



Security Council

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Letter dated 9 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that the Russian Federation, in its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of July 2024, will hold an open debate on the theme “Multilateral cooperation in the interest of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order”. The event will take place on 16 July 2024. Sergey Lavrov, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, is expected to chair the meeting. All States Members of the United Nations are encouraged to participate at the ministerial level.

In this regard, I would be grateful for the circulation of the present letter and the attached concept note for the above-mentioned meeting as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vassily Nebenzia



Annex to the letter dated 9 July 2024 from the Permanent Representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Concept note for the Security Council ministerial open debate on the theme “Multilateral cooperation in the interest of a more just, democratic and sustainable world order”, 16 July 2024

Background

As a brief unipolar moment is over, the number of independent centres of power and economic growth has increased, paving the way for a multipolar world as a key trend in international relations of the twenty-first century. This change has been triggered by breakthroughs in the political, economic, scientific and technological fields achieved over the past decades. Those transformations are now well under way.

As rightfully declared by the Secretary-General, António Guterres, in his address to the General Assembly on 19 September 2023, this rapid movement towards a multipolar world “is, in many ways, positive. It brings new opportunities for justice and balance in international relations.”

More than that, the emerging multipolar world opens a pathway to a genuine democracy in international relations. The polycentric development pattern considerably expands the opportunity for sovereign nations to enjoy mutually beneficial and equitable cooperation. It sets up a stage for world powers to be more responsive to the needs and interests of the rest of the countries, small and midsize alike.

However, a world order of pluralism and freedom is not a predetermined reality, even if it is evolving in tune with the natural course of history. There are serious interests at play which hinder and may reverse the dynamic of multipolarity. Instead of adhering to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations in their entirety and interdependency, as provided for by the 1970 Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, cases of selective application of international law are multiplying. Other than that, rules, standards and norms developed without the equitable participation of all interested States are being promoted as a “rules-based international order”, thus grossly abusing and undermining the rule of international law in relations among States.

The ability of the United Nations and other global multilateral platforms to be universal mechanisms for harmonizing the interests of States is under severe pressure from an unprecedented number of disruptive initiatives and divisive votes. This makes it ever more difficult to generate collective responses to transnational challenges, sidelines diplomacy and ruins trust and predictability in international affairs.

The use of force is increasing, and areas of conflict are expanding. The destabilizing build-up and modernization of offensive military capabilities and the ongoing dismantlement of the arms control system are undermining strategic stability. The weaponization of outer space and information and communications technologies, the blurring of the line between military and non-military means of inter-State confrontation, and the escalation of protracted regional conflicts in several locations greatly increase threats to global security, enhancing the risk of direct armed conflict between major powers, with the growing potential of such conflicts degrading into a global war.

Against this background, the risk of the further unravelling of the basic tenets of the international order, such as universal multilateral institutions and international law, eventually might lead to the political and economic fragmentation of the world. The potentially dangerous and unpredictable implications of this process may overshadow other global challenges of the twenty-first century.

The only plausible way to respond to this possible, if dismal, scenario is to undertake timely and joint efforts to ensure that the members of the international community recommit to the Charter purposes and principles in their entirety and interdependency, as well as launch a serious discussion on how to adapt the current architecture of international relations to better reflect the emerging multipolar realities.

A new global deal among nations may and should be reached by means of multilateralism, which is “the main instrument to address multifaceted and complex global challenges through collective action”, as declared by the General Assembly resolution entitled “International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace” (resolution [73/127](#), adopted on 12 December 2018).

Particular attention should be paid to genuine efforts to prevent a nuclear war that cannot be won and must not be fought and therefore to avoid any armed conflict between States possessing military nuclear capabilities.

The proposed discussion could be based on the following principles:

- Diversity of models for nations’ internal development and international cooperation; no model should be regarded as exceptional or superior to the others.
- Indivisible and equitable global security and universal interdependence.
- Refusal to apply “zero-sum game” strategies.
- Increasing the role of the global South, maintaining responsible collective leadership and reasonable self-restraint of global powers.
- Zero interference in the internal affairs of States.
- Freedom and democracy in international relations.
- Cooperation based on equality of rights, balance of interests and mutual benefit.
- Rule of law in regulation of international relations.
- Diversity of human value systems.
- Strengthening the role of morality in international relations.

It is evident that the Security Council has a role to play in launching this kind of discussion, as it is well located at the heart of the global multilateral system. The Security Council members bear a special responsibility to engage and work collectively to ensure a peaceful transition to a more just and equitable world order.

Objective

To offer to the Member States an opportunity to have an in-depth exchange of views and proposals on a possible new vision for a global architecture and principles of international relations in the twenty-first century in order to avoid a global conflict and build a just, democratic and sustainable global system. In addition, it is an invitation to an “out of the box”, high-level brainstorming exercise on the eve of the Summit of the Future.

Questions for the discussion

1. Should the global development be founded on a polycentric or a unipolar paradigm?
 2. How can the United Nations adapt to the emerging polycentric realities and contribute to the establishment of a just, democratic and sustainable international order? How can it serve to re-establish the atmosphere of trust and dialogue among its Members, including in the Security Council?
 3. What are the ways to counter a selective application of the norms and principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations? How in practice can the international community reaffirm its commitment to the principles of the Charter in its entirety and interconnectedness?
 4. What measures can be adopted to enhance trust and ensure equal and indivisible security for all, in order to avoid a global war?
 5. What are key possible elements of a new global architecture and principles of international relations in the twenty-first century?
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