

# Protecting our planet and being prepared for the future

Thank you very much, Mr Vice-President.

Good afternoon to you, excellencies, colleagues – if I may Mr Vice-President, before I make specific comments on this cluster of proposals, I would like to preface my remarks by quoting from the opening chapter of Our Common Agenda, and I quote, “75 years ago, our founders gathered in San Francisco promising to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war; to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women, and of nations large and small; to establish conditions under which justice and respect for international law can be maintained, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.”

Yesterday, the overwhelming majority of the General Assembly demonstrated their faith in the enduring sanctity of those ambitions. They voted to stand with the brave people of Ukraine as they suffered the barbaric shelling and besiegement of their cities by Russian forces. They voted for the sovereignty and the territorial integrity of every Member State, and they stood up against those who seek to redraw the world’s borders, by threat or use of force – they stood up against President Putin’s war of choice.

The United Kingdom was proud to stand with them.

Turning to the specific recommendations in the cluster before us, this week’s report from the IPCC on Climate Impacts is a stark and a sobering reminder to the world about how climate change is affecting our planet. The UK agrees with the IPCC that global action to adapt to the changing climate has been insufficient, so climate and environment must remain at the forefront of our efforts.

The Glasgow Climate Pact made significant progress on adaptation, but we must urgently scale up our efforts. We call on countries that have not yet done so to prepare and submit adaptation communications as soon as possible, and by COP27 at the latest. We also need to scale up support and increase coherence between the adaptation, disaster prevention, and risk reduction, humanitarian, and aid communities. And as others have just said before me, we must also make further and urgent progress on finance and loss and damage.

The planned leaders meeting ahead of the 2023 global stocktake, named in both Our Common Agenda and the Glasgow Climate Pact, will be a critical moment between COP27 and COP28 for leaders to assess their commitments and take the necessary steps to close the 2030 ambition gap.

We welcome the proposed Strategic Foresight and Global Risk Report and the wider focus on cross-UN disaster risk forecasting, planning and management. It must be linked with existing mechanisms and used to inform and incentivise

action. The Futures Lab recommendation could usefully bring together analysis from across the whole of the UN system, and we would appreciate more detail on the proposed Emergency Platform.

The United Kingdom supports the ambition of the proposed Global Vaccination Plan but believes the existing WHO vaccine strategy remains the best basis for international plans.

With global vaccine supply now projected to be sufficient to meet global demand, further UN work is needed to strengthen coordination among humanitarian actors to deliver vaccinations to populations at risk of being left behind. UN agencies must invest in improving on-the-ground coordination for integrated COVID-19 immunisation, testing, treatments and other essential primary health services.

The pandemic has also highlighted the critical importance of universal health coverage. We welcome the request for member states and the UN to accelerate their work on this goal, noting that strengthening primary healthcare in developing countries could save up to 60 million lives. We need enhanced coordination and collaboration within the UN system that complements the leadership of Member states on universal health coverage, and to implement fully the use of a One Health approach.

Thank you very much.