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Introduction

The 73rd session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) is marked by a complex international context, in which the bases of multilateralism are being called into question by key stakeholders in the international arena. The continuity of certain armed conflicts and the possibility of new ones arising, the persistence of inequality and injustice, the migration crisis, the increasingly worrying consequences of climate change and environmental problems, criticism to system institutions, in addition to the difficulties the EU, as a strong supporter of the UN, is facing, make supporting the reinforcement of multilateralism more necessary today than ever. All these challenges involve a major challenge which requires big doses of commitment by the international community. The election of the new Secretary-General of the United Nations last year brought new energy in, and represents a unique opportunity to revitalise the Organisation in light of the most immediate needs of the present and the future.

Spain, just like its European partners, has developed an active multilateralism which represents one of the cornerstones of our foreign policy. The UN will continue to have our country as a committed partner to the search for international peace and security. Within the context of the session now commencing, we will continue to work with the three priorities identified by the Secretary-General of the United Nations for its term: prevention of conflicts, sustainable development and United Nations reform.

Our actions during this session will revolve around three key axes:

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Attention to human dignity

Human dignity as a priority axis of our actions not only implies a scrupulous respect for Human Rights and Humanitarian International Law, but especially, taking the human being into account and their basic needs in all the actions carried out in multilateral forums. This is consistent with the role traditionally played by Spain in the UN and with future expected actions.

Many are the initiatives fostered by Spain (or in which we have been a key part) within the context of the UN and in which we still deepening: the Women,



Peace and Security Agenda¹; in which we are working with Finland, in order to advance the commitments towards 2025; the 2286 Resolution (2016) of the Security Council on healthcare access and protection in conflict situations², which we lead with New Zealand, Uruguay, Egypt and Japan and regarding which we will submit a new motion for a resolution at the General Assembly; the Youth, Peace and Security Agenda³, including the issue of education in emergencies; the fight against smuggling and trafficking of human beings (2331 Resolution of the Security Council) and organ trafficking (RES/71/322 of the General Assembly), which shall be also the subject matter of a new motion for a resolution; the defence and promotion of the Responsibility to Protect; and the fight against impunity, by means of the firm defence of the work carried out by the International Criminal Court or the support to efforts addressed to limiting the use of its veto in the CSNU in outrageous crime situations. In these areas, Spain will organise in November a conference for the commemoration of the 20 anniversary of the Rome Statute and foster its universal nature and will host in May 2019 the 3rd International Conference on Safe Schools.

As for Human Rights, and very especially in the year in which Spain commenced its second term as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC), we supported the increase of attention paid by the Council to the most serious situations of violation of human rights in specific countries, by means of the so-called country resolutions. Furthermore, we have provided our knowledge and expertise in those areas in which we have certified experience. That is why we will continue to support the activities undertaken by Human Rights advocates; fostering the abolishment of death penalty and the full exercise and enjoyment of women's and girl's rights under equality conditions, with special attention to sexual and reproductive health rights and the fight against gender-based violence in all its manners, and the protection deserved by other vulnerable groups, such as the LGTBI people or people with disabilities. We will do it by means of dialogue, cooperation and efficiency, by supporting the strengthening of Member States in order to fulfil their Human Rights-related obligations and guarantee their cooperation with Council mechanisms, and supporting the participation of civil society organisations in the CHR sessions. Broadly speaking, we will continue working for achieving all social, economic and cultural rights, paying special attention to the right to water.

With the same goal, Spain has a relevant role in the negotiations regarding humanitarian crisis caused by large movements of people. We supported the global mobilisation, and actively contributed achieve that the 2016 New York

¹ Spain promoted the establishment of a Network of Focal Points of Women, Peace and Security and has adopted this year the second Action Plan within this area.

² This is an initiative which, following the works prepared by the CICR, has resulted in a line of approach in the United Nations led by Spain, which is focused towards a new Resolution, within the scope of the General Government, fostered by Spain, to develop aspects which are not covered by the Security Council.

³ Madrid will host in 2019 the Harvard World Model UN, an initiative that aims at fostering multilateral awareness among young people.

Declaration can be translated this year into two Global Agreements on Refugees and on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migrations, which reflect the commitment of the international community to face these challenges in a concerted fashion. We also hope that the situation of refugees and of the States hosting them will improve, while at the same time promoting a more equitable distribution of the pressure and reinforcing the implementation of the CRRF (Framework for Response regarding Refugees), which is being supported by Spain in Central America and Africa.

All this is complemented by actions within the humanitarian scope developed by Spain which, in 2019, will take over the OCHA Donor Support Group (ODSG) presidency, our defence and specialisation in the forgotten crises and our call for more coordination and organisation when dealing with said crises by the international community, as well as our commitment with respect to the challenges posed by gender, disabilities and diversity in same. Additionally, Spain has, since 2018, a medical emergency team with surgical capacity and a field hospital⁴, ready for deployment in less than 72 hours anywhere in the world in case of humanitarian emergency.

Within this approach line, we have promoted, together with other member states the organisation of a series of parallel meetings within this Ministerial Week, which are addressed to improving participation of women in peace processes, which we hope will be expressed through commitments from now to 2025⁵; calls on the international community for increased awareness regarding the issue of disabled women and young people⁶. On the other hand, the President of the Government is part of the Circle of Leadership on the prevention of and response to sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations operations, promoted by the UNSG, the strategy of which was, this year, extended to all UN agencies, which was the subject matter of a Statement by Mr. Guterres, which has been subscribed by Spain.

However, the commitment to human dignity requires continued action, and therefore we are working to become one of the first countries that are able to design a National Strategy of Humanitarian Diplomacy, which informs of the level of internal compliance with the commitments assumed at international level and allows us to maintain a consistent line in foreign policy.

⁴ The START or "Red Vests" project, which has just been verified by the WHO and the European Commission, is the first Spanish health team comprising professionals from the health public system of all Autonomous Communities.

⁵ Side Event: "Women, Peace and Security Focal Points Network", organised with Germany and Spain, in which the launch of the 2025 Commitment was announced, which we promote together with Finland.

⁶ Side Event: "Women and young people with disabilities" organised by FNUAP, We Decide, Spain, Ecuador, Argentina and Morocco.

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Attention to the security of people

All the aspects mentioned above will not be possible without implementing initiatives intended to guaranteeing security of people against global threats, such as terrorism, armed conflicts, proliferation of WMD or new threats, such as cyber-attacks. We will continue to support the efforts made by the international community against Transnational Organised Crime and against the lack of security at sea.

Spain, during its terms as a non-permanent member in the Security Council 2015-2016 launched key initiatives regarding counter-terrorism actions. Among them, the Madrid Guiding Principles to stem the flow of foreign terrorist fighters; the specific attention to victims; or the Resolution 2322 (2016) regarding judicial and police cooperation on criminal matters regarding terrorism. In order to give continuity to these actions, it is our wish to continue to be related to the different initiatives that may be suggested in this area. We have also been decisively supporting and funding the Counter-Terrorism Office, managed by the Under-Secretary-General Voronkov, as well as its Victims of Terrorism Support Portal. Within the broader framework of the UN, we are particularly interested in other initiatives, such as those regarding legal evidence or protection of infrastructures.

In this context, Spain has also committed itself to preserving and strengthening the non-proliferation international regime, that is to say, all the architecture of agreements, organisations and instruments aimed at fighting the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Spain is also a State Party to all universal conventions comprising the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) international regime: the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Convention on the Prohibition of Biological and Toxin Weapons and the Chemical Weapons Convention. Since 1996 we have been a member to the Conference on Disarmament, an assembly that is comprised by 65 states, including all possessors of nuclear weapons and recognised by the UN as the sole permanent negotiation body for multilateral disarmament and non-proliferation agreements. Regarding conventional weapons having an indiscriminate humanitarian impact, Spain is party to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its five Protocols, as well as the so-called "conventions of related States": treaties than have been agreed on the fringes of the traditional channels of the United Nations, by certain States that were willing to go faster in the process of eradication of certain type of

weapons⁷. Spain is active in all these forums, and engages in the discussions by formulating or co-sponsoring initiatives for the reinforcement of the regime. In the last few years, we have taken an important role in the Nuclear Security Summit and in the Global Initiative against Nuclear Terrorism (IGTN).

The other side of this scope has to do with our participation in peacekeeping missions. Spain has been participating in peacekeeping missions since 1989; and ever since, more than 160,000 Spanish soldiers have been deployed to more than fifteen missions in four continents. We are currently participating in nineteen international missions: four UN missions, eleven European Union missions, one NATO mission ("Resolute Support") and two bilateral missions in support of France in Africa, also contributing to the Anti-Daesh Global Coalition in Iraq; and we are the first contributor in terms of troops to EU military and civil missions. As has been broadly demonstrated over the years, Spain is committed to peace and international legality, and has actively contributed to global safety; that is why we have subscribed the Action for Peacekeeping Political Statement, promoted by SG Guterres, which is aimed at becoming a new guideline for peacekeeping mission orders.

Finally, in line with the approach set by the UNSG to promote prevention as a guiding principle of the action of the UN in all its areas, with mediation being one of its main instruments, Spain has supported and will continue to support same, by means of the promotion and involvement in different initiatives: the co-presidency with Finland of the Group of Friends of mediation group in Brussels, the Mediterranean Mediation Initiative (Med-Med Initiative), the support to the European Institute for Peace (EIP) and, more broadly, through our involvement in the Alliance of Civilizations.

04 **Attention to the sustainable development focused on human beings**

The defence of human dignity entails the attention to their sustainable development needs and ambitions. Spain is fully committed to the 2030 Agenda, designed for the global compliance with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For that reason, Spain sat for the Voluntary National Review on July. Likewise, this internal commitment involves international action to support countries for compliance with their SDGs, and for the attainment of the global public goods. Thus, the Spanish Cooperation adopts the SDGs as its

⁴ Se trata de la Convención de Minas Antipersona de 1998 y de la Convención de Municiones en Racimo de 2008.

own Strategic Objectives in its new Master Plan for 2018-2021, focusing on contributing to poverty eradication, building people and community resilience, reducing inequalities, defending human rights and fundamental freedoms, and promoting an inclusive economic growth, as well as the preservation of the planet and the fight against climate change. From this point, we will continue promoting the application of the results of the UN major conferences and summits in the different spheres, including the Agenda for Humanity, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 and the New Urban Agenda approved in the Habitat III Conference.

One of our priorities is the reduction of inter and intra-country inequalities and discrimination, which constitutes one of the greatest challenges of the new Agenda 2030. Spain focuses part of its cooperation efforts working with human groups that suffer from several kinds of discrimination, regardless of the country where they are and adopting a multidimensional approach. For this reason, we will be advocating that special attention be provided to the challenges faced by the least developed countries, middle-income countries and island developing States.

Scientific evidence of the environmental deterioration, global warming and its effects: desertification, movement of people, increase of poverty or scarcity of resources cause Spain to consider that these threatens can only be faced from a global action, as the Paris Agreement. For this reason, we are committed with the 24 Katowice Climate Change Conference (Poland, December 2018) to achieve certain results that maintain the compromise and spirit of the Paris Agreement and allow them to be applicable to all the countries, considering their national circumstances. Within a broader framework, we support the negotiation process for a Global Pact for the Environment in order to harmonise the current mechanism and to bridge, where applicable, the potential gaps that may exist and we will trail the resolutions presented in the UNGA relating to the fight to counter desertification and the protection of forests, seas and oceans.

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Reform of the UN system and renewal of its bodies

These strategic lines prove that the Spain's commitment to the multilateralism is not circumstantial or indifferent to the need to continue improving the system. Spain supports the necessary reform of the UN system advocated by the Secretary General, António Guterres, in order for the UN to be able to act in a comprehensive and consistent manner, both at field level and from its headquarters in New York, Geneva, Vienna, Nairobi and the rest of the world. Its goal must clearly include the three peace-development-HR pillars, reinforce

preventive diplomacy and eschew overlapping dynamics and competence battles between the Secretary departments, and between the bodies and agencies of the developing system that, far from acting jointly, create overlaps and dysfunctions in common issues. The reform will begin being operational from January 2019 and have three main strands:

- Reform of the development system, in which the main point of interest for Spain has been the decoupling and strengthening of the Resident Coordinator, with a greater leadership capacity, a broadly comprehensive and objective vision, and that is uncoupled from the UNDP and reports directly to the UNSG. Likewise, accountability is reinforced.
- Reform of the Peace and Security pillar: the report of the SG on the reform of the peace and security pillar proposes a structural reorganization of the Secretary that seeks to prioritize prevention and the concept of sustainable peace and provide the Secretary with strategic consistency avoiding dysfunctions and lack of coordination amongst the Department of Political Affairs on one side, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations on the other. During the last years, the concept of sustainable peace has consolidated as a process that seeks to eradicate deep-rooted conflicts and reinforce the bonds between peace, sustainable development and Human Rights.
- Management Reform: Its purpose is the streamlining of the bureaucratic procedures by means of a greater delegation of authority and decentralisation and, at the same time, an increased concentration in the rendering of services to the agencies that allows to generate synergies and efficiencies. This greater responsibility would be offset by a greater transparency and accountability that enable the sustainability of the system. For said purpose, it is vital for the States to contribute according to their capabilities.

Regardless of the internal reform process of the UN system, Spain will continue supporting the intergovernmental work aimed at achieving a renewal of the organization bodies to improve their efficiency. On the basis of such beliefs, we will support the efforts aimed at boosting the renewal of the General Assembly by means of the improvement of its working methods, including a reflection on the selection procedure of the United Nations Secretary General.

Spain further supports the validity of the intergovernmental negotiations (IGN) for the reform of the UNSC. The necessary reform of the SC must be attained by means of an agreement supported by the broad majority of the States and that strengthens its legitimacy and efficiency. We are committed to a comprehensive reform that jointly resolves the five issues subject of same (categories of membership, veto, regional representation, size and working methods and relationships between the UNSC and the UNGA) to achieve a more legitimate UNSC, i.e. a truly representative, transparent, democratic,

responsible and efficient SC. Moreover, we will continue seeking an increased transparency and collaboration between the General Assembly and the Security Council.

We will work with the same approach as members of the United Nations Human Rights Council. Finally, we will encourage a greater dialogue and interaction with the civil society, leveraging the existing resources, as well as a greater coordination with Regional Organizations, namely with those with bodies of a similar content (European Union and African Union).

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Other issues

- We will defend the principle of multilingualism in the UN as an expression of their universal character, which facilitates communication and tolerance amongst people and ensures a broader and more efficient participation of all in the Organization.
- We will continue working to achieve the complete and effective application of the unequivocal doctrine of the UNGA on the Gibraltar issue, calling for an end to this colonial situation by means of negotiations between the United Kingdom and Spain.
- We will continue working to attain an appropriate presence of Spain in the bodies, commissions, committees and executive boards of the UN system, as well as to increase the presence of Spanish professionals in management positions in the Secretary and the rest of the system.
- We will pay attention to the communication between Member States and the Spanish citizens, aimed at giving visibility and placing value on the efforts of the United Nations and the role that our country plays within the organization.
- We will increase our presence in forums and debates organised by the UN with regards to Sports, as a contributing factor for peace and reducing exclusion; Sustainable Tourism as a key factor to promote coexistence, mutual understanding and friendship amongst people; and Corporate Social Responsibility as a means for the responsible attainment of benefits by means of Good Governance, Environmental Management and Social Action for Development, areas in which our country and our companies are recognised as international benchmarks by the most prestigious international indexes.
- Within the framework of the Action Plan for Spanish Companies, the UN will try to increase the presence of Spanish companies in UN procedures.