



United Nations

SECRETARY-GENERAL PRESS CONFERENCE

SG/SM/20892
10 SEPTEMBER 2021

Press Conference by Secretary-General António Guterres at United Nations Headquarters

Following is a transcript of UN Secretary-General António Guterres' press conference, held in New York today:

[On the death of President Jorge Sampaio] He was a former President of Portugal. He has worked for the United Nations, and if you allow me to say a few words in Portuguese, I would be very grateful.

É com profunda tristeza e emoção, que sinto a perda do Jorge Sampaio. Portugal perdeu um grande estadista. As Nações Unidas perderam um colaborador valioso, sobretudo em aspetos de solidariedade e em aspetos de promoção da paz e do diálogo entre culturas e civilizações. Eu perdi um muito querido amigo. Quero uma vez mais expressar a Maria José Sampaio e a sua família as minhas sinceras condolências e a minha profunda solidariedade.

Good afternoon. I have just come from the General Assembly Hall, where I presented my report on *Our Common Agenda*. No doubt you have seen many UN reports, but this one is not a typical one. *Our Common Agenda* goes beyond the crucial issues we talk about every day, to consider where our world is, and what we need to do to fix it. Because business as usual is not an option.

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken more than 4 million lives, is still killing nearly 10,000 people every day, and is circling the globe while a handful of rich countries stockpile vaccines. Climate breakdown and nuclear war pose extreme risks to human life and to our planet. It is difficult to conceive of a more destabilizing invention than autonomous lethal weapons. Inequality, discrimination and injustice are bringing people out on the streets, while conspiracy theories and lies fuel deep divisions within societies. Poverty, hunger and gender inequality are rising again, after decades of decline.

Our world is edging towards a new abnormal — more chaotic, more insecure, more dangerous for everyone. We are moving in the wrong direction, and we are at a pivotal moment.

The choices we make now could put us on a path towards breakdown and a future of perpetual crisis; or breakthrough to a greener and safer world.

The General Assembly recognized this when it asked me last year to report back with recommendations on *Our Common Agenda*. Today's report represents our best effort to grapple with the challenges and threats we face, and to chart a road ahead based on unity and solidarity.

My report on *Our Common Agenda* takes a long, hard look at global governance, and finds it wanting. From global health to digital technology, many of our multilateral frameworks need updating to deal with today's challenges. We don't need new multilateral bureaucracies. But we must [make] those we have, including the United Nations, more effective. And we need multilateralism with teeth.

First, we need immediate action to protect our most precious global assets, from the oceans to outer space, and to deliver on our common aspirations — peace, global health, a liveable planet. My report proposes a global summit of the future to consider all these issues and more, to be held in two years. The summit would consider too a new agenda for peace that would include measures to reduce strategic risks from nuclear arms, cyberwarfare and lethal autonomous weapons.

The summit would go beyond traditional security threats to look into the long-term future, exploring ways to strengthen global governance of digital technology and outer space, and to manage future risks and crises. To prepare the summit, I will ask an advisory board led by eminent former Heads of State and Government to identify what are the global public goods and potentially other areas of common interest where governance improvements are most needed, where the systems we have now are not sufficiently effective and to propose options for how this could be achieved.

A central theme of my report is that we must expand our field of vision, using new technologies to forecast and model the impact of today's policies, while strengthening global coordination and introducing new voices to decision-making processes. A new United Nations futures lab will publish regular reports on megatrends and risks.

Biennial summit meetings at Heads of State and Government level between the G20, [Economic and Social Council] and international financial institutions can align the global financial system with global priorities, from sustainable development and climate action to addressing inequality. We need effective coordination in financial and development issues. These summits would be a corrective to historic injustices and imbalances in the global economy, from trade to the development of technology.

I recommend an emergency platform bringing together Governments, the UN system, international financial institutions, civil society, the private sector and others, that would be triggered automatically in large scale crises. I also propose that Member States should consider

repurposing the Trusteeship Council, to create an intergovernmental body for intergenerational issues. A special envoy for future generations will represent the interests of people who will be born over the coming century, while a new United Nations youth office will enable young people to participate in designing our shared future and have a much stronger influence in the UN itself. And I intend to broaden engagement with local and regional governments, civil society, parliaments and the private sector.

To support these efforts, we will launch a UN 2.0 that offers more relevant, systemwide, multilateral and multi-stakeholder solutions to the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Dear friends,

Global cooperation for peace, sustainable development and human rights can only be built on solidarity within countries. And the report proposes a series of measures to rebuild trust and social cohesion through a new social contract anchored in human rights. This would herald a new era for social protection, including universal health coverage and income protection, housing, decent work, transforming education, skills and lifelong learning; and preventing and ending the epidemic of discrimination and violence against women and girls that holds back all of humanity.

A world social summit would anchor the new social contract at the global level, giving a strong push to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. All these efforts will require economic analysis based on today's priorities, rather than outdated ideas of prosperity and economic success. And so, my report therefore recommends ending the tyranny of gross domestic product (GDP) as a yardstick, and replacing it with metrics that measure our well-being and that of our planet. Today, if we burn a forest or if we burn coal, we are producing GDP and that shows the absurdity of using it as the only metric.

My report also urges all Governments to reinvigorate action on human rights, including in our online lives. I urge steps to achieve Internet access for all as a basic human right by 2030. And I propose global action to tackle disinformation and conspiracy theories, and promote facts and science in public discourse. We must make lying wrong again.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The United Nations and our Member States are central to the vision and implementation of Our Common Agenda. My report responds to a request from Member States, and many of its ideas emerged from our consultations with them and with a broader group of stakeholders.

Our immediate joint challenge is the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. We still have an opportunity to act together, in solidarity and self-interest, to end the pandemic before it does even more damage. I hope the forthcoming general debate will see action on a global vaccination plan, implemented by an emergency task force made up of countries that produce or can produce

vaccines, the World Health Organization (WHO) and its partners, and international financial institutions.

This task force should work with pharmaceutical companies guaranteeing at least that production of vaccines will double and ensure that vaccines reach 70 per cent of the world's population in the first half of 2022.

The next two weeks will also see opportunities for action on the climate crisis; on an inclusive, equitable recovery from the pandemic, including decent jobs and social protection; on ending the scourge of racial discrimination; on transforming our food systems so that they deliver for all; and on eliminating nuclear weapons. In all these meetings, I hope Member States will heed the warning signs and the calls of their own people for unity and solidarity. And I hope that they will see my report on *Our Common Agenda* as the beginning of a global effort to come together and fulfil the potential of nations united. The high-level week will be a first opportunity for political leaders to pronounce themselves. Thank you, and now I am, of course, ready to take a few questions.

Stéphane Dujarric, Spokesman for the Secretary-General: Thank you very much.

Just to note that we have interpreters who will do Spanish and French into English. First question will go to Valeria. And a kind reminder to ask questions and avoid statements, but that's not aimed at you, Valeria. Just... go ahead, please?

Correspondent: I'm always quick.

Spokesman: I know you are.

Question: Thank you, Stéphane, and thank you so much, Secretary-General, for this press conference. It's always good to see you here. My question is on Afghanistan. In recent days, we have heard of very different positions on the new Taliban government, from Westerns, US and EU, and China, for example, so how do you think, if you think it's possible, that the high-level week can be the chance to find some common ground on how to deal with the situation in Afghanistan?

And if I may, something on UNGA [United Nations General Assembly], very quick. Do you think this hybrid version of the high-level week can be a game changer in the future? I mean, we see more in the upcoming years, like the Foreign Minister here and the Head of State speaking from the capital, and if so, do you think that this can undermine the effectiveness of diplomacy of the UNGA gathering? Thank you.

Secretary-General: Well, in relation to Afghanistan, I've been insisting, with all Member States, and as you know, there have been some different positions on several issues, but I've been insisting that there's a number of things in which we all agree, and it will be very important that everyone conveys the same message. The message, of course, that we want the Afghan people to

live in peace; that we want the Afghan people to be able to stop the dramatic suffering that has existed in the past; that we want, naturally, the Government of Afghanistan to be an inclusive Government, representing the different sectors of the Afghan population; that we want Afghanistan never to be a sanctuary for terrorism anymore; that we want basic human rights, and I'm particularly concerned, of course, with women and girls' rights to be respected; and that we want Afghanistan to play a constructive role in international relations. That's what we all want.

Now, it's important that independently of different strategies, of different forms of contact, all countries are able to convey the same message and to engage with the Taliban in an effective way. Our choice, as UN, was clear, the UN has not the leverage that others have, as is well known, but the UN has been in Afghanistan since '47. The UN has a key role to play in humanitarian aid to a people that is now in a desperate situation. And so, we decided that it was our duty to engage the Taliban, to create the conditions for the possibility of effective humanitarian aid, impartial, to reach all areas and to take into account our concerns in relation to women and girls, for instance, to engage the Taliban. That's the reason why I sent Martin Griffiths to Kabul, and if you can see there, the Secretary-General to be at the ministerial level from a protocol point of view, it is the first person in the world at that level that went to Kabul to speak to the Taliban leadership.

At the same time, together with the whole UN system and our partners, we prepared a humanitarian appeal. And I am leaving to Geneva to preside next Monday [over] an international high-level event at ministerial level to gather support to humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. And it's my belief that engaging with the Taliban, on one hand, telling them what we believe is important, the things that are easier to say and the things that might be more difficult, but that are important to be said, and at the same time, showing a total commitment to support the Afghan people, I think it's the best way to achieve those principles that I mentioned in the beginning that we all agree on and we should be able to convey in a coordinated way.

Spokesman: On the General Assembly?

Secretary-General: On the General Assembly, I hope that with the support of technology we will be able to minimize the negative dimension of a General Assembly that is not done in full presence of full delegations from all over the world. This is what I believe makes sense. This is what I believe is the best way to serve diplomacy, the best way to create contacts, to forge forms of dialogue. The presence of everybody, here, together, during a meaningful period, is a very important instrument that nothing can replace. Having said so, it is obvious that with the technology that is available, the possibility of different forms of hybrid interactions and others through only virtual means will allow the General Assembly to discuss effectively a number of important issues, and I hope will allow us to make progress in relation to the dramatic challenges that we face, and I spoke when presenting our report on the common agenda. So this is not the best solution. We will be trying to make it a second-best, mobilizing all our resources, to allow for a maximum of interaction among Member States.

Spokesman: We'll go to Iftikhar Ali, Associated Press of Pakistan, in the back.

Question: Thank you very much, Steph, and Mr. Secretary-General, sir. Since the mandate of UNAMA [United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan] is to support the Government of Afghanistan in promoting democracy and development and peace, may I ask you, sir, whether the UN has the concurrence of the new government... the new government in Kabul, for the renewal of the UNAMA's mandate, which is expiring on 17 September.

Secretary-General: I do believe it is not possible with the level of unpredictability that exists to do a new mandate for UNAMA, an entirely new mandate for UNAMA. I hope that the consensus will be in a technical rollover for a short period, allowing time for a more clear perspective about what the situation is in Afghanistan and what the role of the UN should be. And obviously, these are areas that require some time, so I think it's prudent to do this kind of technical rollover and to have the time to engage sufficiently to be able to have a more clear perspective about the future, to define the characteristics of the mandate of UNAMA that will necessarily be different from the present mandate, for different reasons. So, as I said, I hope the decisions are of course decisions for Member States, but I hope it will be possible to have a short, technical rollover to allow for a more well-prepared, new mandate for UNAMA, taking into account the new realities.

Spokesman: Thank you, Edie. And if I could ask all of you to stick to one question for sharing of time. Thank you, Edie.

Question: Sorry. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary-General. I know you've been concerned about the situation in Tigray for months, and I wonder if you could tell us what you see happening now — what the UN may or may not be able to do? Have you been talking to the leaders? And we understand that there are now reports of atrocities being committed and killings by the Tigrayans, as well as Ethiopians and Eritreans.

Secretary-General: Well, I've been, since the very beginning, engaged. We have established a dialogue with Prime Minister Abiy [Ahmed]. As you know, I've sent also Martin Griffiths to Tigray to speak with the leadership of the TPLF [Tigray People's Liberation Front]. I made an appeal, a very strong appeal, in three dimensions. First, immediate cessation of hostilities, creating the conditions for the negotiation of a lasting ceasefire; second, full humanitarian access to all areas impacted; and third, beginning of a dialogue to address the root causes of this conflict and be able to solve it. That appeal did not get a full, positive answer, even if there was, as it is known, a letter of the leader of the TPLF to myself and to the leader of the General Assembly. And, of course, we maintained contact with the Government and we have been engaging and continue this engagement.

We also followed the initiatives of other entities, the African Union. We fully support the envoy, and we will be the backstopping through the UN resources for him to be able to fully operate. We follow initiatives of other countries like the United States, the United Arab Emirates.

We all try to converge with these objectives. The war must end; it doesn't make any sense; there is no military solution. Humanitarian aid needs to reach everybody, everywhere, and it's not the case at the present moment. And the Ethiopians must have a serious Ethiopian-led dialogue to solve their problems with the support of the African Union, the UN and all other entities.

For the moment, I think both sides have not yet understood that there is no military solution. There have been terrible violations of human rights, apparently now from both sides. It's true that the human rights cooperation between the Office of the High Commissioner and the local committee that is quite independent will be producing a report soon, and we are looking forward for that report. But I mean, it's heart-breaking to see the Ethiopian people suffering so much in Tigray, but not only in Tigray, but also now in other areas. And we need to recognize that the stability and the unity of Ethiopia is a very important pillar of regional stability and unity. And we are very concerned with the fact that this conflict might have an impact that goes beyond the borders of Ethiopia.

Spokesman: Thank you. Michelle Nichols, Reuters.

Question: Thank you, Secretary-General, for the briefing. In the past couple of days, we've heard from Martin Griffiths and Deborah Lyons, talking about Taliban leaders asking for guidance. You said that you would talk to the Taliban when the time is right and there was someone to speak with. They now have a government. Do you think the time is right for you to speak with them, particularly if they're asking for some sort of guidance in how to govern the country? And we've also heard from Deborah Lyons yesterday, and I think you told one of our colleagues in an interview that the economy needs to breathe in Afghanistan. How can that happen?

Secretary-General: Well, first of all, Martin Griffiths was in Kabul. We have permanent contacts. We will define at any moment what is the right level of these, taking into account all the aspects of the present situation. The recognition of governments is not done by the Secretariat of the United Nations, as you know, it is done by Member States and is done by the bodies of the UN. But we are permanently engaging with the Taliban, and we believe that a dialogue with the Taliban is absolutely essential at the present moment.

Now, an economic meltdown of Afghanistan is in nobody's interest, so there are a number of measures that were taken by some States and by the international financial institutions, and of course, I know there are regulations that are complex in this regard. There is a number of sanctions, namely sanctions determined by the Security Council of the United Nations. And at the same time, there is a very difficult financial situation. Now, there was a meeting yesterday of Ministers of Finance of G7. I had contacts with several of the leaders, Kristalina Georgieva. I think it is essential to find ways, through some waivers or through some mechanisms. We managed in Yemen to agree on some mechanisms that would allow to inject some cash in the Afghan economy to avoid its meltdown.

That, of course, doesn't mean recognition of anything; it doesn't mean any particular choice. It means finding ways. And my appeal has been to find ways to have sufficient injection of cash to avoid a meltdown. And, for instance, the UN at the present moment is not even able to pay its salaries to its own work... so we need to find ways to avoid a situation that would be catastrophic for the people and, in my opinion, a source of instability, and an action, gift for terrorist groups still operating there.

Spokesman: Thank you. Betul, Anadolu Press Agency.

Question: Thank you, Mr. Secretary-General. Betul Yuruk, Turkish News Agency. A question on Afghanistan. Do you think the UN Security Council should lift the sanctions on the members of the Taliban, some of whom are now representing the interim government?

And a very brief question on the climate change. There have been some calls by environmental activists to delay the climate summit in November in Scotland due to uneven roll-out of the COVID-19 vaccine. Do you think the summit should be further delayed? Thanks.

Secretary-General: First of all, I think that what would be positive is to have simultaneously the formation in Afghanistan of an inclusive Government — the fact that that Government respects international commitments made by the Afghan State, and that a number of the concerns that we have expressed about terrorism, human rights, etc., are taken into account, and that that leads to a normalization of the relations of the international community with Afghanistan. So these are two things that are interlinked and they depend on how they evolve. I think that, for the moment, what is important is to have engagement, that engagement is necessary, and at the same time, there is an absolute priority, which is humanitarian support. And there is where we can move as Secretariat of the UN. The Security Council, of course, will have to ponder its decisions, and I think that members of the Security Council will be also looking into how the situation evolves in Afghanistan in order to make their decisions.

The second point about the COP [Conference of Parties] — I mean, to delay the COP is not a good thing. So my appeal today would be to make efforts in order for those vaccine problems to be able to be addressed. I mean, just to give an example, the City of New York has offered to all delegates coming to the General Assembly the possibility to be vaccinated and we will have here a... I mean, a system to do it. So, I mean, before thinking about the possibility of any further delay, delays have been so many and the issue is so urgent, I think there should be an additional effort to address, namely, the questions of vaccination. We had here a similar problem, as you know, and of course, it's a different context, but the City of New York is cooperating with us in a very effective way in this regard, and I'm very grateful to it.

Spokesman: Pam Falk, CBS News.

Question: Thank you very much, Steph, and thank you, Secretary-General. On climate, and I think I said Pamela Falk, CBS News. China recently rebuffed US efforts to call for

increased pledges during the COP that's coming up in Glasgow in November, and that was during a visit of the US Special Envoy, John Kerry. If China is requiring the US to come together on other goals, what do you think is the worst-case scenario or best-case scenario if the US and China aren't in sync going into the Climate Conference? Thank you.

Secretary-General: The Climate Conference is not a bilateral issue; it is a multilateral issue. We understand that there are problems in the relations between the US and China, but those problems do not interfere with the needs of both the US and China to do everything possible to make sure that the COP is a success, independently of the relations between the two, and, of course, we need a stronger engagement of the US, namely in financing for development, for climate-related development issues, mitigation, adaptation, and we need an additional effort from China in relation to emissions, but, as I said, we are talking about a multilateral process in which all countries must commit themselves, based on their own engagement with climate action.

Question: If I could, is there a worst-case scenario if the countries don't come together?

Secretary-General: I am very worried, because I feel that there is a lack of trust between developed and developing countries, especially countries, for instance at the G7 and countries of the emerging economies, the basic group. And I've been asking for a serious dialogue in order to make sure that we manage to have, simultaneously, an adequate solution for the problems of financing and technological support to developing countries, a breakthrough in adaptation, building resilience for especially those countries that have more difficulties, but look what has happened here. I mean, "build resilience" is for everybody, everywhere. It is in New York, too, as we have seen, and it's important to have really a much stronger effort in adaptation. This is essential for developing countries. And at the same time, it is very important that all countries contribute to our objective, which is net-zero emissions in 2050 and simultaneously, a strong reduction of emissions in the decade to 2030. And I hope that it's still possible to come to this kind of understanding. If the present mistrust is maintained, if the financial problems are not properly addressed, and if many emerging economies think that because of that, they are not supposed also to make an additional effort, we risk to reach tipping points that make the 1.5 degrees target unreachable. Now, all countries in G20 have agreed with 1.5 degrees, so it's time for all of them, and they represent 80 per cent of the emissions, to assume their responsibilities.

Spokesman: We're going to go to the screen. Benny Avni. Benny?

Question: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Secretary-General. Speaking of conferences, at least 16 countries in my last count, and counting, have decided to boycott the Durban IV conference. They include members of the P5, US, France and Great Britain, as well as Canada, Australia, Germany and other members of the EU. What is your message to the Durban IV and how do you address their concerns?

Secretary-General: Well, I believe that Durban represents an important moment in the history of the United Nations. I believe that that should be effectively commemorated, and I hope that there is a dialogue among countries to make sure that the present situation is overcome.

Spokesman: Thank you. CCTV.

Question: Hi, Secretary-General. I'm Xu Dezhi with China Central Television. Just one question. It's been 20 years since 9/11 terrorist attack, and the antiterrorism operations. So do you feel it's been safer, concerning terrorist threat? Because we knew that in Security Council, people frequently talk about terrorist threats now. Thank you.

Secretary-General: I must tell you, I am very worried with what we are witnessing in different parts of the world. And the fact that in Afghanistan, the Taliban were able to win might embolden other groups in different parts of the world independently of the fact that they are different from the Taliban and I am not seeing there is a similarity among them. We have seen several of them, not only congratulating the Taliban, but showing stronger enthusiasm about their own capacity. And there are two things that make me be very worried. One is that, in some scenarios, like the Sahel, I think we do not have today an effective security mechanism to address the terrorist challenge in the Sahel, so the terrorists have been gaining ground and they must feel emboldened by the present situation. That's why I've been insisting time and time again for an African force with a strong mandate, Chapter VII, assessed contributions, because what I see now in the Sahel is the security system that is in place, in my opinion, is not enough to defeat the terrorists. And, of course, there are the other dimensions about development, climate change, etcetera, that are also relevant. And what I said about the Sahel can be said about other parts of the world, but we are also seeing something that is to be noted. When you have a group, even if it is a small group, that is fanaticized, that is ready to die in all circumstances, or even consider death to be a good thing, if that group decides to launch an attack to a country, we are seeing armies unable to face them and melting down and fleeing.

I mean, we have seen what has happened when ISIS attacked in Mosul. We have seen... I mean, independently of whatever you can see, that the Afghan Army disappeared in seven days. If you remember the beginning of the Mali crisis, the Malian... when there was this offensive from the north, the Malian Army melted and it was at the time the French column that avoided the rebels to take Bamako. And we've seen in Mozambique, with this small group that started, how ineffective was the local army. Now, of course there is a Rwandese force. There is the SADC [Southern African Development Community] involved. But I mean, I'm very worried with the terrorism. I'm very worried that many countries are not prepared to fight it. And we need a much stronger, a much stronger unity and solidarity of countries in the fight against terrorism.

Spokesman: Thank you. Margaret Besheer, Voice of America. One question.

Question: Hi, Secretary-General. My question to you is on Lebanon. Today, after more than a year delay, the new Government has been formed. What's your reaction to that? And will

this open the path to aid the Lebanese more? Because the currency has collapsed and the country is in a very bad way, and it could be a new protracted crisis on your plate.

Secretary-General: I think this was very important step. Of course, we know it's not enough. There are many other things to be solved, but this was the basic condition for anything else to be possible. I worked with Prime Minister [Najib] Mikati when I was High Commissioner for Refugees in support of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and I wish him the best success in his work. And I wish that he's able to bring together the different Lebanese communities and the different Lebanese political forces in order to make sure that Lebanon is able to overcome the dramatic situation it faces now.

Spokesman: Thank you. Abdelhamid Siyam. With respect, one question.

Correspondent: Yes, I will.

Spokesman: Thank you.

Correspondent: Thank you, Stéphane. Thank you, Secretary-General. My name is Abdelhamid Siyam from the Arabic daily, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*.

Secretary-General: From... sorry?

Question: *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, the Arabic daily based in London. It's pan-Arab. My question, about the struggle of people under occupation. Normally, UN supports, glorifies, people struggling for independence and fighting occupation. It happens in Namibia, South Africa against apartheid, in East Timor, Angola, I can go on and on. Why, when it comes to the Palestinian people, then people start talking about the right of Israel to defend itself? Does the... do the Palestinian people have the right to defend themselves and to struggle against occupation? Thank you very much.

Secretary-General: Our objective is very simple. It's not a rhetorical objective. Our objective is to create the conditions for a peace, and to create the conditions for a two-State solution, and for the Palestinians to have their own State. This has been our objective and we have been acting consistently with that objective in the way that we think is the best in order to [engage] with the parties and mobilising the international community to achieve this objective.

Spokesman: Thank you. We're going to go to the screen. David from Bloomberg. David?

Question: Thank you. Can you hear me?

Spokesman: Yes.

Question: Hi, Secretary-General. Thank you for doing this. In your initial remarks, you noted efforts on both climate change and vaccine equity that you hope will really move forward during UNGA. I was just wondering what specific action are you hoping to get during UNGA on climate and on vaccines? What sort of meetings or summits are you hoping to have to push forward on your agenda on those two fronts? Thank you.

Secretary-General: On climate change, one of the reasons I'm convening for Monday the 20th a summit of the key countries related to climate change is exactly to make an effort to build trust, to allow for this triple ambition to be met before COP26. Ambition in finance, ambition in adaptation, ambition in mitigation. I mentioned it in another answer. In relation to vaccines, what I asked of the G7, what I asked in the G20 is the following: We have a number of countries that produce vaccines, and we have a number of countries that can produce vaccines, if they are authorized to do so and if they have technical support to do so, and we know who those countries are. Most of them are in the G20. So I mean, instead of first vaccine nationalism, then vaccine diplomacy, what I asked was for these countries to come together, supported by WHO and by the IMF [International Monetary Fund], the World Bank... and the IMF, I must tell you has gathered the World Bank, WTO [World Trade Organization]] and WHO for a project of \$50 billion to boost the capacity to support developing countries in relation to vaccines, but the point is we need to double the production.

Now, we have seen companies ready to cooperate, but, of course, they need to make their profits, and I'm not putting that into question, but, in my opinion, those countries should be able to work with the companies in order to make sure that all the vaccine production capacity in the world is used, paying the fees that are necessary, and that the mechanisms of technical support are put in place in order to guarantee that the vaccines are safe and can be used. Now, it's interesting to see that companies are doing it... they are starting do it by themselves, making contracts for manufacturing with other companies. Now, if companies are able to do it by themselves, the countries... I mean, and without those countries, the companies cannot survive, because those are the countries that represent their most important clients. I mean, if... these countries need to come together, establish a number of rules to make sure that intellectual property is not an obstacle, but that the interests of the pharmaceutical companies are taken into account, and seeing what are the capacities that are available, and making sure that as quickly as possible we double the production of vaccines. And then, they will have the capacity also to organize a global vaccination plan with the support, again, of the different institutions I mentioned, to make sure that we get at least 70 per cent of the population everywhere vaccinated in the middle of next year. I think it's possible, but it requires that countries cooperate among themselves, share their capacity, and, as I said, what we have had until now is each one doing its... each one's policies, some probably hoarding vaccines and even not having the capacity to use all of them, others giving vaccines to this or to that. But what we need is a global vaccination plan and we need those that have power in the world to put their power at the service of vaccine equity.

Spokesman: Maki, NHK.

Correspondent: Thank you, Mr. Secretary-General. This is Maki from NHK Japan Broadcasting.

Spokesman: If you can speak just a little bit... just a little bit louder. Maybe just take your mask off.

Question: Thank you, thank you. Thank you, Secretary-General, and thank you, Stéphane, for having me for the question. My question is on Myanmar. The situation there is still very, very volatile. And can you comment on their representation at the UNGA upcoming? And have you had dialogue with ambassadors here or your envoy with the junta? How can the UN... how does the UN see what it can do to... ongoing?

Secretary-General: It is a matter that is strictly in the hands of the Credentials Committee and, of course, we will abide by what Member States decide in the Credentials Committee or eventually, if necessary, in the General Assembly. This is an area where the Secretariat has no power whatsoever.

Spokesman: We'll go to the screen, Elena Lentza, Lusa. Elena?

Question: Hello. Thank you so much for having me. *Condolências pela perda do seu amigo, Senhor Secretário-Geral.* Regarding the situation in Guinea, do you expect any progress to be made here at the General Assembly? And what is your message for the people in political class in Guinea-Bissau, which is a neighbouring country and has its own democratic and social difficulties? Thank you.

Secretary-General: I think we're starting to have a dangerous fashion of power being taken by force. This is totally unacceptable. The coup d'état that took place is totally unacceptable. I think I was the first voice condemning it immediately. I have appealed for the release of President Alpha Condé. I know ECOWAS [Economic Community of West African States] has met, our Special Representative for West Africa, [Mahamet Saleh] Annadif, was there. I believe the countries of ECOWAS will be now trying to address this problem. But this is becoming a fashion, and a dangerous fashion, and I think it's necessary to make sure that we are united in not allowing this fashion to proliferate.

Spokesman: On Guinea-Bissau?

Secretary-General: Now, Guinea-Bissau, of course, I mean... Guinea-Bissau has its own democratic institutions, and of course, I strongly hope that those democratic institutions will be working normally, and that there will not be any disturbance of this kind, and I have all reasons to be confident of that.

Spokesman: Thank you very much. Thank you. We have to go. Thank you.

Secretary-General: Thank you very much.

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