

Your Excellency, Csaba Korosi, President of the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,

Excellencies, Heads of States and Governments,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentleman,

All protocols observed,

It is a great honour and privilege to address the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly here in New York today.

At this particularly challenging time in human history, I welcome the important theme of this Session which directs us all to find transformative joint solutions to the various interlocking challenges we face. There is absolutely no doubt that today, we as a community of nations, collectively face the most challenging socio-economic and environmental situation we have experienced in modern history. In fact, I can say with sadness, that the situation is dire and, potentially, existential. Therefore, without transformative and urgent implementable solutions to these interlocking challenges of our time, the small window of opportunity we have to act together will pass to the detriment of all our citizens and the world. Our actions today will surely determine our fate and that of the generations to come. The burden on all our shoulders is heavy and failure is not an option.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Most of the World is still recovering from the devastating health and socio-economic impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This

pandemic was unprecedented in its impact on the daily lives of all citizens across the world in that it changed the way we live forever and clearly presented how unprepared the world is for such shocks and disruptions. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic painfully illustrated how far apart the world is in development and ability to respond to such huge crises through the top-down distributions of the vaccines with richer nations being able to invest in and distribute lifesaving vaccines more rapidly for their citizens while developing countries like Somalia waited for whatever was available and they could afford or were gifted by international partners. While this vaccine inequality is symbolic of the existing developmental divide between the developed and developing world, we as a community of nations understood that we must, and can, stand together to overcome even the greatest of challenges if we have strong global systems of cooperation, collaboration, and action. In this regard, the Somali Federal Government is grateful to all its dedicated medical professionals on the COVID-19 frontline and bilateral and multilateral partners who supported our national efforts to vaccinate our people and provide protection for their livelihoods through the difficult COVID-19 crises. Today, we must ensure the global inequality of the COVID-19 vaccines is not replicated with the looming food security crises.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Our World is becoming less secure through recurring conflict, increasing international terrorism, and the destructive impact of

climate change. I cannot prioritize between these three interlocking challenges because they are equally as dangerous and directly hamper any progress we can make anywhere in the world on achieving the vital UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. In fact, these complex and interconnected crises are the drivers of today's unprecedented international humanitarian crises, food insecurity, rapid urbanization and the burdensome international cost of living crises which is pushing most of the world's population into poverty. Indeed, we are at an unbearable juncture in human history where citizens are looking to their respective governments and international multilateral systems to provide meaningful policy responses which are anchored on transformative and sustainable solutions. Accordingly, we, as a community of nations, must be more optimistic and work even more closely together rather than retreat to nationalistic isolation which does not, and cannot, serve our global citizenry in this new age of interconnectivity and interdependence.

In Somalia, we are working tirelessly to transition from over two decades of devastating conflict, droughts, famine, and developmental stagnation to a new age of stability and progress. However, despite our continuing efforts, Somalia and its resilient people are facing some of the most complex and interconnected crises in the World. These crises include the ongoing regional droughts which is directly threatening the lives and livelihoods of Somalia's most vulnerable communities. In fact, our government has called on all its business community, diaspora, and

international partners to work with us to do everything possible to avert a possible looming famine. We urge all our partners to heed our call and work with us to provide immediate support and relief to the most affected communities.

In the long term, we must collectively work together to ensure that we mitigate the acceleration of the dangerous and costly climate crises through meeting the commitments to invest in, and adequately finance, climate adaptation in the most affected and vulnerable regions including most of Sub-Saharan Africa. Key areas of investment must be sustainable water management, biodiversity protection to enhance food security, climate smart agriculture, resilient infrastructure, and more investment in renewable energy.

In Somalia, for the first time, we have established a new Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to lead on the urgent process of addressing the devastating impact of our national and regional environmental deterioration.

Somalia is caught between floods and droughts annually owing to climate change and poor infrastructure. Our people who have a long tradition of living harmoniously with nature, and barely contributing to the poisonous emissions warming the earth, are the ones paying with their lives. We are, therefore, taking the matter of protecting our environment seriously because we know climate change is real as we are living with the evidence of its painful and destructive reality. We also know that Somalia, and the

rest of the world, cannot develop sustainably without the global climate crises being jointly addressed quickly and effectively because our whole way of life and the most important job creating productive sectors of our economy including agriculture, livestock, fisheries, and the wider blue economy depend on it.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Terrorists are making our world less safe by the day. Terrorism remains a persistent and complex challenge which both contributes to and exacerbates all other crises including food insecurity, displacement of people from their homes and climate change. Terrorists have no religion or human values: they are violent criminals who seek to simply terrorize innocent people. We must continue to stand up to them with all our collective strength.

Nowhere in the world has there been an example of terrorist organizations succeeding against united governments and people let alone govern justly as many falsely claim. The most important lesson we have learnt in the long modern war against international terrorists and terrorism is that neither can be contained or degraded: they need to be comprehensively defeated.

In Somalia, we are actively fighting the terrorist groups called Al-Shabaab who are an Al-Qaeda affiliate and ISIS. Both are criminally misrepresenting the beautiful and peaceful Islamic religion to destabilize the region and, in the process, terrorize the Somali people and their brothers and sisters in neighbouring countries and across the world. In recent weeks, the unprovoked violent and

senseless actions of Al-Shabaab against innocent civilians across Somalia has highlighted the urgent need for an expedited common national and international response to defeating them on a permanent basis to advance regional and global security. At the height of the humanitarian crises, this group which falsely claims to be Islamic, blew up desperately needed water wells, burnt transport carrying food and killed innocent people who were already struggling to live because of the impact of the severe drought. This is the true criminal and despicable face and intentions of terrorism and terrorists.

On our part, the Somali Federal Government, and its Federal Member states, with the direct support of our brave and resilient people, are responding by challenging and defeating the terrorist group in major localities in which they still remain.

The Somali people have begun to organically rise-up in support of their government's call to defend themselves and their nation from the evils of terror. As recently as this past month, more towns and villages were recovered through our offensive military operations with the support of the local communities. We are now confident that, with enhanced public support, our government will eliminate terrorism from Somalia because the Somali people have finally realized that Al-Shabaab's repressive actions will not end until we all take action to achieve this. In a nutshell, the Somali people now believe Al-Shabaab can and will be defeated and this is our real source of energy and inspiration as a government in the fight against international terrorism.

At the policy level, the Somali government will continue to work with all its partners, including the African Union Transition Mission in Somalia, in the fight against global terrorism. We are truly committed to doing the heavy lifting to secure our future. However, to deliver the killer blow to the violence and insecurity, we must think past the notions of Containing and Degrading Al-Shabaab or any other terrorist organization anywhere in the world. We know these policies are no longer as effective as they were once thought to be at this advanced stage in the fight against the ever-evolving global terrorism threat. Instead, we need to focus all our joint efforts on the Somali government's new strategy of militarily, ideologically, and financially challenging terrorism and terrorists to ensure that they are comprehensively defeated once and for all, and quickly. Furthermore, the Somali government is sincerely committed to working with all its partners to effectively train, equip and sustain its armed forces with the view to going forward to fully transition security responsibilities in the future. We understand that this is the only long-term sustainable solution for stability and progress in our country, the region and world.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Without predictable and committed national and international financing, it is not possible to realize transformative solutions to the interlocking challenges we face. In Somalia, we are working to enhance our economic capacity through a rigorous economic and financial reform program. This will strengthen Somalia's economic fundamentals, improve Public Financial Management, and

mobilize more urgently needed domestic resources to respond to crises more sustainably and swiftly. However, given Somalia's fragile economic situation as a recovering post conflict state, financing global development priorities must be underpinned by a common international commitment to support countries like ours with more concessionary financing, capacity building and investment in all areas that can strengthen resilience to today's multiple crises including climate change, security, and the provision of social protection for the most vulnerable in our societies. We must also facilitate and promote private sector investment and participation in overcoming these challenges to transition from simply what is now referred to as Corporate Social Responsibility to Common Societal Prosperity in which we all contribute our fair share.

Conclusion

In conclusion, there is no escaping the global vicious cycle of complex and interconnected crises which challenges our citizens and the wider world. More worryingly, they have become repetitive and without strong bilateral, multilateral, civil society, and private sector partnership, they cannot be addressed effectively anywhere or by any single nation or geographic region alone. In the absence of urgent and effective joint action starting today, the dream of achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 will remain just that: a mere distant dream.

On our part, the Somali government is committed and determined to defeat international terrorism with all our international partners, tackle extreme poverty, raise the environmental consciousness of our population, mitigate the worst of the climate change impact, and rebuild an inclusive, resilient, and people-centered society and economy through our successful ongoing socio-economic reform programs. These are the basis for the transformative solutions that will help us mitigate and overcome the interlocking challenges that our nation faces today and pave the way for a future of progress and prosperity.

The most important lessons we learnt from dealing with the multiple, complex, and interconnected crises in Somalia is that we must not always be behind and plan for, and respond to, the worst cases of emergencies when we have many early national and international warning systems in place. It is better, and more just and prudent, to plan ahead and focus on building resilience by finding and financing durable solutions that help to deliver sustainable development for the most vulnerable across the world.

In Somalia we have a wise saying and it is: One finger cannot wash a whole face. If we work together sincerely and collaboratively as a community of nations, no challenge, no matter how big, is insurmountable.

I thank you all.