



STATEMENT BY
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DURING
THE SECURITY COUNCIL HIGH-LEVEL MEETING ON THE THEME
“MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY: UPHOLDING
MULTILATERALISM AND THE UNITED NATIONS-CENTRED
INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM”
FRIDAY, 7 MAY 2021

Thank you, Mr. President.

1. Allow me from the onset to congratulate You Excellency, Wang Yi, on China’s assumption of the Presidency of the Security Council this month and for convening this important debate.
2. I also thank His Excellency, Mr. Volkan Bozkir, the President of the General Assembly for his briefing and welcome our colleague, the new Foreign Minister of Niger.

Mr. President,

3. Rarely in the last thirty years has effective multilateralism been as sorely needed as it is today.
4. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically showcased the interconnectedness of our world. The corona virus has touched all of us; exposing state vulnerabilities, revealing stark inequalities in our societies and unveiling latent weaknesses within international institutions. Despite regular calls for global solidarity, responses to the pandemic have in many instances, paradoxically spawned, increased isolationism, nationalism and protectionism, thereby diluting state cooperation and depleting the potency of multilateral agencies. In fact, the stark absence of widely accepted rules, norms and principles to guide the international system

through this crisis has become apparent. For this reason, Kenya has joined other states in appealing for a pandemic treaty domiciled within the World Health Organization framework. We would encourage all states to embrace this noble cause so as to enhance rules-based multilateralism.

Mr. President,

5. Although Kenya wholeheartedly welcomes and appreciates the establishment of the COVAX facility, vaccine access and distribution has become one of the greatest tests to multilateralism today and poses an existential threat to global peace and security. It ought to be the duty of this Council to affirm this truism. Mr. President, there is a real and present danger that many states in the global South will remain excluded and neglected in the face of growing vaccine nationalism and vaccine hoarding, as well as the uneven production of vaccines. Vaccine exclusion, coupled with the dire economic challenges confronting African states for instance, will impede global recovery and the return to normalcy for everyone. We therefore fully support the African Union in advocating for international cooperation in expanding vaccine manufacturing within the African continent, as well as for the waiver of intellectual property rights in relation to COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics in order to democratize and accelerate large-scale production worldwide. Access to vaccines, particularly within the context of a global pandemic, is a fundamental human right which the multilateral system must jealously uphold.

Mr. President,

6. As the world tackles the COVID-19 crisis, terrorism and violent extremism endure especially on the African continent. Thus, multilateral approaches to subdue these threats must be bolstered without delay, driven by an invigorated consensus derived from UNSC Resolutions including 1267 and 1373. In this regard, Kenya persists in her demands for the listing (without exception) of acknowledged terrorist groups such as Al-Shabaab under this Council's sanctions regimes. Without a consistent, strong, and unyielding multilateral consensus against terrorism, we risk providing space for the expansion of terrorist groups.
7. Further, a firm multilateral consensus must also be established around the nexus between international peace and security and climate change. It is no longer tenable in our view, to underestimate the devastating effects of climate change both as an underlying cause and multiplier of conflicts and insecurity throughout our world. Accordingly, this Council ought to pronounce itself unequivocally on this matter and offer the leadership and momentum required to galvanize global action against climate-change related risks to international tranquility and security.

Finally, Mr. President,

8. Kenya fervently believes that the success of the United Nations largely depends on its cooperation with regional and sub-regional organisations in line with Chapter Eight of the Charter. Intensifying this inextricable interdependence especially in the arena of peace and security in Africa is imperative. Accordingly, the principle of complementarity must attain its salient place in the Council's vision and decision making. Besides this, as we seek to "build back better" in the throes and aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis, the expansion of the permanent membership of the United Nations Security Council to reflect our world's diversity and to correct historical injustices is now both urgent and necessary. Multilateralism without inclusion is unsatisfactory and limited.

9. Mr. President, Kenya affirms her commitment to a rules-based ethos, strengthened by robust multilateralism and secured by the United Nations Charter and International Law. I thank you for your kind attention.