

[UN must bolster role in coordinating Member States' efforts to tackle challenges, Tajik leader says](#)

19 September 2017 – Addressing the general debate of the United Nations General Assembly today, Emomali Rahmon, the President of Tajikistan, called on the Organization to carry out its mission, coordinating the efforts of Member States to build resilience to the many challenges and threats peoples and countries face.

He stressed that rapid globalization had led to development as well as challenges that had sometimes jeopardized UN efforts to help people lead secure lives. Moreover, 'tragic events' undermined global commitments to bring about sustainable development, he said, citing terrorism, transnational organized crime and drug trafficking in that context.

Stressing that terrorist movements flourished in "hot spots" around the world, he said such horrors were not connected with Islamic teachings and did not know the tolerance of Islam. Confronting those threats required Member States to make monumental efforts and to refrain from double standards.

Peace, stability and cooperation were essential for resolving the situation with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, he said, noting that in Afghanistan, the growing activity of violent terrorist groups was a matter of serious concern. "It is high time to take strong, coordinated measures to tackle terrorism and drug trafficking," he said, calling on the international community to help, just as his country was ready to do so.

Calling the adoption of the [2030 Agenda](#) a milestone for the international community to work together, he said Tajikistan had made great strides in the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals ([SDGs](#)). For the success of the Agenda as a whole, it would be necessary to help less developed countries, including landlocked nations, that lacked access to ports. They required more assistance and the UN, through the Economic and Social Council and specialized agencies, should play an important role.

[UN must update itself to face 21st century challenges, Afghan leader tells General Assembly](#)

19 September 2017 – The United Nations and its agencies must reinvent

themselves to tackle the challenges of the 21st century, Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani told the UN General Assembly on the opening day of its annual general debate today.

“Overcoming the destructive and disruptive patterns of change in the 21st century requires collective and coordinated action at the global, regional, national, local and individual levels,” he declared.

“Delivering on the promises of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the context of uncertainty requires re-examination of core functions, re-engineering of business processes, reinvigoration of organizational culture and value, and reform of systems of accountability,” he added.

“The inherited model of the UN agencies as instruments of technical assistance and capacity building should be subjected to the market test, namely value for money and sustainability of results in comparison to government, private sector and non-governmental modes of delivery.”

He stressed that the threat of international terrorism has played on Afghan soil, dominating the narrative of Afghanistan and driving the fate of its people for far too long, but also cited his country’s “enormous potential” to be the regional brokers of peace, a hub for economic prosperity, and a beacon of democratic values.

“Afghanistan will, yet again, be the Asian Roundabout for dialogue of civilizations and a model of harmony and culture of tolerance and engagement,” he concluded.

[*Full statement available here*](#)

Striving for peace, decent life for all, ‘very pertinent’ UN Assembly theme, says Ugandan President

19 September 2017 – Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda, took the podium expressing support for the theme of the United Nations 72nd General Assembly – ‘Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent life for all on a Sustainable Planet’ – questioning why the world’s elites failed to see its pertinence.

“Who would lose if all the people on the globe led a decent life,” he said, namely by having enough food; inoculations for “immunizable” diseases; drinkable water; education; clean electricity; fair-paying jobs; and respectable homes. “Parasitism is the only obstacle to global affluence, prosperity and peace,” he added.

Turning to “the dangerous situation on the Korean Peninsula,” he believed that, as “kith and kin,” the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Democratic Republic of Korea (DPRK) would do well to alone discuss their re-unification. He cited a unified Viet Nam, as well as that of Germany in 1990. Noting the strength of a unified Korea, he posed the queries, “Why do some actors fear strong nations in the world? Why should the Koreans themselves (North and South) allow external forces to continue to divide them?”

“We always strive not to allow actors, foreign or local, to divide the African peoples, regardless of the complications involved,” he underscored, saying that Uganda accommodates many African refugees on account of a conscious ideological position – “not to allow any actors to divide us. We only fight traitors.”

On “the small issue” of enforcing sanctions against the DPRK, Mr. Kaguta told the Assembly that Uganda is in compliance. “We do not have to trade with North Korea. We are, however, grateful that, in the past, the North Koreans helped us to build our tank forces,” he concluded.

[Full statement available here](#)

Government bodies must serve people, Uzbek President stresses at UN assembly

19 September 2017 – Noting efforts to advance socio-economic development in Uzbekistan, the President of the country highlighted that the ultimate goal is to build a democratic State and a just society, where the priority is implementation of the principle that “human interests come first.”

“We are deeply convinced: the people must not serve the Government bodies, rather the Government bodies must serve the people,” said Shavkat Mirziyoyev, the President of Uzbekistan, at the general debate of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly.

In his address, the noted the country’s five-year development plan, prepared through nationwide discussions, as well as of initiatives in partnership with UN agencies, including the International Labour Organization ([ILO](#)) and the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)) on advancing human development and rights.

“The most important vector of reforms is liberalization of the economic system and creation of favourable investment climate. We proceed from one simple truth: the richer the people are – the stronger shall be the State,” he added, noting fiscal initiatives including switching to free conversion of

the national currency.

Further in his remarks, he also drew attention to the situation of the Aral Sea and urged for full implementation of the UN programme to assist the populations affected by the ecological disaster.

Turning to the challenges posed by terrorism around the world, President Mirziyoyev called for strengthened multilateral cooperation to build social support for the youth, protection of their rights and interests, to save them from what he said was the “virus” of the ideology of violence.

He also called for promoting universal access to education and for eradicating illiteracy and ignorance promote tolerance and mutual respect.

[Full statement available here](#)

At General Assembly, Baltic leaders spotlight human rights, UN reform as vital issues

19 September 2017 – The international community must give the United Nations a voice to raise against human rights abuses and nationalistic rhetoric, or see it become irrelevant, the Lithuanian president said in her address to the United Nations General Assembly’s high-level debate.

Addressing representatives of 193 countries, Dalia Grybauskaitė urged world leaders to stand up against abuses and indifferences to basic international norms.

“Time and time again we have no courage to enforce the rules that we ourselves create. We draw red lines in the sand and then pretend they don’t exist,” Ms. Grybauskaitė said, adding that that international community must stop being passive observers.

“Aggression cannot make anyone stronger. It can never earn anyone even a drop of respect,” she said. “The only thing the aggression will bring is contempt, shame and condemnation.”

She said that the international community has to take its share of responsibility, and stop those violating norms and disrupting international peace.

[Full statement available here](#)



Republic of Estonia addresses the General Assembly's annual general debate.
UN Photo/Cia Pak

Also addressing the general debate, Kersti Kaljulaid, President of Estonia, underscored to the Assembly that the world is unpredictable. She maintained that stemming largely from climate change, it could be "counterbalanced by rapid technological disruption of our wasteful ways of life."

The President stressed that her country of just over one million, is sensitive to unpredictability, especially for the inherently weak and "for those made weak by discrimination – often women, ethnic and religious minorities."

Ms. Kaljulaid also pointed out that many nations suffer from unresolved conflicts, saying: "These are States which could take care of their own population and contribute at the global scene, if we were quicker to manage the conflicts which are holding them back or, worse, threatening to tear them apart."

Turning to violent extremism, she told the Assembly, "the risk of terrorism is metastatic. Having started from disappointments and disillusionment of people from failed and failing States, it has spread globally." She emphasized the importance of national, regional and global cooperation, saying "Effective counter terrorism measures and the protection of human rights are mutually reinforcing, not conflicting goals."

The President concluded by drawing attention to the need for a strong UN to successfully address the challenges. Ms. Kaljulaid welcomed the Secretary General's reform agenda, saying "We strongly support the efforts to link the reform of UN's Peace and Security architecture with the reform of the UN Development System. We welcome the emphasis on conflict prevention and peacebuilding, creating societies resilient to vulnerabilities," she said.

[Full statement available here](#)