THE NATIONAL STATEMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS
DELIVERED BY
HER EXCELLENCY SHEILA CAREY
PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
PERMANENT MISSION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS TO THE UNITED NATIONS

HIGH-LEVEL MEETING TO COMMEMORATE THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

26TH OCTOBER 2020

PLENARY
SEVENTY-FIFTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

NEW YORK
General Statement at the High-Level Meeting of the Assembly to commemorate the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of the United Nations under the theme: “The future we want, the United Nations we need; reaffirming our collective commitment to multilateralism” in the United Nations General Assembly

Colleague Heads of State and Government,

His Excellency Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General,

President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Mr. Volkan Bozkir,

Excellencies,

For Seventy-five years, the United Nations has been a source of hope for humanity to develop a better world even in the most challenging times. The Bahamas takes this opportunity to congratulate the United Nations on its Seventy-fifth year since the signing of the UN charter. This anniversary is a stock-taking moment, where we can reaffirm our dedication to the principles and values enshrined in the Charter. The Bahamas is proud to be a part of this organization since gaining independence in 1973 and is very pleased to witness the commemoration of this milestone.

This provides an important occasion to reflect on the successes of the past and to discuss our hopes for the future. The legacy of the United Nations has been solidified by its vital role as the lead organization in assessing threats, encouraging collective security and providing recourse where threats are present, and the decades of success in fighting colonization and providing development support and assistance. The UN continues to champion the protection and promotion of human rights.

Just last year the islands of Abaco and Grand Bahama in the northern Bahamas were struck by the most severe Hurricane in The Bahamas’ recorded history. The security implications of climate-linked disasters like the systemic devastation caused by more frequent and more powerful hurricanes must be addressed at the multilateral level. The resulting shocks threaten our health, marine resources, coastal management and access to decent work. If consumption rates and greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced immediately, existing threats to our citizens will be worsened, and new and unprecedented risks will continue to emerge.

I want to take this opportunity to thank the UN and our many international partners who came to our immediate assistance in the aftermath and who are continuing to work with us as we rebuild Abaco and Grand Bahama. I also want to salute the many dedicated UN staffers and pay particular homage to those who sacrificed their lives to uphold the principles of the UN.

The Bahamas remains dedicated to supporting and furthering the UN’s mission, while also recognizing the complexities of the many tasks ahead.

The relevance of this organization was reaffirmed with the emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic as the UN, through the WHO helped to lead the fight against this disease and its aftermath. As we noted in the declaration that was adopted on 21 September, COVID-19 has led to a “global economic recession, increased poverty, anxiety and fear. It has put enormous pressure on our societies, economies and health systems”. The impact of COVID-19 threatens our ability to meet the SDGs we have agreed are necessary
to help build a more equitable and just world. The effects of the pandemic exacerbate the complex problems small island states like The Bahamas face in the wake of dangers linked to climate change.

The Declaration we adopted by consensus reaffirms our commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter. This Declaration sets out twelve (12) action points which, if followed, will improve and enhance the lives of all our citizens. COVID-19 has reminded us how vulnerable this world is. It has demonstrated that we need united, determined action if we are to succeed.

In celebration of this auspicious occasion, The Bahamas reaffirms our commitment to the United Nations and commends its Seventy-five years of support to member states.