

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](#)