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General Debate

Statement by

H.E. Mr. Klaus Werner Iohannis

President of Romania

Plenary meeting

20 September 2017

Mr. Secretary General,

Mr. President of the General Assembly,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me welcome this year's focus on *peace and a decent life for all on a sustainable planet*.

These are very important objectives, which require all of our determination, as responsible leaders, in order to reach them, especially when we see the challenges before us.

Indeed, people across the globe still suffer from the brutal effects of war, poverty, inequality and injustice.

Tensions over cultural identity and faith are rising even within traditionally open and tolerant societies.

Natural disasters cause increasing damage every season. Terrorist attacks deepen the sense of insecurity.

Even if there are some perceptions that the United Nations did not manage well the multitude and complexity of the new crises, it is clear that no other path serves us better than **multilateralism** in finding viable solutions for the current global challenges.

More than ever, a rule-based international system – the **International Rule of Law** – is paramount for our success. The UN has to be **equipped with the essential tools** to perform as an efficient organization that reflects the will of its Members and enjoys the trust of all the people of the globe. At the same time, **we, the Member States, need to increase our commitment towards the Organization.**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Developing and sustaining peace require not only a swift and adequate response to crises, but also an understanding of the root causes of conflicts and insecurity, which are rarely emerging from one single source.

At the same time, the UN agenda is not only about conflicts and crises, but also about **sustainable development and promoting human rights**. It is about hope in a **decent life for all**, the only way to **build a safe and sustainable planet**.

Working on **education**, ensuring **prosperity** of our people are the most efficient ways to prevent instability and crises. **Focusing our actions on people** should remain the ultimate goal. *How to achieve this aim?*

We have to drive the implementation of the ambitious global Agenda for Development forward, including in relation with conflict prevention and sustaining peace, as well as its Sustainable Development Goals.

Romania has assumed the necessary development policies with real impact on advancing the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. We have chosen to involve in this process all political actors, the civil society, the private sector, and the scientific community.

To share our experience in coordinating the national process of implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to speak about our progress, Romania will submit its Voluntary National Review during the High Level Political Forum for Sustainable Development in July 2018.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We cannot lose sight of the stabilizing role the United Nations is playing in setting the broad parameters of contemporary international relations. That is why our effort to improve the **effectiveness of the UN** should remain strong.

At the end of the day, no matter how a future reformed Security Council will look like, we need a UN with robust policy planning capabilities, able to project visions for the global peace and well-being beyond the crises of the day.

Romania supports the Secretary General's focus on the creation of an integrated institutional structure for supporting a holistic approach to crisis management.

We also strongly advocate for modernizing and increasing the effectiveness of peace operations.

We support the Secretary General in his efforts to pursue a meaningful reform on three priorities: conflict prevention; sustainable development; management reform and reshaping the Secretariat for making the UN more efficient.

My country also welcomes the reform of the United Nations counter-terrorism architecture and the UN demarches of making counter-terrorism a key element of its prevention agenda. As no country can fight alone this terrible scourge, we trust that the newly established UN Office of Counter-Terrorism will increase our efficiency in combating **terrorism** in all its forms and manifestations. In this respect, Romania remains committed to the common initiative developed with Spain for the future possible establishment of an International Court against Terrorism.

We also expect an increased contribution of the UN to the global efforts in the area of **international migration**, including in **addressing its main sources**. We hope for a consistent follow-up to the New York Declaration of 2016.

It is important, in my view, that the Global Compact for Migration, whose negotiations will start soon, covers all dimensions of international migration, to the benefit of both migrants and host communities.

We also support the **reinforcement of the human rights dimension** within all relevant sectors of the UN activity. That is why I welcome the Secretary General's Upfront Initiative on Human Rights, aiming at mainstreaming the human rights policies throughout the UN system.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I had the pleasure to organize, earlier today, a debate on a very important topic: **Making Education for Peace**. The use of identity "fears" and of the "us versus them" paradigm cannot be left unanswered.

In a context of increasing violence and disinformation, Romania is convinced that **only through quality education we can counter extremist trends which our youth is facing today**.

At the same time, we continue to be concerned with the security developments in and around our region. The belt of protracted conflicts around the Black Sea remains a serious threat. We are still witnessing actions undertaken at the expense of the principles and norms of international law.

This proliferation of protracted conflicts in our neighbourhood hampered regional cooperation and brought mutual confidence to historically low levels. That is why the international community should actively support and stimulate regional cooperation, confidence-building measures and address decisively these conflicts.

Romania has constantly flagged the need of strengthening cooperation of the UN with regional and sub-regional organizations. To this purpose, we promoted a first Resolution in this respect, in our capacity of non-permanent member of the Security Council, in 2005.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Romania would be proud to bring its contribution, once more, to the work of the Security Council.

Our bid for a non-permanent seat during the tenure of 2020-2021 is about my country's sincere engagement in supporting the UN efforts for peace and security. It is about **our enduring commitment to peace, development and justice**.

I am convinced that Romania's solid track record of building trust within the UN could bring a valuable contribution to the Security Council. Our dedicated work in the 4 previous mandates speaks clearly about the intensity of our commitment and represents a wealth of experience.

Romania is honoured to have been serving in UN peacekeeping missions for more than 26 years, with more than 10.000 Romanian Blue Helmets, men and women. Romanian military, as well as police and gendarmerie officers have operated and are currently operating in over 20 missions around the world, from Pakistan and Mali to Angola and Haiti.

There are also other relevant contributions of my country to UN efforts:

We host in Romania the Centre of Excellence for Protection and Security – for training the UN security personnel, and the Emergency Transit Centre for refugees, managed together with UNHCR and the International Organisation of Migration – the first such body in the world.

If our endeavour to become a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the term 2020-2021 is successful, we will be honoured to work even harder for the advancement of our common projects and of the Organization as a whole.

Thank you very much!