



# Preparatory Ministerial Meeting for the Summit of the Future

21 September 2023

Malta Statement delivered by The Honourable Dr Ian Borg Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, and Trade of the Republic of Malta

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Excellencies,  
Fellow Ministers,

It is my honour to stand before you today to reflect on the state of the world that we live in. If one were to describe the world today, one could refer to how the world is both diverse and complex. Indeed, the planet that we call home is made up of a patchwork of people, each with their different beliefs, traditions, languages, and perspectives. However, whilst acknowledging the diversity that makes up the world as we know it, at the same time, we must also recognise that that we inhabit this world together.

With this in mind, I refer to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which we established together in 2015 and was aimed at the promotion of well-being for people, the planet, prosperity, and peace through the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. In this regard, I reaffirm Malta's commitment to the SDGs. We must continue to work together to ensure their effective implementation for a better future. In the same manner, I welcome the Secretary-General's vision for the future specifically, the "Our Common Agenda" and the policy briefs.

We might ask ourselves 'Is there even a future to being with?'. We know all too well that challenges to peace and security have become more severe and complex in recent years. Violations of international law, the upending of Constitutional order, the persistence of instability and transnational threats all characterise the world today. Wars continue to cause untold suffering on civilians and the most vulnerable sections of society. This is the case with the war by Russia in Ukraine, which is having far and wide effects creating food insecurity, and energy, and supply chain disruptions.

We are continuously faced with challenges that go beyond borders and have repercussions on the world at large. We are seeing first-hand the effects of climate change, particularly with regards to floodings, wildfires, and sea level rise. As a small island state vulnerable to the effects of climate, Malta is acutely aware of the challenges posed by climate change and the security risks which result from this. In this manner, when we held our Presidency of the United Nations Security Council in February 2023, we aimed to shed light on sea-level rise and its implications for international peace and security through a ministerial level open debate.

Furthermore, poverty, inequality in various sectors, and continuous attempts at undermining agreed human rights principles, particularly on matters relating to the rights of women and girls and sexual orientation, remain concerning.

Excellencies,



When taking into account the present state of affairs, is this really the future that we want for our children? The future is not fixed, it depends on us. The decisions we take today and how we collectively respond to global challenges will have repercussions on generations to come. When I look at my daughter, I am instantly reminded to do better. To take action to ensure her wellbeing. More than ever, we need to muster all our efforts to support international and regional solutions – as opposed to unilateral action - to prevent and resolve conflicts and crises and to address underlying and exacerbating factors that perpetuate strife and instability.

As longstanding and convinced multilateralists, we place great importance in upholding inclusive multilateral cooperative structures that can enable us to seek concerted solutions. We believe the UN must remain at the centre of this collective endeavour. In line with this, Malta reiterates its support to the OHCHR in its vital work in the Human Rights Council, UNGA 3C and via its special procedures and mechanisms. We see these as indispensable tools for the promotion and protection of human rights. Malta remains committed to achieving a future in which women and girls have equal access to opportunities for leadership and economic empowerment in society.

Over the past years, additional efforts on a national level were made to provide better frameworks to achieve this purpose. These include the introduction of free childcare that has allowed more women to re-enter the labour force and better their personal economic and financial situation; and the introduction of the Gender Corrective Mechanism in Parliament in 2022 which seeks to ensure better gender balance between House Members to address the issue of women’s participation in political life. I am certain that more can be done to achieve better results in gender equality both at a national level as well as in the international level.

In the global sphere, I believe that there is also more that we can do from an economic viewpoint. Malta, as a founding member of the WTO, remains a firm believer in the rules-based multilateral trading system. I refer to one of the key elements of UNGA78 theme: ‘Rebuilding trust to achieve sustainability for all’. In the past, we have seen how smaller and developing countries were excluded in important decision-making processes and suffered as a result. Malta maintains that international trust can only be preserved if genuine solidarity is maintained between all member countries. This includes discussing and reviewing decisions, such as the highly consequential realignment of supply chains, through the appropriate channels of the multilateral institutions, such as the WTO and the UN. For the sake of global cooperation, Malta calls for these concerns to be addressed in a fair and equitable manner. As a small export-oriented economy, which has benefitted significantly from the opening of the world economy, we hope that global challenges can be faced together in the best interest of international law and the spirit of the United Nations Charter.

As Mahatma Gandhi once said, “The future depends on what we do in the present.” Let us be remembered for our collective efforts to make the world a better place. In this manner, I look forward to the holding of the Summit of the Future in 2024 which will seek to define the future of multilateralism.

I thank you.