

**Address by HE Mr. Filip Vujanović
at the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly
New York City, 20 September 2017**

Dear President,
Distinguished Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my pleasure to address you at the 72nd Session of the General Assembly and reiterate a strong commitment of Montenegro to the values of the United Nations.

As one of the newest members of the United Nations, Montenegro actively contributes to maintaining peace and security in the region. Good neighbourly relations and regional cooperation in the Balkans are on the top our foreign policy agenda. We are strongly committed to multilateral cooperation and affirmation of the international organizations that contribute to the peace and stability. It is of great importance for Montenegro that it became the 29th member of the North Atlantic Alliance.

As a member of the Alliance, we will continue to improve its cooperation and partnership with the UN peace-keeping missions and regional organizations dedicated to establishing and maintaining the peace and stability. At the same time, Montenegro has proved to be a reliable partner of the European Union. Accession negotiations have already ensured significant economic benefits.

International community is faced with the complex challenges such as long-term conflicts, terrorism and violent extremism, refugee crises, systematic violation of human rights, poverty. The United Nations, which are established to prevent war and human suffering, should make more rapid adjustments to respond to these challenges and adopt new mechanisms to prevent conflicts and resolve long-term crisis.

The United Nations and international as well as regional economic organizations have new responsibilities. Peace, stability, achieving sustainable and inclusive growth and improvement of international economic relations are the basic elements for achieving the goals set in the 2030 Agenda. Therefore, it is highly important to carry out a successful implementation of the reform process of the United Nations and its affiliations -IMF and World Bank- for achieving a more equitable economic growth- poverty eradication, women's economic empowerment and bridging the technological gap between countries and regions.

Montenegro remains dedicated to the UN efforts in implementation of the ambitious reform agenda, including the strengthening of the role of the General Assembly an enlargement of the Security Council according to the principles of equitable regional representation. Successful cooperation between Montenegro and the UN system

continues in the framework of the program "Acting as One". Positive results of this program are visible and recognized by many UN member states.

Montenegro is a part of the region whose experience has shown that dialogue and cooperation are possible and that they are the only way to overcome the differences and achieve peace and lasting solutions. Therefore, we will organize, early next year, a regional conference, in order to share our experience and help in defining new mechanisms for conflict prevention and resolution.

Efforts aimed at prevention of terrorism must be focused on its causes. It is a particular responsibility of the countries from which the terrorist threats origin, but the international community should also offer necessary help. Therefore, we highly appreciate establishing of the Office of Counter-Terrorism at the initiative of the Secretary-General, which will enable a strong leadership and connection between the UN and its members in preventing conflicts and terrorism.

Montenegro unequivocally supports the efforts aimed at non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is a foundation for improvement of the global stability. Montenegro has defined its national framework by adopting the Strategy on Non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (2016-2020) and the Action Plan for its implementation.

Montenegro strongly condemns nuclear weapons tests conducted by North Korea as an act that violates international obligations determined by the Security Council resolutions and poses a serious threat to global peace and security. We support diplomatic efforts aimed at calming down current situation and call on North Korea to fully respect its international obligations.

Highly important multilateral agreements that have been adopted confirm that multilateralism is crucial and essential for achieving peace, inclusive sustainable growth and respect for the human rights. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and Paris Climate Agreement represent a universal platform for the transformation and progress. Therefore, for their full implementation, it is necessary to ensure the utmost commitment of all member states and considerable financial resources.

Montenegro has strongly supported the negotiations on new international accord on climate changes. Paris Agreement on Climate Changes is a foundation for further efforts in preserving a long-term stability of the climate system. I had a pleasure and honour to participate on behalf of Montenegro in the historic summit in Paris, when this agreement was adopted and, later, to take part in its signing ceremony in the UN headquarters. In the efforts to mitigate the climate changes, Montenegro financially contributes to the Trust Fund of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Changes.

Respect for human rights is a precondition for peace, stability and development. Full implementation of the international standards and norms relating to promotion and protection of human rights is the obligation of each country. Being committed to the multilateral system of protection and promotion of human rights, particularly the most vulnerable groups, we attach special importance to the poverty eradication and fight against discrimination. We attach special attention to: strengthening the position and role of women in society and prevention of violence against women; child protection and development; fight against discrimination of LGBTI population and persons with disabilities. We especially appreciate the joint initiative of the European Union and the United Nations for eliminating of all forms of violence against women and girls as well as launching the Global Alliance to end trade in tools of torture and capital punishment.

I am certain that improvement of human rights protection and respect recommends Montenegro for a candidate for membership to the Human Rights Council 2022-2024. This was also confirmed by the High Commissioner for Human Rights who said that Montenegro was one of the 33 UN members that sent regular reports on the implementation of the international agreements concerning human rights.

Attaching special importance to creating key documents on refugees and migrants, we point out to the necessity of a comprehensive approach, taking into account developing, humanitarian and security dimension as well as human rights dimension. We are ready, in cooperation with the UNHCR and based on our experience, to make a concrete contribution to drafting two global compacts.

Enormous needs for offering humanitarian assistance to the civilians in conflicts and natural disasters oblige the United Nations to reinforce mechanisms for humanitarian aid. Montenegro has actively participated in the first World Humanitarian Summit last year. This Summit confirmed the necessity of an efficient coordination of the international humanitarian assistance. Therefore, Montenegro has invested significant efforts this year to ensure appropriate legislative and strategic framework for planning and implementation of control and financing of the international development cooperation and humanitarian assistance.

Mr. President, Ladies and gentlemen,

Finally, allow me to extend congratulations, in my own name and on behalf of Montenegro, to Mr. Miroslav Lajčak on his election as the President of the 72nd Session of the General Assembly, whose persistent commitment to dialogue and cooperation unequivocally confirms that he will be very successful in this high office.

I would also like to express high appreciation to the former President, Mr. Peter Thomson, for the achievements in his work related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

I avail myself of this opportunity to reiterate my most sincere congratulations to the new Secretary-General, Mr. Antonio Guterres. I am convinced that his rich professional experience, leadership and commitment will contribute to the work and results of the United Nations in times of complex challenges that the world faces today. I also express my sincere gratitude to the former UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon for his overall contribution to achieving goals and values of the United Nations and his support for Montenegro.

I wish a successful 72nd session of the UN General Assembly.

Thank you for your attention.