

UNITED NATIONS  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
Thirty-first Special Session  
Special Session in Response to the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic  
3-4 December 2020

S T A T E M E N T  
by  
H.E. Mr. Aleksandar Vučić  
President of the Republic of Serbia

Mr. President,  
Mr. Secretary General,  
Excellencies,  
Dear Director-General of the World Health Organization,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I address this distinguished gathering today in a moment when my country, Serbia, and the whole world face an extraordinary challenge put before our healthcare systems and our economies by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Serbia, as the legal successor of Yugoslavia, is a proud founder of the Organization of the United Nations and as such it is persistently committed to the UN Charter and to the multilateralism as the founding principle of the United Nations.

Virtual format of this address speaks for itself about the situation the world has found itself in at the end of 2020, and in which it still is, and it is a confirmation that we must do everything to preserve and strengthen the United Nations.

COVID-19 pandemic strongly confirms the need and necessity of existence and strengthening of the role of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and organizations, like the World Health Organization. They have the irreplaceable role in organized response to newly occurred challenges that are not only of a health nature, but they also have social, economic, political and security dimension. That's why the relevance of this forum must never be questioned.

We firmly believe that the answers in facing global challenges such as the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic can be found only by joint actions, mutual harmonization and respect.

Your Excellencies,

In that regard, the Republic of Serbia cordially welcomes the decisions on organizing such an important Forum.

Great hope for prosperity of the Mankind is given by a fact that 150 member states, without a single vote against, accepted and voted for the necessity and urgency of having this gathering today.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the sustainable development and healthcare go hand in hand, as the candidate country for EU accession, Serbia strongly supports and follows the approach of the European Union that we must continue working together within the UN system in fighting pandemic and its consequences, laying at the same time foundations for inclusive, green and sustainable recovery, in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals.

It is with great dose of optimism that I look forward to days ahead.

Good news related to prevention and treatment of COVID-19 come from all over the world. Those quick and good results could only be achieved with common global effort and information exchange.

Serbia is absolutely advocating universal and equal approach to vaccines and therapy for treating COVID-19, as a leading global priority.

Global initiative and synergy embodied in COVAX is aimed at ensuring righteous distribution of supplies of future vaccines against COVID-19.

We hope that COVAX will distribute 2 billion doses of safe and efficient vaccines worldwide by the end of 2021- where needed, and guided by humanistic and nonselective principles.

Your Excellencies,

Adoption of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030 as well as the Paris Agreement on Climate Change are key steps in facing some of the biggest challenges of today- global economic instability, global social inequalities and climate change effects.

Devastating consequences of global recession must be removed by mobilizing bigger, faster and more flexible support through international financial institutions.

Serbia pays priority attention to goals related with the following: eradicating poverty, sustainable economic development and employment, building infrastructure and industrialization, providing healthy life at all ages, free and quality elementary and high-school education for everyone, with special focus on gender equality.

I proudly underline that the citizens of Serbia voted for the Parliament where both genders are equally represented. This and such a modern Serbian Parliament supported for the second time the Government led by a woman.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Efficient and productive multilateralism is necessary, but also achievable if readiness for joint engagement in the spirit of dialogue, cooperation and compromise is demonstrated.

We have intensively cooperated with the countries of the entire world, as well as our region, regarding allocation of humanitarian aid, but also regular goods supply during COVID-19 pandemic. Serbia is also facing problems in fighting this communicable disease that caused tectonic changes worldwide and we received assistance of the friendly countries when we needed it the most, and I take this opportunity to thank them once again. Likewise, we showed solidarity and provided assistance to other countries and we will keep helping those who need it most in these difficult times.

I hope that we have all reminded ourselves during this pandemic how important every single life is, and that we must do everything we can to prevent further loss of life and human suffering. Having said that, I want to underline that the Republic of Serbia joins the UN Secretary General in his call for a global ceasefire.

Your Excellencies,

Throughout its entire existence, Serbia has, above all, appreciated freedom, equality and peace. Not a single one of these traditional criteria of ours is possible without strong United Nations and strict observation of the Founding Charter.

President John Fitzgerald Kennedy said once: "Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future."

We cannot change the past, but from this place we can significantly impact the more quality future of this Planet and Mankind.

Thank you for your attention.