

ADDRESS BY MEXICO'S SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, HER EXCELLENCY CLAUDIA RUIZ MASSIEU, AT THE UNITED NATIONS HIGH-LEVEL THEMATIC DEBATE ON PEACE AND SECURITY.

New York, NY.

May 10th, 2016

Your Excellency, Mr. Mogens Lykketoft, President of the United Nations General Assembly;

Distinguished Ministers, Permanent Representatives and Delegates;

I want to recognize President Lykketoft's timely call to convene the Member States of the United Nations and provide a venue for the participation of representatives of the civil society and private sector.

In the eyes of the world, multilateralism has reach a momentum of legitimacy that we must seize. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, has confirmed that the United Nations remains a central global actor with the legitimacy and capacity to integrate the will of its Member States and signal the path to concrete action in order to tackle the newest challenges of our time.

On their own, neither states nor any other actor could provide the necessary and comprehensive solutions to these challenges. However, it is also true that in the 21st century, the global landscape has changed at a faster pace than the speed at which our international institutions have adapted to. This has been particularly the case of threats to international peace and security.

In a world that is increasingly fragmented in multiple poles of power, with the rising influence of non-State actors and the expansion of extremism and terrorist organizations, the United Nations risks to be perceived as an outdated institution lacking the capacity to respond to these new realities.

In this context, some countries may be tempted to rely on unilateral formulas, specifically regarding the use of force, which are expressly prohibited by the UN Charter.

This would be an unfortunate step backwards, and history has demonstrated more than once the fatidic consequences of such relapses.

We have then a window of opportunity to capitalize this momentum of multilateralism and show that the leadership that allowed the UN to achieve results in the field of sustainable development, materialized in the 2030 Development Agenda, can be replicated to find preventive, peaceful and collective solutions to international peace and security challenges.

But let us bear in mind that this window of opportunity is not there forever: it requires urgent decisions and meaningful action.

Mr. President:

Mexico has been a historic supporter of multilateralism as a privileged alternative to address international challenges and a country fully convinced that the United Nations is an indispensable actor in maintaining international peace and security. Mexico has always seen the peaceful resolution of controversies as a point in which our interests and principles meet.

In every legal instrument that sustains the global order, there is a Mexican contribution: from the San Francisco Charter to the recent Arms Trade Treaty, the Convention on the Law of the Sea, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban-Treaty or the Tlatelolco Treaty.

At the national level, Mexico is experiencing the boldest process of transformation and dynamism in decades. In parallel, Mexican civil society is more informed, more participative, and more concerned by events arising both inside and outside our borders.

We are aware that these positive domestic transformations necessarily lead us to increase our efforts in projecting ourselves as an actor with global responsibility. We do not see this as a burden, but as an opportunity to use our values and international weight in a positive way, to help, transform and improve reality.

An example of this is that in 2014, President Enrique Peña Nieto decided to resume the participation of our country in UN peacekeeping operations. In a very short time, 7 months in total, we deployed military personnel in the UN missions in Haiti, Western Sahara, and Lebanon. To reaffirm this commitment, I would like to announce today that Mexico will send military observers to the UN Special Political Mission in Colombia, once a peace agreement is reached between the parties.

Furthermore, Mexico has strongly pushed for the most needed Security Council reform. It is not feasible to successfully address the 21st century transnational challenges, with a structure that responds to the 20th century post-war world.

The Security Council cannot represent exclusively the individual interests of its members, but it should epitomize the consensus of the international community as a whole. This mandate requires adjustments to make the Council able to tackle today's reality.

It should also be a more transparent and accountable body, and therefore, we must avoid replicating structural mistakes. We need a Security Council that evolves in tandem with the international system, and that does not accept tendencies that privilege the paralysis over timely action.

An enlarged membership is needed, but one in which all States are represented and allows them to participate in accordance to the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

Against this backdrop, Mexico leads, along with France, a movement to promote that Security Council Permanent Members voluntarily join the initiative to restrict the use of veto in cases of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

This initiative is part of our profound conviction that the veto power is a responsibility, not a privilege. It also derives from a practical consideration: for the UN to keep its credibility and relevance, it cannot be an organization that only takes action when conflicts escalate. Instead, mediation and a preventive approach should prevail.

In the same vein, Mexico has pursued a substantive analysis of Special Political Missions.

In its political aspect, we need to rethink the specific place these missions should have in the international peace and security architecture, considering its main characteristic: flexibility. In the financial sphere, and we take this timely opportunity to underscore it, **it is crucial to establish a special and separate budget, different to the regular one**, in order to guarantee the efficiency of one of the most innovative and flexible mechanisms of mediation.

Mr. President:

Mexico considers essential to integrate in a consistent and cross-cutting manner the advancement of women and women's empowerment throughout the entire UN agenda, including mediation, negotiation of peace agreements, and ceasefires.

An organization representing all member States cannot be complete until it fully brings women to the table, in all its activities and levels of responsibility. They represent half of the population of those very States.

Despite all the positive developments in peace processes, today only 9% of negotiators and 4% of deployed peacekeepers are women. The financing of the women, peace and security agenda, is also falling short of what is needed, considering that it only represents 6% of the total special budget for peace operations.

Mr. President:

Mexico acknowledges the challenges that the United Nations faces in a global landscape of delicate balances and scarce certainties. Nevertheless, it is optimistic that the review processes of Peacekeeping Operations, the Peacebuilding Architecture, and the Global Study of Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace, and Security offer an opportunity to redefine its architecture.

As a result of these processes, we now have a clearer diagnosis. Mexico would like to highlight some of its main elements: prioritizing political over military solutions; bolstering prevention and comprehensive approaches that address the root causes of conflict; and guaranteeing the funding of prevention, as well as peacemaking and peacebuilding activities.

This diagnosis also points towards the need to generate a paradigm shift that recognizes that the central actor in our efforts are the people who live and suffer from conflict or post-conflict situations, whose interests must be defended and their rights guaranteed.

Today, we cannot get caught in paralysis due to analysis. This diagnosis and these discussions should serve as a basis to draw consensus and joint action plan with clear commitments that can be measured and evaluated.

Mexico also considers that while the United Nations requires a renewal of its prevention and conflict-solving mechanisms, it is not expected to assume sole or a larger responsibility than that of the parties directly involved.

It is crucial to keep this in mind, especially with the upcoming election of the Secretary General of this organization, because the United Nation's capacity of action is and will be a reflection of the political will of the states that comprise it.

Today, President Lykketoft's wise invitation grants us the opportunity to consider all these matters. Mexico celebrates this initiative. I take this opportunity to endorse the commitment of the Government of Mexico as a permanent ally of multilateralism and advocate of the United Nations as an essential actor to address the collective challenges of the 21st Century.

Thank you.