



Alliance for Multilateralism

Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance for Multilateralism on September 23, 2021 in New York

Written statements by participants

Albania

Olta Xhaçka, Minister of Europe and Foreign Affairs

MULTILATERALISM

Multilateralism is defined as the only democratic way to address global issues. Albania strongly supports multilateralism as it believes in the commitment and contribution of all to the worldwide solutions. By believing to multilateralism, Albania run OSCE last year. It has been greatly involved in very sensitive issues for Europe as arms control, conflict resolution, encouraging dialogue between parties, fight against terrorism, corruption, defending human rights etc. As an active member of UNO, Albania is rendering its valuable contribution in UN policies and with its military troops' presence for protecting and sustaining peace.

While the pandemic is affecting everyone across the globe, global solidarity is needed than ever before. Combating COVID-19 pandemic situation reminded us, once again, about the importance of multilateralism in facing this multidimensional world crisis.

The COVID-19 pandemic is far more than a health crisis. It upended almost every aspects of life as we all know, causing societal and economic disruption at a magnitude never seen before, while challenging and putting into test the entire multilateral system.

Albania fully supports the UN's central coordinating role in emergencies and highly appreciates SG efforts in launching the Global Humanitarian Response Plan to ensure the most effective and efficient humanitarian response for all the countries. No country, however big or powerful be, can not address alone the complex challenges, we are facing today.

In this vein, Albania has co-sponsored two GA landmark Resolutions "Global Solidarity to Fight COVID-19" and "International cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment to face COVID-19", pledging global solidarity to fight the coronavirus and to boost international cooperation to ensure global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment. We are concerned about negative consequences of "info-demic" in the context of the COVID-19, which can heighten the risk of conflict, violence, human rights violations and mass atrocities.

This pandemic also risks diverting international attention and resources away from other important world challenges, such as climate change, human rights, conflict prevention, poverty, rising inequalities, human insecurity, international terrorism and organized crime.



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The world needs rules based on international order with effective multilateral institutions able to ensure stability, security and respect for human rights, development and prosperity. Multilateralism has been proven to be the only democratic way to address issues in international relations without contradicting with the concept of sovereignty.

While the UN reform is giving its first positive impacts, especially in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda by placing the development at the heart of the organization, the greater integration within the peace and security pillar, as well as a more integrated approach with the sustainable development and human rights pillar, are expected to strengthen the capacities of the United Nations in playing a more effective role in sustaining peace, as well as in protecting human rights.

Albania considers that the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is a shared responsibility.

Albania is well positioned to achieve strong progress on SDGs by building on the development gains it has made through sweeping reforms. These include the administrative and territorial reforms, as well as public administration, judiciary, social and energy reforms. Due to these overwhelming and profound reforms, we are looking forward to receive the “green light” from the Council of Ministers of the European Union to open up accession talks with our country.

Considering Climate change, as one of the biggest challenges Humanity is facing with, the Government of Albania is committed to contribute to the achievement of the UN's global goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 45% in the next decade and to net zero emissions by 2050.

Protecting and promoting human rights are a big challenge of our Government and society. Gender equality is a priority for Albania. Albania enjoys a full gender parity on merit's basis in the executive branch. We are aiming to strengthen the role of women and girls in the security sector. The Albanian National Action Plan on the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 “Women, Peace and Security”, aims to integrate the gender perspective into our national, foreign and security policy, by providing a comprehensive legal framework to promote and increase women's participation in political and public life. As an elected member to the SC of ONU for the term 2022-2023, Albania will conduct at its priorities Women, Peace and Security.

Albania has been part of international politics in the fight against international terrorism and organized crime, against extreme violence, Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Albania has implemented all UN resolutions against international terrorism. We have co-sponsored UN Security Council Resolution 2178 (2014) on "Threat to International Peace and Security Caused by Terrorist Acts" and have been among the first countries to harmonize the national legislation in line with international law.



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Albania has always played and will continue to play a proactive role in promoting regional cooperation and good neighbourly relations. Regional cooperation, being complementary to the European integration, is one of Albania's top foreign policy priorities. Greater regional security and stability creates in turn greater security and stability for our continent and the whole World.

We firmly believe that the United Nations, even after 75 years after its founding, still remains the cornerstone of the multilateral rule-based cooperation, from which benefits the global community, as whole. The way we react, will determine how fast the world recovers.

Thank you for your attention.

Japan

Motegi Toshimitsu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

I highly appreciate this initiative by Heiko and Jean-Yves. It is beneficial for us all to discuss today's themes—including the fight against the pandemic, climate change, human rights, and gender equality—when we are faced with the global spread of COVID-19, which has made cooperation among the international community and multilateralism more important than ever.

With the achievement of universal health coverage in mind, Japan has committed to providing multidimensional assistance amounting to 3.9 billion USD to address the COVID-19 pandemic. In June, Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit together with Gavi and announced a pledge of 1 billion USD to the COVAX AMC. Japan has provided approximately 23 million doses of vaccines to date, making Japan the world's third largest contributor of vaccines donation. With upcoming additional contributions included, Japan will provide up to approximately 60 million vaccine doses in total. Japan is also carrying out "Last One Mile Support" in nearly 60 countries to aid cold storage and transportation to ensure that vaccine deliveries reach every individual. Japan intends to further expand such efforts going forward.

Furthermore, in order to promote gender equality, Japan has contributed 30 million USD to UN Women and other organizations to support women and girls.

The fight against climate change and to conserve the world's biodiversity are also issues that the international community must tackle together. Japan has decided to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and aim to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in fiscal year 2030. We have also joined an initiative aiming to conserve 30% of global land and oceans.

Innovation is key to achieving such high-level targets, and Japan will make the utmost use of its world-leading technologies in areas such as hydrogen and ammonium that contribute to decarbonization.



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Japan will continue to play a leading role in addressing climate change and biodiversity loss, including by contributing to the upcoming discussions at COP26 and the discussions at COP15 on the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

Japan would like to further enhance cooperation based on multilateralism together with the like-minded countries attending today.

Jordan

Ayman Safadi, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Thank you, Y.E Minister “Heiko Mass” and Y.E “Jean-Yves Le Drian” For convening us together today in the second anniversary of the launch of the alliance for Multilateralism.

Indeed, only through active effective multilateral work we will be able to overcome the coming challenges that we face. Only through working together we will be able to create the better futures that we all seek for our peoples.

Covid-19 pandemic has clearly shown how interdependent we are. The devastating impact has hit us all. The response to it must also be collective, ensuring coordinated measures and equality in vaccination.

Refugees is a growing common challenge that also demand that we continue with joint action to counter it. As the largest per capita host for refugees, we know how vital multilateral work is in efforts to provide refugees with the dignified life they deserve.

All the challenges that we face, from efforts to conflict resolution to climate change to gender equality will not be sufficiently met except through effective multilateralism.

Jordan, as His Majesty King Abdullah II stressed in his address to the United Nations General Assembly yesterday, will remain committed to joint action and will continue to work with all of our Friends and partners to ensure a better today and a safer more prosperous tomorrow. Thank you.

Maldives

Ahmed Khaleel, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Thank you, Ms. Elizabeth Cousens,

1. First and foremost, let me take this opportunity to thank their excellencies Ministers Heiko Maas and Jean-Yves Le Drian for convening today's timely meeting, and I join you in celebrating the second anniversary of this great initiative. The Maldives, as our President



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emphasized during the General Debate, is an ardent believer in the cause of multilateralism, and we welcome any opportunities to extoll its virtues.

2. As a Small Island Developing State, the prosperity of the Maldives is perhaps more closely bound to the movements of global currents than most. Nowhere is this more emblematic than in the themes of our common agenda: the COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis and biodiversity, and gender equality. In each area, the impacts of international developments can be magnified by the time they reach our shores. The impact of the pandemic on international travel devastated our economy and threatens to unwind years of sustainable development, while the climate crisis rapidly becomes an existential threat to our islands.

3. The pandemic has caused some States to turn inwards, reviving isolationist attitudes of a bygone era. There is an urgent need to strengthen and revitalize our multilateral order to confront the nature of today's global challenges, such as pandemics and climate change. We can all now clearly see the interconnectedness of these threats. COVID-19 struck most fiercely on marginalized communities already suffering from a lack of basic rights, such as health care and decent housing. Vaccine inequities has stalled, and in some cases, regressed developmental progress in nations that are already suffering from financial constraints. This unforeseen pandemic further limits the fiscal resources available to address climate change. Combatting these interlinked issues will require closer collaboration and communication, and may well require a strengthening of the institutions and rules that underpin our cooperation.

3. The Maldives has come to understand that our global networks are not just one-way streets. Through innovative action and compelling initiatives, small islands can harness the power of multilateralism to project positive change outwards and influence the global currents for the betterment of all.

4. Together with Costa Rica, the Maldives is co-leading the Action Coalition of Feminist Action for Climate Justice. We are active in promoting an inclusive and gender-just climate response, and we are ensuring that women and girls are empowered to equitably and meaningfully participate in decision-making processes. These actions align with our deep belief in the relationship between human rights and gender equality. Inclusive representation must be actively pursued to ensure that all segments of our community enjoy the fulfilment of their rights to the fullest.

5. Last year, we launched the Group of Friends to Combat Marine Plastic Pollution with 46 partner States. The collaborative efforts of this Group are to coordinate our multilateral efforts to address marine plastic pollution and work towards a comprehensive global response to protect our oceans and marine life from the scourge of plastic pollution. We hope to rehabilitate those marine areas that have been damaged and ensure that they are sustainably managed for generations to come.

6. Our belief that small nations can have big impacts is exemplified by the recent election of our own Foreign Minister, His Excellency Abdulla Shahid, to the Presidency of the General



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Assembly for the 76th session. As he said during his opening remarks at the General Assembly, his Presidency will be one of hope, and it is hope that is the very keystone of multilateralism. The hope that our collective endeavours will succeed, and the hope that our shared pursuits will bring prosperity and security for all communities across the world.

7. More than ever, we must continue to communicate, collaborate, and hope, if we are to overcome the common threats we face. These threats are linked, and our array of solutions must expand and evolve, including innovative forms of multilateralism. In this vein, the Maldives, as always, looks forward to working together with all nations to ensure a safe, resilient and harmonious future for all.

I thank you.

Spain

José Manuel Albares, Minister of Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation

Thank you very much for your invitation to participate in this ministerial meeting of the Alliance for Multilateralism. I have the honour to participate for the first time as Foreign Minister of Spain.

Let me just emphasize one point: the COVID pandemic has proven to millions of people that structured international cooperation is our best tool to deal with global challenges.

We have to reinforce, and whenever necessary, reform international institutions. We must build a system that is more inclusive, more effective and that delivers, in line with the proposals taken by Our Common Agenda report the UN Secretary General just launched some days ago.

I would like to share with you two suggestions and one additional comment:

First, we urgently need to devise a more effective approach to global public health. The system has to be based on a reformed World Health Organization, with wider mandates and greater enforcement authority. A global health framework with real teeth. We suggest that WHO ought to have the capacity to:

- Design and impose better protocols for preparedness and reaction;
- Establish a global reserve for the supply of emergency medical and sanitary materials;
- Enforce data sharing and a mechanism for national reporting, including a system of inspections, particularly on animal markets;



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- And cover the whole chain of public-health interventions, from scientific research and early warning to policy formulation, implementation, and evaluation.

Second, we need a more inclusive global governance. This means leaving no one behind, particularly women and girls.

COVID-19 is having a direct impact on the situation of women and girls around the world, and women play a major role in the response against COVID-19: 70% of frontline health and social workers are women.

However, most initiatives and resolutions at the UN and other levels, designed to spur action, have been, so far, gender-blind.

That is why Spain promoted last year a Resolution at the General Assembly that stated the need to adopt a gender responsive approach to COVID at all levels. The Resolution was very short, strategic and action oriented, and touched upon five elements:

- Women participation in the decision-making process.
- Economic recovery plans must drive transformative change, by addressing care work and recognizing unpaid care.
- Equal and full access to health services.
- Integrate prevention of gender-based violence in COVID response schemes.
- Gender-sensitive response also in humanitarian settings.

Finally, let me conclude by saying that Spain will continue advocating in favour of a reinforced international system. This is a demand from our citizens, so we have to seize this opportunity and build back better.

Thank you.