

73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly
Annual General Debate
Address by H.E. Mr. Borut Pahor, President of Slovenia

New York, 25 September 2018

Distinguished Presidency,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is always an honour to take part in this great General Assembly

1. Today we live in a world where new challenges are multiplying and old ones never seem to go away.

The multilateral system is being challenged.

A system which we spent over 70 years building, and which should prevent the humanity from ever again experience the horrors of war.

A system which ensure respect for human rights and international law and promote social progress, development and better standards of life for everybody.

2. The case for multilateralism is clear.

As Member States, we all have the responsibility to find common solutions to common threats and challenges we face, while protecting the principles and values of the UN Charter.

That spirit of cooperation and common responsibility must guide our work in the years to come.

No state, no nation will gain if it only strives to assert its own interests.

In today's unpredictable world, I urge let us join our efforts towards strengthening multilateralism as the only way to secure peace and security for future generations.

3. My country Slovenia stands firmly in defense of this multilateralism with the United Nations at its core.

Our commitment, the commitment of the Republic of Slovenia, to the multilateral system based on shared values, the rule of law and human rights, remains as strong as ever.

4. Ladies and gentlemen,

we all should strive to make the United Nations stronger and more efficient organization reformed in a way to be able to respond and assist in solving the most pressing concerns of our time.

Slovenia strongly supports the reform efforts by Secretary-General Guterres. A lot has been achieved throughout the past year, yet progress needs to continue.

At the end of the day, the success of the UN reform largely depends on us, the member states.

It depends on our political will and ability to translate words into action for the benefit of all of us.

We hope this will also give fresh impetus to the reform of the Security Council to secure a more equitable representation of today's world.

5. Only rules based international order can guarantee the equality of peoples and equality of nations.

If we want to create a more stable, peaceful and just future, member states must adhere to international law.

The respect for international law and the rule of law is a precondition for life in peace and security of all states for the entire international community.

6. At this point I would, since I come from the country neighbouring the Western Balkans region, like to stress the importance of international law and judgments of international courts also in the relation to the reconciliation process in the region.

Recognising and accepting historic facts no matter how painful they are, is the basis for stability and progress.

Western Balkans is in need of both.

7. I also wish to emphasize the necessity of full respect for human rights which is always pertinent, but even more in today's world.

Without it there can be no peace, security or development.

The United Nations have been instrumental in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms worldwide, but let's not forget that the primary responsibility for their fulfillment lies with the state.

No rights of states, no emergency, no political reasons can ever excuse the violations of human rights.

8. Slovenia, the current Chair of the Human Rights Council remains a strong supporter of human rights for all.

Slovenia considers that the Council's contribution to the strengthening of human rights in the world is important.

We all must endeavor to ensure the Council's credibility and better effectiveness.

We hope and expect that USA, a traditional promoter and supporter of respect for human rights throughout the world, will remain committed to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Slovenia will continue to seek through dialogue results in the process of strengthening legitimacy, credibility and effectiveness of the Human Rights Council.

9. War, violent extremism and terrorism always present assaults on human rights.

These atrocities are shocking to the core of human conscience.

Effective law enforcement measures are indispensable in the fight against terrorism.

But terrorism will never be defeated by security measures alone.

Our endeavors to counter and prevent terrorism have to be comprehensive, targeting also root causes of radicalization.

10. Impunity represents one of the major obstacles to the prevention of grave and systematic violations of human rights committed against civilians in armed conflicts.

All parties to a conflict, including non-state actors, must comply with the international humanitarian law.

Ending impunity is essential for the war-torn society to recover from conflict as well as to prevent future human rights abuses.

Slovenia is a strong supporter of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

We stress the importance of effective cooperation with the International Criminal Court, including by the Security Council, and invite states that have not yet done so to ratify the Rome Statute.

11. We must preserve and protect the non-proliferation architecture based on NPT, to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical, biological and nuclear weapons.

We have to implement all binding international treaties, concerning weapons of mass destruction including in particular the NPT of which 50th anniversary we are marking this year.

12. Slovenia supports solving of the pressing proliferation issues by diplomatic and peaceful means.

To that end we reiterate support to JCPOA as long as Iran honours its obligations.

We welcome developments related to Korean peninsula and hope to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible de-nuclearisation of it.

13. Slovenia continues to support humanitarian demining, mine victim assistance and the elimination of the unexploded ordnance and remnants of wars.

ITF Enhancing Human Security, a humanitarian, non-profit organization established by the Slovenian Government two decades ago and its many activities around the globe from Bosnia and Herzegovina to Afghanistan and Colombia are concrete reflections of this support.

We are grateful to many states which cooperate and support the demining work of ITF.

14. Slovenia considers international development cooperation as an important element of our overall international endeavors.

Through development co-operation we support efforts in partner countries to eradicate hunger, protect the environment and contribute to overall sustainable development.

Through our efforts in the Western Balkans, the European Neighborhood and Sub-Saharan Africa, Slovenia is directly contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Slovenia has also taken up the task of implementing 2030 Agenda at the national level and we try to contribute to its implementation at the global level with a sense of urgency.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Paris Agreement are in our view two documents that together provide a clear path and vision for a more sustainable future for our planet and prosperity for its people.

Slovenia is in the eight spot among the 156 surveyed countries in terms of the realisation of the 2030 UN agenda for sustainable development.

15. Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today, more than ever, we need a strong multilateral system, where the emphasis must be on "doing more collectively, timely and effectively".

Let me conclude by assuring you that Slovenia is committed to supporting the United Nations, and

determined to work with all partners to deliver tangible, meaningful results that will advance peace, security, development and human rights for all.

Thank you.
