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INTERVENTION

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**PRIME MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS**

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**Madam President,
Distinguished delegates,**

Let me join other Leaders to pay a special tribute to late Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations. The legacy left by this great son of Africa will remain forever carved in the history of the United Nations.

Madam President,

I warmly congratulate you on your election as the President of the 73rd Session of the General Assembly and wish to reassure you of our full support in your work.

I also thank Mr Miroslav Lajčák for his dedicated and able leadership; relentless commitment to multilateralism and continued engagement with member States during his presidency.

Madam President,

2018 is a special year for Mauritius.

It marks the fiftieth Anniversary of our Independence. We also celebrate, with immense pride and honour, fifty years of membership to this august body.

The theme for this session, “Making the United Nations relevant to all people: Global Leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies”, is both apt and timely.

Madam President,

We are living in troubled times, marked by uncertainties and complex threats to peace, stability and sustainability of our planet.

Increased international tensions, intractable conflicts, expanding pockets of poverty throughout the world, growing inequalities, the deterioration of the oceans, climate change, violent extremism and terrorism, nationalism, cyber threats, escalating militarization, and forced migration are only some of the perils that endanger global peace and security.

These challenges cannot be overcome without greater cooperation, global leadership and shared responsibilities.

We wholeheartedly welcome the reform process to make the United Nations fit for purpose, closer and in synchronization with the people that it serves and better

equipped to service the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development so that no one, irrespective of race and gender, is left behind.

Madam President,

My Government remains fully committed to the 2030 Agenda. In this regard, Mauritius will present its voluntary national review at the 2019 High Level Political Forum next July.

Madam President,

The SAMOA Pathway remains a valid roadmap for us to measure how much progress has been achieved in addressing the challenges and difficulties faced by SIDS, including climate change.

We welcome the holding of the mid-term review of the SAMOA Pathway next September and call on all stakeholders to participate at the highest level in order to accompany SIDS in strengthening their resilience.

The stark effects of climate change are being felt all around the world. As we have seen in California, the Carolinas, the Philippines, China, Europe and elsewhere, the frequency of extreme weather events demonstrates that the impacts of climate change can affect every country on every continent.

Hurricanes, floods, droughts, and wildfires are becoming deadlier, and weather patterns more severe. These disasters are sounding the alarm.

Without a renewed global commitment to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects we will fail to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement, and endanger our planet as well as our own survival.

Madam President,

We cannot dissociate climate from our oceans. Our planet's future also depends on our ability to further protect the ocean and increase its ability to act as a buffer against climate change. We need global leadership and enhanced multilateral cooperation to safeguard the ocean and its role as the natural weather regulator of our planet.

Madam President,

As a large ocean State, respectful of the rule of law and international law, Mauritius has taken the lead in the Western Indian Ocean region to combat piracy and other transnational organized crimes, and keep its territory and surrounding areas safe.

As Chair of the Indian Ocean Commission, Mauritius co-hosted with the Indian Ocean Commission a Ministerial conference on Maritime Security in April 2018, to coordinate actions to fight transnational organised crimes, such as drug trafficking, piracy and human trafficking.

In doing so, we have consolidated our engagement with the UN system, in particular, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Department of Political Affairs (UNDPA) with which we have recently signed an MoU to assist the Indian Ocean region to fight these security threats and challenges.

Madam President,

We are equally concerned with the situation in the Middle East where the scourge of violence and war continues to claim innocent lives.

Peace in that region would remain elusive as long as the international community does not live up to its legal and moral responsibilities to uphold international law.

Mauritius therefore reiterates its call for renewed and genuine international efforts for negotiations towards an early realization of the two-state solution, with an independent and viable Palestine, existing side by side and at peace with the State of Israel. While we wait for this to happen, it is extremely important that the sufferings of the people, especially women and children, are alleviated through renewed and increased international support.

Madam President,

Despite all current efforts, terrorism still remains a painful reality claiming numerous lives daily and threatening world peace and development.

It is urgent to build consensus on global counter terrorism efforts and reinforce multilateral cooperation in fighting this scourge. Indeed, we need to pay attention to why individuals are attracted to violent extremist groups. We are convinced that the creation of open, equitable, inclusive and pluralist societies, based on the full respect of human rights and with education and economic opportunities for all, represents the most effective way to end violent extremism.

Madam President,

In the same vein, we need to reinforce global non-proliferation regimes. The continued existence of nuclear arsenals and the threat of a nuclear disaster represents a major impediment to the maintenance of peace and security.

We need to also remain vigilant to the cyberthreats which endanger our national security.

As highlighted in the new Disarmament Agenda by the UN Secretary-General in May 2018, we need to create secure space, land, sea, spatial, and cyber zones alike. We need to do whatever is necessary to make our planet a safe place for all.

Madam President,

Unregulated drug consumption and trafficking if unchecked has the potential of destroying the future of our youth. We are but too well aware how drugs undermine sustainable human development and the stability of countries and whole regions.

My Government remains determined to fight drug trafficking. In that regard, the Commission of Inquiry on Drugs set up to enquire on all aspects of drug trafficking in Mauritius has recently submitted its findings. I have set up a Ministerial Committee to look into the recommendations of the Commission which includes, *inter alia*, the strengthening of existing institutional framework as well the review of relevant legislations.

To address the evolving challenges of drugs, my country committed itself to the Global Call to Action on the World Drug Problem. More than ever we need closer cooperation to address this scourge.

Madam President,

We must be cautious not to undermine the multilateral system as this has served the comity of nations well. The United Nations was created to bring States together. It also established conditions under which justice and respect for law can be maintained and strengthened.

Madam President,

Conscious of the responsibility of belonging to this Assembly, my country, at its admission, made a pledge in 1968 to uphold the great ideals which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

We gave the assurance to bring our contribution, however modest it may be, to the shaping of the destiny of a better world.

As a responsible member of this comity of nations, Mauritius has remained true to this pledge.

Today I reaffirm my country's continued commitment to the ideals and values of this institution, the respect for international law and faith in international partnership to build a safer and more prosperous world.

It is with this commitment that Mauritius subscribes to the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration and we look forward to its endorsement in Marrakech in December.

Madam President,

In the same spirit of upholding the Charter of the United Nations and their commitment to the international rule of law, in June 2017 Member States of the Group of African States tabled a resolution to seek an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on the legal consequences of the separation of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius in 1965.

At the heart of this request for an advisory opinion is the issue of decolonization, a matter of international public order under the Charter, a central element of the work of the United Nations and General Assembly. The decolonization of Mauritius remains to date incomplete in view of the unlawful excision of the Chagos Archipelago from Mauritius prior to its accession to independence.

Madam President,

The hearings at the Court have been completed, and the judges will now deliberate on a matter that has raised important issues on decolonization and human rights, particularly the right to self-determination of the people of Mauritius and the plight suffered by Mauritians of Chagossian origin who were forcibly removed from the Chagos Archipelago.

The advisory opinion will also further clarify and strengthen the rule of law at the international level, at a time when such strengthening is greatly needed.

I take this opportunity to express my Government's appreciation to all the Member States and the African Union which have actively participated in the written and oral proceedings of the International Court of Justice relating to this matter.

Madam President,

The United Nations is and will always be at the center of all action for sustainable development, peace and security. While we applaud the Secretary-General-led three-

pronged reform of the United Nations, considerable resources will be required to match this ambition.

We appeal to all stake holders to generously support this reform by providing adequate resources on a predictable basis.

We also appeal for a special consideration of Africa's needs and priorities in the restructuring of the peace and security architecture.

Madam President,

We commend the efforts of the Secretary General to enhance the framework of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union- so vital for sustained peace and development in the continent. Africa's growth is showing promising signs of rebounding. Already several countries are undergoing positive transitions.

Elections in Africa during the last several years demonstrate that African countries have strengthened their democracies while ensuring a peaceful transition of power.

We welcome the signature of a historical peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea ending two decades of tension which followed years of open conflict causing the loss of thousands of lives.

This improved political climate, reconciliation efforts, and inclusive participation rights herald a new age of governance that deserves to be supported by the international community.

Madam President,

One aspect of the United Nation's reform where we find progress wanting is the collective aspiration for a strengthened and more legitimate Security Council reflecting today's reality.

We call, once again, for the reform of the UNSC and repeat our plea for the start of a text-based negotiation.

We all agree that an equitable representation of Africa in the Security Council will not only redress a gross historical injustice but render the Council more democratic and representational.

We also support India's legitimate aspiration for a permanent seat in an enlarged Security Council and a non-permanent seat for SIDS.

Madam President,

Three days ago, we celebrated the memory and legacy of one of Africa's most illustrious leaders, Nelson Mandela.

We, as world leaders, would benefit from being inspired by the words and actions of Mandela, especially when he says and I quote "What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead" unquote. Together we can make that difference.

Thank you.