and resolute collective action in order to confront them,” Djibouti’s Foreign Minister Mahmoud Ali Youssef told the Assembly’s 72nd annual general debate. “We must mobilize ourselves anew to give new life to multilateralism and emphasize the central place of the UN.

“The task is immense, the responsibility heavy. These challenges demand ambitious reforms and additional resources,” he added, focussing in three key areas – fulfilment of the [2030 Agenda](#) and the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)), management reform, and a reformed ‘architecture’ that enhances the efficiency of the Organization’s peace and stability missions.

Conflict is the major obstacle to economic development with enormous costs, including forced displacement, famine, the rise of communicable diseases, acute food insecurity and the rapid deterioration of respect for human rights, he said.

“Our Organization, more than ever, has an increased role to play in the prevention of conflicts and the resolution of differences,” he added.

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

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## [Global challenges ‘a litmus test’ for leadership, Nepal Prime Minister tells UN Assembly](#)

23 September 2017 – Noting that amid a complex and polarized environment, the global community faces challenges that include terrorism, climate change and mass migration, the Prime Minister of Nepal called for a greater display of wisdom, knowledge and capacity to address pressing issues.

“As we embark upon a path of implementing the [2030 Agenda](#) for Sustainable

Development, [the] challenges are the litmus tests for our leadership,” said Sher Bahadur Deuba, the Prime Minister of Nepal, addressing the 72nd annual general debate at the United Nations General Assembly.

Recalling his country’s contributions to UN peacekeeping efforts around the world, he said that troop and police contributing countries must be given fair opportunities to serve in leadership positions both in the field and at headquarters. Also on peacekeeping, he stressed the protection of civilians must be prioritized and that the UN must move “from zero tolerance to zero case scenario” on sexual exploitation and abuse.

Also in his address, the Nepali leader urged for greater security for migrants and, in the context of increasing frequency and destruction by natural disasters, called for greater cooperation and coordination in prevention, mitigation and recover efforts.

He also spoke of his country’s commitment to human rights, noting that Nepal’s Constitution bans death penalty in all circumstances. He also spoke of strengthening of the country’s human rights commission as well as protection of the rights of women and other disadvantaged sections of the society.

Prime Minister Deuba also highlighted the recent local elections in his country – the first in 20 years –and said that preparations are underway to hold provincial and federal elections.

Also in his address, he deplored the actions of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) which he referred to as the “continued defiance” by it of repeated calls by the Security Council and the international community, and urged it abide by all relevant Council resolutions.

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

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## **DR Congo, at General Assembly, calls on UN mission there to focus more on development**

23 September 2017 – The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which hosts more than ten thousand United Nations peacekeepers and where enormous resources over the past two decades have been devoted to bringing stability to the vast country, today called for the UN mission to be re-directed more to development.

“It is clear that nearly 20 years after its deployment the UN force cannot nurture the ambition of remaining indefinitely in my country or exercising

its mandate under the same format without learning from the weaknesses that have been noted,” President Joseph Kabila Kabange told the General Assembly’s 72nd annual general debate.

“What is important and should be important in the eyes of all those who value the credibility of our Organization is the actual effectiveness of UN troops on the ground. That is why for several years now we demanded a re-dimensioning of the MONUSCO force with regard to its dynamic mission and the redirecting of the means thus freed up towards our developmental needs.”

MONUSCO, the French acronym for the UN Organization Stabilization Mission, was renewed in June for another year at a level of 16,215 military personnel, 660 military observers and staff officers, 391 police personnel, and 1,050-strong formed police units, several thousand lower than its previous authorized level.

On other issues, Mr. Kabila decried the rise of terrorism, called for full support for the UN’s [2030 Agenda](#) that seeks to eliminate poverty, hunger and a whole host of other social ills by 2030, and highlighted the threat climate change posed for humanity.

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

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## [Tackling ‘curse of poverty’ tops Indian Government’s agenda, UN General Assembly told](#)

23 September 2017 – The complete eradication of poverty is the most important priority for the Government of India, its Minister for External Affairs told the United Nations General Assembly today, as she outlined some of the measures taken to advance this goal.

“There are two ways of addressing the curse of poverty,” Sushma Swaraj said in her address to the Assembly’s annual high-level debate.

“The traditional method is through incremental levels of aid and hand-holding. But our Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, has chosen the more radical route, through economic empowerment,” she noted.

“The poor are not helpless: we have merely denied them opportunity. We are eliminating poverty by investing in the poor. We are turning them from job-seekers into job-providers.”

Among the Government’s initiatives, Ms. Swaraj cited the Jan Dhan plan, by which some 300 million Indians – roughly equivalent to the population of the

United States – who had never crossed the doors of a bank today have bank accounts.

She also highlighted programmes to provide bank credit to those who want to start small businesses; to train poor and middle-class youth for employment; to provide free gas cylinders to the poor so that women do not have to suffer the dangerous consequences of wood-fired kitchens; and remove “black money” from circulation.

She noted that nations with rising capabilities will be able to generate such change, but the developed world must become an active partner in helping those vulnerable countries still mired in poverty to reach the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)) by the target date of 2030.

Agreed by world leaders in 2015, the [SDGs](#), also known as the Global Goals, are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity.

[Full statement available here](#)

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## **Syrian Government has spared no effort to end bloodshed, Deputy Prime Minister tells UN**

23 September 2017 – The Syrian Government has spared no effort to put an end to the war that has besieged the country for the past six years, but the bloodshed continues owing to the “aggressive policies” by some States, Deputy Prime Minister Walid Al-Moualem told the United Nations General Assembly today.

“No people has suffered at the hands of terrorism more than the Syrian people, who, for six years now, has fought against terrorists pouring from all over the world, supported by parties from the region and beyond,” said Mr. Al-Moualem, who is also the country’s Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Since March 2011, Syria has been in the throes of a conflict that has forced more than half of all Syrians to leave their homes. An estimated 5 million Syrians have fled the country and more than 6 million are internally displaced. The crisis, described as the worst humanitarian disaster of our time with more than 13 million people in need of assistance, has caused untold suffering for Syrian men, women and children.

The UN Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, has been working to bring the parties to the negotiating table and an end to the war.

Mr. Al-Moualem stated that since day one, the Syrian Government has positively considered all initiatives to put an end to the war. "However, these initiatives eventually failed after States that supported and fueled terrorism decided to persist in their aggressive policies against Syria and its people."

He noted that the so-called 'Geneva process' has yet to bear fruit "in the absence of a genuine national opposition that can be a partner in Syria's future, and as countries with influence over the other party continue to block any meaningful progress."

"It is truly unfortunate that these countries that block a solution in Syria are members of this international Organization, including permanent members of the Security Council," he added.

Certain countries, the Prime Minister said, have boasted about fighting terrorism in Syria and having the interests of Syrians at heart. "They have established 'coalitions' and held dozens of conferences under deceiving titles, such as 'friends of the Syrian people'.

"It is quite ironic that those are the same countries that are shedding the blood of thousands of Syrians by supporting terrorists, bombing innocent civilians, and destroying their livelihoods."

Syria was, however, encouraged by the Astana process and the resulting 'de-escalation zones' and hoped that it will result in an actual cessation of hostilities and separate terrorist groups, such as ISIL, Al-Nusra and others, from those groups that have agreed to join the Astana process.

"This will be the real test of how committed and serious these groups and their 'Turkish' sponsors are," said Mr. Al-Moualem.

"So far, Turkey under Erdogan has persisted in its aggressive policies against the Syrian people and has continued to labor under the illusion that terrorism will help serve its subversive agendas in Syria and the countries of the region. Turkey's position stands in stark contrast to the positive and constructive role played by Russia and Iran," he added.