

MAY 12, 2014

**JAN ELIASSON, DEPUTY SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS, DELIVERS
REMARKS AT THE COUNCIL OF COUNCILS THIRD ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

SPEAKER: JAN ELIASSON, U.N. DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL

**MODERATOR: STEWART PATRICK, DIRECTOR AND SENIOR FELLOW, INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTIONS AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE PROGRAM, COUNCIL ON FOREIGN RELATIONS**

[*]

PATRICK: Excuse me, ladies and gentlemen. This is an auspicious night, and I refer to the fact that, of course, this is the first time that I'm using reading glasses, which many of you are somewhat familiar with. But my name is Stewart Patrick. I've met, I think, all of you and really are delighted that we're here for a wonderful meal at this wonderful restaurant after a really great and, I think, very productive day of discussions.

It's a distinct honor for me personally to be able to introduce tonight's keynote speaker, the deputy secretary general of the United Nations, Jan Eliasson. Over the course of his celebrated career, Ambassador Eliasson has been a leading participant in efforts to improve the performance of the United Nations and hopefully to improve the performance of its member states, which, of course, is the ultimate determinant of how the U.N. operates.

He's looked at some of the most pressing challenges facing humanity over the course of his career, and that includes more than 20 years -- perhaps verging on three decades -- in and out of the United Nations. I'll just hit some of the highlights.

Ambassador Eliasson served as Swedish ambassador to the United Nations from 1988 to 1992. As we all recall, that was an optimistic period when the end of the Cold War seemed at least to some of us to catapult the U.N., if not back into the center of world politics, at least to a much more productive role after a long hiatus.

He moved from that position to serve as the U.N.'s first coordinator for humanitarian affairs at the level of undersecretary general. That position is now known as -- the office is now known as OCHA, which is the Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. And he did so at a time of surging refugee and internally displaced persons throughout the world, which makes him very well suited to speak tonight, as well, at a time when those populations are becoming once again record levels.

After a long stint as Sweden's secretary of state for foreign affairs, he served as ambassador to the United States from September 2000 to July 2005. As one recalls, that was a somewhat turbulent period during U.S.-U.N. relations, to say the least.

In autumn 2005, not insignificantly, he served as president of the U.N. General Assembly during the 60th General Assembly, which produced, among other things, the Outcome Document of that summit. Not a very felicitous name, but a very influential document, which was based on Secretary General Kofi Annan's blueprint "In Larger Freedom." And among other things, that highlighted the linkage between security development and human rights.

Now, in the years since then, Ambassador Eliasson has served as foreign minister of Sweden, special envoy to the U.N. secretary general for Darfur, and since July of 2012, as deputy secretary general. The DSG and I had a chance to speak last week. He's offered to provide perhaps 10 to 15 minutes of unscripted, on-the-record remarks, and then to take questions for a similar amount of time.

He indicated -- this may have changed over the last few days -- but he indicated he might speak on the role of the United Nations in global conflict management with a specific reference to Syria, South Sudan, and perhaps, if he wishes, the Ukraine, which I know he was in, in March of this year.

I also think that he would like to offer some deeper reflections on -- not simply on those crisis in terms of the headlines, but what this means for what the U.N. can and cannot do when it comes to global conflict management, within the constraints of the charter, within the constraints of its capabilities, and with -- in partnership with other organizations and entities and member states.

So without further ado, I bring you Jan Eliasson, deputy secretary general. Thank you very much, sir.

(APPLAUSE)

ELIASSON: Thank you very much, Stewart, for this gentle reminder of my age. The present emergency coordinator, Valerie Amos, is the ninth coordinator after me. And I'm now back in this trade, with a slightly masochistic pleasure. I wish I had U.S. advisers on some of the issues that I'm working with.

Also, thank you for inviting me. I like the mission statement of this group, the Council of Councils, the defining policy challenges of the 21st century are global in nature. I would have added today, the defining policy challenges of nations of the 21st century are global in nature. And I will try to start with a little bit of a general introduction, conceptual, and then I will try to move into these three, four concrete areas that occupy most of our minds.

I was glad for the -- to hopefully being in the right place. And I must tell you a little short story that I was invited here when I was president of the General Assembly to an event, and I didn't quite recognize the people in the room. I felt a bit strange. Normally you recognize the foreign policy crowd. I feel at home with you now; I hope you feel at home with me. But at that time, I didn't find myself at ease.

In my CV, which I haven't written, it says that I have a wide experience in conflict resolution and mediation. But I realized what had happened when I entered this room and I looked at the invitation, which was in front of me with the big -- big paper in front of me. It says, "Please come and welcome Mr. Jan Eliasson. He is an expert on conflict resolution and meditation."

(LAUGHTER)

So I said I'd better be at the right place. Hopefully I'm in the right place with you.

Well, my starting point is that -- it might sound like a banality, and you've probably been discussing it today, but I think this is -- this period is a test of multilateralism. But what I would like to add is that it is also a period where it's so obvious that we're -- if we are to deal with these multilateral issues, which were sort of stated more or less in your mission statement, we also need to have action from the national actions.

So what has happened in the world, I think, in the past 20, 30 years is that the borderline between national and international has progressively disappeared. We have come to the conclusion that building a nation well at home is a contribution to peace and security. But I would also hope that we will soon reach the conclusion that a good international solution, a good international formula is a national interest.

If our problems are global, could we possibly reach that conclusion that a good international formula is a national interest? I mean, on issues like climate and migration, it's easy to come to that conclusion, but on a number of others, it's not.

And as long as we have this dichotomy of international/national and see it in terms of contradictions, I think we are going to have to deal with another -- I wouldn't say threat, but a problem in today's world, at the same time as we have almost a natural force around multilateralism, which is necessary, we have at the same time also some trends of introspection that to many the outside world is a threat.

That's where the jobs go to and that's where the problems come from, migration and so forth, and you have then this paradoxical situation that -- of the necessary of multilateralism, but at the same time, that -- you have to sort of make sure that you deal with the problems at home in order to be strong. Richard, you made that case in one of your books. But also that if we fail to bring out good international solutions and formulas, then those forces, who are pretty strong -- and I know from my own European scene who think that this world outside these states was supposed to run -- the governments who are going to do our affairs, our European Union or United Nations, they don't deliver -- they do not deliver.

So then you will have a situation where loyalties go not to the state, not to the European Union, the regional organization, the United Nations. They go to more primordial forces, which we see in the world today. You go back to religion. You go back to your ethnic background. You go back to your tribe. You go back to your sect. That's why I think multilateralism and international cooperation is so important.

I would also claim that our analysis of globalization is rather outdated. I think we still live in the definition of globalization that we produced in the '90s, mostly free, you know, movement of people, ideas and goods, and I don't think we have still come to grips with the new elements in this new global landscape.

I don't think we have a strong mechanism to deal with the new elements of the new global landscape. Let me just enumerate them. The new geopolitics, the new geo-economics, not only the shift to Asia, but also the emerging powers who rightfully, justifiably think that they are not taken seriously, Security Council reform, et cetera, and a number of other areas, where you feel that there is a need for them to get the space that they would like to have.

Now I'm really dependent in not seeing my notes.

(LAUGHTER)

You have the new element of sustainability. We have no Planet B. We may have Plan B in life, but we certainly have no Planet B. And we need to have peace with nature, and we haven't made peace with nature. It's new. Did any of your parents speak about climate change? It's a new phenomenon.

And you have the revolution, which you have spoken about today, I understand, discussed today, the communications and information revolution. You have the huge migration -- we had it before, but a quarter of a billion people live in countries where they were not born.

Sixty percent of humanity is now also living in cities. In 2030, you will probably have 75 percent of humanity living in cities. You have a new factor which plays an enormously dangerous role in the world, namely organized crime. It plays a huge role, undermining societies. The drugs trade, what that does to nations, both in Latin America and Africa, cannot be overestimated.

You have, of course, positive things, also, the growth -- the role of women. I don't want to ingratiate myself with the still minority in this room here, but I would say this is a century of the women. It will happen; it has to happen. It's a new factor that comes in, also. It's never been the case in history, and I think we have to take youth seriously, not only their youth unemployment problems, which we really have to deal with, but also youth as a potential.

If you look at -- I just mentioned I think six different aspects new, the global landscape. Practically none of these were discussed in the '70s and '80s. They started to grow as factors in the '90s, and now they're here. And we are organizing our international cooperation very much on the basis of the world postwar and the up until now.

And if you look at these factors that I mentioned, they -- we don't have -- well, we have certain organization for it, but they're not very strong. And I come back to my point, if we don't prove that we in this new global landscape can produce good solutions, good formulas for these issues, well, don't we then land in the risk that people will say, well, listen, we don't trust neither our governments nor these organizations that you create, because you can't deliver results?

So that's why this is such a huge challenge for us. How we deal with it, well, I would suggest that we move from the vertical approach, the silo method, which is horrifyingly debilitating. I'd rather move to the horizontal approach. Practically no problems in today's world can be solved in the vertical, in the silos. They have to be solved on the horizontal, crossing borders.

When I was president of the General Assembly -- thank you for relating that -- I was very proud of a formula that Kofi Annan and possibly I also produced, namely that there is no peace without development, no development without peace, and none of the above without respect to human rights. And today, I would add rule of law.

In other words, if we are to deal with the problems, we need to bring all these factors in at the same time. These three pillars we have to deal with at the same time. I remember, when I was a student, a professor suggested at first you get peace, then you get development, then you do human rights. I mean, it's very primitive. We have to deal with it at the same time. If one of these factors is weak, everything is weak.

But not only horizontal in terms of functions, we also go horizontal in terms of actors. We need to reach out to governments, parliaments, the private sector, the academic world, the scientific world, the civil society -- I said civil society, didn't I -- all these factors need to be brought in around these global issues.

So this is my conceptual part of my presentation. Such a huge challenge to recognize the new elements of the new global landscape and ask ourselves to what extent we are relevant. And then we have to deal with them -- we have to deal with them in a horizontal approach, and we need to see them as part of both challenges for the international community, but also challenges for nations.

For instance, this post-2015 development agenda we're working with, it will never work if we just do this as a rhetorical document in the United Nations. It will work if it goes down and is relevant among the actors, not only governments, finance ministers, industry ministers, energy ministers, but also the private sector, the civil society, others. And then it becomes a reality.

So this would be my introduction, not quite optimistic or, rather, challenging, I'd say it is, but we really need to keep -- take this into account and then talk about the role of the United Nations.

OK. Let me now move to the crisis areas. I'll start with Syria. I think the word nightmare starts to lose its meaning for me, because nightmare is pretty good news. You wake up, don't you? But from Syria, you seem to -- it seems just to continue and continue.

And I must say, the secretary general, Ban Ki-moon, and I, when we sit down and talk, this comes back all the time, this frustration of not having enough strength in our tools of acting in the conflict. What we do is, of course, help with this horrifying humanitarian situation. What we try to do is limit the spreads into Lebanon and Iraq. What we try to do is also deal with issues where I think the Americans, the Russians helped us, on the chemical weapons destruction.

But on the basic issue of the political solution, we have very little help. As you know, the Security Council had not been able to agree, and this means that some of the world's best negotiators, Kofi Annan and our Lakhdar Brahimi, have been given a very, very poor hand to deal.

And they have achieved something important 30 June of 2012, namely, a decision to achieve a -- to form a governing body with full executive powers. Now, as you know, President Assad seems to be going in the direction of an election on the 3rd of June to be elected for seven years. And, of course, that seems to be difficult to reconcile with transition government at the same time.

So I think the direction that we will probably have to go is now to really move the responsibility more and more to those nations who can influence the situation on the ground. Right now, it seems that there are some difficulties between the United States and Russia, due to Ukraine. I hope it doesn't spread into the Syria conflict, although there are some such -- such signs a little bit.

But I also think there are responsibilities on others, not only the other permanent members of the Security Council, but also neighboring countries, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Iran, who could really be the ones who make the difference in terms of whether there are arms coming to the area and whether the notion, the illusion, I would say, of military victory will be maintained -- will be maintained.

I've heard that phrase for two or three years now, military victory. It goes in, you know, ups and downs for one of the other side. I don't think it's possible. Even if there were a military victory possible, I would say that the day after such a victory you would have something even horrifying that you have today.

So I think there is -- it's time, really, for the major actors to take their responsibility. I hope they do. Lakhdar Brahimi will report to the Security Council tomorrow morning. I met him an hour ago. He didn't -- he hadn't finished his draft, so Jeff Feltman, the political affairs, said that I'd better go down and listen to you, see what you will have me be able to say, but I think there will be news coming out tomorrow.

South Sudan and Central African Republic I can almost combine. South Sudan got an agreement Friday last week between Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, finally. There was enormous pressure on both of them from also member states, key member states. I don't know whether this will hold, because the genie is a bit out of the bottle with this ethnic dimension that now plays a horrifying role. Once you get that emotional element into a conflict, then you see the same in Central African Republic, then it's extremely difficult to get that genie back in the bottle.

But I think we will -- we will hopefully make progress. There is good cooperation between African Union and United Nations. And I have come to the conclusion, since I was mediating in Darfur, that no conflict practically in the world, but particularly in Africa, can be solved if you don't see it in a regional context.

It's an absolutely mistake to think that you can solve any of these issues, whether it's Mali or Central African Republic or South Sudan, if you don't see it in the regional context. We have to -- in all analysis -- start from the regional context. And fortunately, we have realized that and have very good cooperation with the African Union and even some of the sub-regional organizations.

What is also lying behind this is, of course, we are extremely worried that this will turn into a situation where mass atrocities could go into even worse. I belong to those who don't think the responsibility to protect is behind us. It will have to come back. Sovereignty is there, but solidarity cannot stop at a border. And I think we will have to constantly refer to it. Certainly both in the case of Central Africa and South Sudan, the governments haven't lived up to it.

Particularly in cases of the Central African Republic, we have the problem that you have a failing government or a failed state. We have an obligation, if we are to solve this issue, to also help this government to establish itself. But in

terms of cooperation, I think it's been a good example of U.N. and Africa working together, also with the help, of course, of the French, who played a key role on Central African Republic.

On Ukraine, finally, there is too little -- there is very little for me to say. We are a small actor on the Ukraine issue. The big elephants are up there. We see how much of the grass remains for us to be dealing with. I was there, as Stewart said. We were working on two issues. One was to bring the Russians to the -- to agree to talk to Kiev. At that time, it was crucial, and then finally they did, although it's a very reluctant speaking partner.

The second one was to make sure that we have what I call international eyes and ears on the ground, so we were working for human rights monitors. In the case of the United Nations, we still have 35 people out there in the country. But also, we helped OSCE in Vienna to get about 200 monitors in, and now I think they are hopefully heading to be 400 or 500, and by that, have international (inaudible) on the ground, perhaps also at the border line between Ukraine and Russia.

That was mainly our task. The secretary general went to Moscow, saw Putin. We will see whether our offices are good offices, are desired. We hope that there will be a de-escalation and finding a political solution, but very much this is an issue which is out of our hands. We are ready to do what we can, but we will not be very operational, at least for the time being.

I think as been already breaking the time limit, so I will quit at this --end of this point. And if you have 5 or 10 minutes for questions or comments, I would like to very much take advantage of this eminent group. So, thank you very much.

(APPLAUSE)

PATRICK: Thank you very much, Deputy Secretary General. If there are questions (OFF-MIC) yes, please, in the back. And, please, if you could state your name and affiliation, that would be great.

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Hello. My name is Alan Whiteside. You probably know me from the University of KwaZulu Natal and the AIDS work I did, but I'm now in Canada at CIGI. My question is, which border are we talking about between Ukraine and Russia?

ELIASSON: Can I take a couple of questions?

PATRICK: Yes, of course. And this cartographer (OFF-MIC)

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Hi, Robin Niblett from Chatham House. Just wanted to -- you and I were discussing a little bit earlier on the issue of human rights as a measure of risk and potential future conflict. We did bring up the issue of North Korea earlier on, and there is this kind of issue -- very difficult issues to manage. I'm just wondering where -- if you want to say a word or two about human rights in general as a measure of potential future conflict and whether you could say anything about North Korea, which has really come up much more strongly into that area where, can we allow something like that to continue for as long as it has, in terms of the human rights abuses taking place there?

PATRICK: Thank you, Robin.

ELIASSON: One more?

PATRICK: (OFF-MIC) and then I'll (OFF-MIC)

ELIASSON: OK.

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Thank you. You spoke about Syria and you spoke about regional conflicts or about conflicts in a general way, and you said we always have to see the regional context. Now, if we link that to the Syria conflict, it will bring back the question whether one could at all imagine solving the Syria conflict without having Iran in. And I know that probably touches on a difficult subject, because the United Nations wanted to have Iran at the Geneva -- at the Geneva II meeting. So you think we will go back to try to get Iran and Saudi Arabia into a solution for Syria?

ELIASSON: OK. I guess this question about border is a rhetorical question.

(LAUGHTER)

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: It's a real question.

ELIASSON: Well, of course, the immediate concern is, of course, what happens at the border between eastern Ukraine and Russia, but, of course, the territorial integrity of Ukraine is never questioned by the United Nations. So Crimea is still, of course, in the -- in the name of 100 nations and General Assembly, part of Ukraine.

The -- thanks, Robin, for your questions right upfront. I was thinking of this at the end, but then I probably had broken the timeline, so I said I hope someone asks about it. Thank you so much.

I'm very glad you asked about that, because when I was president of the General Assembly, we got the rights upfront -- the responsibility to protect accepted. I'm sure you have discussed it today. But one initiative that I want you to know about is an initiative that we have taken the last few months. We call it Rights Up Front. It's called Human Rights Up Front.

It is meant, first of all, to put human rights on the level of the peace, security, development, human rights, as an entity, as the three pillars of the United Nations, but we also would like to see human rights as -- human rights violations as the first signal of upcoming crisis, conflicts that could be conflicts leading to mass atrocities.

If you analyze conflicts over the last 40, 50 years, you will find that that is very much a pattern. So if that is the case, that human rights violations is the first sign of a conflict going sour and getting very serious, then why don't we act more on that stage?

So what we have now done is to build up a system where we will more -- I would say almost -- I hate to use the word, it doesn't really fit (inaudible) but I said aggressively bring in the different acts, the different measures that we can take. We want to go to the Security Council and say that the situation in one country could lead to mass atrocities.

We will use the different monthly meetings with the Security Council members, the lunches, to bring those issues up. On the item any other business, we will bring them up. And we will do it even if we take the risk of alienating -- alienating some of the countries involved.

We have done it now in South Sudan, and particularly the Central African Republic, it's easier because we have a failing or failed state. Let's face it. Later (ph), we may have a government which feels very bad about us bringing up this conflicts that could turn very, very, very nasty.

We will also try to be very concrete to suggest, also, fact-finding missions, quiet diplomacy, talking to neighboring states, influential actors on the scene who could help the situation, talk to civil society, take context so that we act on the human rights violations, rather than waiting for the mass atrocities.

And we are right in the beginning of this process. If you're interested, I'll ask my staff to send you the material which is just now coming out. The first reaction from member states has been positive, but I'm sure we will have some push-backs later on.

But I think this is a very interesting way of making prevention really concrete. And the reason why this happened was that I was asked to chair a meeting on the conclusions from the Sri Lanka -- end of the Sri Lanka war, and a colleague of mine, friend from my time in humanitarian action, Charles Petrie, said that we had in the United Nations gone through a systemic failure. And I just couldn't take it. A systemic failure? Yes, I agreed. We have to do something about it.

So we hope that we will actually speed up the action on human rights violations and put that in the context of peace and security. We hope we have your support on this. It's going to be a bumpy ride.

The regional conflicts, yes (inaudible) yes. I am absolutely convinced that we need Iran on board. Iran is necessary, also, for -- you know, if we are to deal with the situation in Afghanistan and Iraq, and I would really hope that the diplomatic openings will continue so that we can really take advantage of the fact that we have a government in Iran -- at least a president and a foreign minister who want to go that direction. They also -- I know from my own negotiations from Iran, Iraq, that they are very skillful once they get onto something. So I would hope that we will have them onboard.

I'm not sure that they will want to play that role constructively right now in the Syria situation, but we certainly expect them to help on Afghanistan and on the regional security and the Gulf area and the situation in Iraq.

But generally, I'm glad you picked up that point, because this is my very strong conclusion, we will never make it in any of these issues today if we do not from the beginning take -- put it in the regional context. We sometimes look at it as an afterthought. We come to the conclusion -- but I remember, when I was doing the negotiations on Darfur, after about two months, Salim Salim and I went to the Security Council and said, we need to be able to work with Chad, Libya, Egypt, and Eritrea in order to get peace in Darfur.

So, yes, we need them, and I hope that the constellations of stars are right for them to play that role. But I won't keep you from dinner. Our French colleague was reminding of the need for dinner now.

PATRICK: We have -- if I could take two more questions, I think Thierry (ph), including maybe Michael, our French colleague and then our Australian colleague.

ELIASSON: Yeah.

PATRICK: Go ahead, please.

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Starting with France...

PATRICK: (OFF-MIC)

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Thank you. No, I would like to take up the -- from a different angle your remark about the importance of understanding a conflict in its regional context. And you mentioned the importance of the African Union.

Now, my question is, do you -- don't you think that the organization -- security regional organizations are too weak today? And do you see with your enormous experience, can you identify a trend that is -- can you say, for instance, in

10 or 20 years from now, more stronger regional organizations that could take by themselves, you know, part of the building of restoring order in some regions, including typically Africa?

PATRICK: (OFF-MIC) Australia?

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: Mr. Eliasson, Michael Fullilove from the Lowy Institute in Sydney. Thank you very much for an interesting and very muscular speech, which I appreciated. You mentioned in passing that you thought the United Nations had a -- was a minor actor when it came to Ukraine. Can I say something provocative to you and say that, on a number of international issues these days, it feels that the United Nations is a minor actor, certainly compared to 10 years ago when you were president of the General Assembly and Kofi Annan was secretary general, when it felt like the organization was more in the center of the field, rather than on the margins.

Do you think that critique is fair? And if it is fair and something has changed, what has changed?

ELIASSON: OK. The first question of the region, this is really interesting. This is not for show, but I always have the charter in the pocket, you know? Here it is.

(LAUGHTER)

Here's the charter.

QUESTION FROM AUDIENCE: (OFF-MIC)

ELIASSON: That's a good question, but I do this for demonstration.

PATRICK: To share with people.

ELIASSON: There are two underutilized chapters of this charter. One is chapter six. Chapter six is pacific settlement to disputes. Isn't that beautiful? Not even "peaceful." It's poetry. Pacific settlement to disputes. I particularly encourage you to read article 33, eight methods of mediation, arbitration, et cetera.

But then, of course, chapter eight is also underutilized, not -- there are so many people who don't even know that chapter eight, regional arrangements, is part of the United Nations charter. And if you read article 52, I think it is, section two (inaudible) you will see that actually the fantastic authors of this charter wanted first the regional actors to find the solutions within the region, and only if they failed would they go to the Security Council.

So I think we sort of -- we didn't quite remember that this was the way it was supposed to be done, and that requires, of course, pretty strong regional arrangements, regional organizations. I think we are slowly coming to the conclusions. European Union, after all, look, what has happened. All these years, it's still there. There is critiques. But by god, we need the European Union. As a former foreign minister of Sweden, I said, yes, it's a fantastic step forward.

I would say also African Union -- ups and downs, but, yes, no, I think they are making great progress. If you look at the charter of the African Union, it's a beautiful charter. They wrote about responsibility to protect before we discovered it. It is -- and they throw out any member who has a military coup. They don't belong in the -- they suspend them from the African Union.

Now, they are very -- if you look at their bureaucratic -- their size of their operations, you know, it's -- I'm impressed by people like Sajinit (ph) or the present Chair Geyu (ph), they have six or seven people working for them. They certainly need to beef up their organization in order to play that role.

But I think we are getting almost week by week better organization. Darfur and the operation there may be could have been improved, but now we -- Mali was a good lesson for us. DRC is another one. And now have this situation where we solidly and genuinely and honestly want to improve the African Union capacity in Central African Republic, but then we are ready by September to take over and make this a U.N. operation.

So I think we -- I think we need to realize that United Nations have a huge problem of expectations, but we can only make it if we bring in the -- the potential that exists not least in regional organizations.

Now I come to your question. Yes, the reason why I gave this rather protracted introduction, where I sort of looked at the new global landscape and analyzed -- hopefully analyzed -- too presumptuous a word -- but I tried to list the different new elements. These elements have grown in importance during this period. Even the last 10 years, the new geopolitics, the new economics, the sustainability issues, the organized crime, all these factors have grown on us, and I don't think we have yet found the methods to deal with it.

I don't expect in the end that the United Nations is going to deal with these other issues. I would reduce the expectations in the United Nations and rather say that we should not expect always to be in the lead. Maybe we could just be in some cases catalytic or even part of the horizontal division of labor.

I would use a method of putting the problem in the center -- the problem in the center -- and then we say, who can do something about it? And then we gather those and try to find some type of working together.

We had a long period where United Nations was supposed to solve everything. Now we have been reminded, mainly through the deep frustration that we feel about Syria, that we are so limited and we are reminded every day, every day my SG and I go out, we hear that, why don't you get peace in Syria?

So Syria has really undermined so much of the belief in the United Nations. That's why this is such a very, very damaging process, and that's why -- what you heard from me, that I said now it's time, really, to move the responsibility to the member states, particularly those states in the -- in the Security Council who have the veto, and those in the neighborhood who can influence the situation on the ground.

But I think also that we will never be able to solve these issues unless we combine the good international solution with action at home. Today's world requires societies to build up internally so that they are the actions that don't produce conflicts and don't produce poverty and don't produce violations of human rights, while the international society has sort of set up a structure where we as nations strive at home to make decent lives for our citizens, also provide international shapor (ph), so to speak, coming to the conclusion that simply we can't solve them alone -- solve these issues alone.

Sounds slightly idealistic, but that's probably what keeps us working in this business. I often say to young people, my colleagues here who are here, I say to you, the United Nations is a mirror, a reflection of two things. It's a mirror and a reflection of the world as it is, and I expect from you to have a very tough analysis of the world as it is, no illusions, no rosy pictures. You've got to know exactly what goes on, on the ground, whether you like it or not. And it's not a pretty world.

But the United Nations is also a reflection, a mirror of the world as it should be. So if you have the world as it is here, the world as it should be here, our job is to try do a little bit -- just a little, little bit to diminish that gap between the world as it is and the world as it should be. And I think in this way, we should reduce the expectation of the United Nations and rather see us as one catalyst for action on the multilateral scene, but also to improve our societies at home.

PATRICK: Please join me in thanking Ambassador Eliasson.

ELIASSON: Thank you.

(APPLAUSE)

Thank you.

END □