



High-level meeting of the General Assembly to commemorate the
seventy-fifth anniversary of the
United Nations General Assembly
21 September 2020

Statement by

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President, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

For seventy-five years, the United Nations has promoted peace, sustainable development and human rights, based on a shared vision of a better future for all of mankind. It has served as counterweight to aggressive nationalism, protectionism and isolationism. The Charter of the United Nations is the keystone of modern international relations. We can hardly imagine a world without it.

I commend the co-facilitators, Sweden and Qatar, for the Declaration from today's meeting. Plainly written, concise, substantive, forward-looking and unified. It is a declaration worthy of the moment.

As Norway prepares to enter the UN Security Council as an elected member on 1 January, it is against a backdrop of renewed great power rivalry and a rules-based world order under pressure. In this day and age, it is of vital importance that we reiterate our common commitment to the principles of justice and international law.

A long time has passed since the end of the devastating war that led to the creation of the United Nations. Today, we must be as forward-looking and dedicated as the founders of the UN were at the San Francisco conference in 1945.

President Truman said: *"With this Charter the world can begin to look forward to the time when all worthy human beings may be permitted to live decently as free people."*

We are not there yet.

To achieve our common goals, we must restore and reinvigorate the multilateral system. We must adapt it to the challenges of our time. We must recognise, once again, that no State, no matter how powerful, can meet the challenges of climate change, growing inequality and violent conflict- and now, the pandemic- alone.

We, the Member States, will be measured on achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. We will be measured on our ability to maintain peace. And we will be measured on our ability to deliver visible and adequate results when confronted with new challenges such as COVID-19.

It is up to us to prove in practice that our discussions and decisions in the great halls of the United Nations can alleviate the daily struggles of ordinary people all over the world.

Thank you.