H.E. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly, visits Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

“Africa matters to the United Nations”
H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák
UNOAU Mandate

Background on the establishment of UNOAU

Since the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the African Union (AU) in 2002 and particularly since the 2004 launching of the AU peace and security architecture, there has been strong support among the UN and its Member States for closer UN cooperation with the AU. In 2005, the World Summit underscored the need to devote attention to the special needs of Africa. In follow-up to the World Summit, Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in the 2006 Addis Ababa Declaration “Enhancing UN-AU Cooperation: Framework for the Ten-Year Capacity-Building Programme for the African Union”, pledged UN support for the development and strengthening of the AU Commission, focusing “with priority, on conflict prevention, mediation and good offices, peacekeeping and peace building”. In 2007, the General Assembly adopted GA Resolution 61/296 on cooperation between the UN and the AU and requested the Secretary-General to take appropriate steps to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat to meet the special needs of Africa.

The United Nations Office to the African Union (UNOAU) was established on 1 July 2010 by UN General Assembly Resolution 64/288. The Office integrated three existing offices: Department of Political Affairs (DPA) Liaison Office, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) AU Support Team and the Department of Field Support (DFS) Planning Team for Somalia to support the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), as well as the support component of the United Nations and African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) Joint Support Coordination Mechanism (JCM) office in Addis Ababa.

In 2016, the AUPSC Members adopted the 628th Communiqué on the partnership between the UN and the AU on issues of peace and security in Africa. Later the UN Security Council (SC) adopted resolution 2320 (2016) on partnership between the UN and Regional Organizations, in particular with the African Union. Afterwards, the UN Secretary-General’s report was presented on a new level of partnership. This was further strengthened by the new UN Secretary-General, through his expressed vision and priorities in which he stressed the fact that UN and AU must continue to keep a strong strategic partnership in the area of peace and security, through the implementation of both organizations programmes namely Agenda 2063 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

On 19 April 2017, at the first UN-AU Annual Conference held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York, the UN Secretary-General, H.E. António Guterres and the AU Commission (AUC) Chairperson H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat endorsed a Joint UN-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security as a basis for collaboration through joint mechanisms and regular consultations. In a Joint UN-AU Communiqué SG/2239 of 19 April 2017, the Secretary-General and the Chairperson reiterated their strong commitment to working hand in hand towards achieving the continent’s development goals.

The mandate of UNOAU is to:

- enhance the partnership between the United Nations and the African Union in the area of peace and security;
- provide coordinated and consistent United Nations advice to the African Union on long-term capacity-building and short-term operational support matters;
- streamline the United Nations presence in Addis Ababa to make it cost-effective and efficient in delivering UN assistance to the AU.

About the UNOAU Bulletin: UNOAU Bulletin aims to increase visibility and awareness on the UNOAU’s mandate as it relates to UN-Joint support with the African Union Commission, the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms in the area of Peace and Security on the continent. The Bulletin illustrates the political role that the United Nations is playing with the AU and other stakeholders on conflict prevention and management, peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

UNOAU welcomes H.E. President Lajčák to Ethiopia

The President of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, H.E. Miroslav Lajčák, visited Ethiopia from 28 February to 2 March to engage with the African Union (AU), Ethiopian authorities and the in-country UN system on the following four main priorities of his mandate: (i) Peace and Security; (ii) Sustainable development; (iii) Migration; and (iv) UN reforms.

UNOAU Chief of Staff, Ms. Nathalie Ndongo-Seh and the senior management team welcomed President Lajčák and provided him with a briefing on the UN-AU Joint Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, as well as on country and region specific issues.

Vision and Priorities

Advancing global understanding of the critical role of multilateralism in our modern world and in serving the needs of all people

- PEACE: Strengthening the role and performance of the UN in conflict prevention and sustaining peace
- MIGRATION: Driving the process to develop a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration
- SUSTAINABLE PLANET: Maintaining the momentum to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement
- HUMAN DIGNITY: Promoting and protecting the human rights of all people
- MODERN UN: Playing a leading role in driving forward UN processes on General Assembly revitalization, Security Council reform and ECOSOC review
The President of the UN General Assembly (PGA) met with the African Union Chairperson, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat.

In the meeting, Mr Lajčák outlined that his priorities for the current (72nd) session of the General Assembly are as follows: (i) peace and security; (ii) sustainable development; (iii) migration and (iv) UN reforms.

With regard to peace and security, Mr Lajčák invited the AU Chairperson to Africa has the largest concentration of young people in the world. participate as a keynote speaker in a High-Level event on prevention of conflicts. The AU Chairperson noted that the peace and security challenges the continent is facing, require the UN Security Council to re-examine the mandates of various Peace Operations established to respond to these crises. He further stated that Peace Operations mandates may need to be adapted to address threats such as terrorism, trans-national crime and human trafficking.

On sustainable development, the PGA noted that the 2030 Agenda is underfunded. President Lajčák informed the AU Chairperson that he was planning to host three High-level events on development namely, water and energy (March 2018), youth (May 2018) and on financing for development (June 2018). The PGA extended an invitation to the AU Chairperson who noted that in the ongoing AUC reforms, one of the goals was to align its Agenda 2063 implementation structures with those of the UN 2030 Agenda on development.

On migration, the PGA commended the unanimity of the Africa Group in the General Assembly which is presenting a common position on the ongoing consultations on the Global Compact on Migration. On reforms, the PGA stressed that his aspiration for the 72nd session is to facilitate a credible and transparent process towards UN reforms.

In response, the AU Chairperson the African Union Commission informed that the AU has embarked on reforms to be best placed to achieve its Agenda 2063. H.E. Moussa reiterated his wish that Africa’s voice would be better heard in the UN Security Council.

The Chairperson sought to the PGA’s support and advocacy efforts to address the emerging threats and attacks to multilateralism. This is in view of the fact that global challenges including climate change and its impact to peace and security, terrorism, all require a global response rooted in multilateral institutions such as the General Assembly.

President Lajčák launched the International Decade for Action: Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028 on World Water Day, 22 March, 2018

“Years ago, the United Nations was like an island. Too often, it acted alone. But, we have all, now, realised something important: Sustaining Peace is not owned by any one entity. It can only be achieved, if we all work together.”

President Lajčák at the Stockholm Forum on Peace and Development 2018: The Politics of Peace, 7 May, 2018
Dialogue with African Union Commissioners

In a meeting with African Union Commissioners for infrastructure, trade and social affairs, President Lajčák engaged the Commissioners in crucial global issues such as the Sustainable Development Goals, migration, trade, employment and labor, energy, youth and water were explored.

President Miroslav Lajčák was briefed by Commissioners at the African Union on trade, industry, social affairs among other priorities of the African Union Commission. H.E. Victor Harrison, Commissioner for Economic Affairs at African Union (left) chaired the session.

H.E. Dr. Amani Abou-Zeid, Commissioner for Infrastructure and Energy (left), H.E. Mrs. Amira Elfadil, Commissioner for Social Affairs and H.E. Mr. Albert M. Muchanga, Commissioner for Trade and Industry briefed the President of the General Assembly in this meeting.

President Lajčák meets President Mulatu Teshome of Ethiopia

On 1st March 2018, President Lajčák was received by the President of the Federal Republic of Ethiopia, H.E. Mulatu Teshome at the National Palace. The two leaders exchanged views on the Global Compact on Migration, Sustaining Peace, financing for Sustainable Development Goals, UN reforms and joint support for multilateralism.

In a meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Ethiopia, Dr. Workneh Gebeyehu, President Lajčák discussed conflict prevention, developments in the Horn of Africa, poverty as a security threat, opportunities for youth and the on-going UN Security Council reform.

“And, when we look to this continent, we see some things, very clearly: Opportunity, Ambition, Innovation, Growth and most importantly of all, hope. Because for all the gains that have been made – there are many more on the horizon.”

President Lajčák remarks at the Transform Africa Summit, Kigali (Rwanda), 8 May, 2018
President Lajčák engages with ECA on the UN-AU Framework for Sustainable Development

At the Economic Commission for Africa, President Lajčák stated that UNGA would host high level meetings from March to June 2018. These high level discussions were set to focus on financing for development, peace and security, water for development, the youth and education in a bid to keep global momentum up on the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as well as Africa’s Agenda 2063. After productive consultations, President Lajčák toured the oldest building in the UN ECA compound, the Africa Hall.

President Lajčák meets with the UN Country Team in Ethiopia

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President Lajčák addresses graduate students and professors at Addis Ababa University

At Addis Ababa University, President Lajčák interacted with students and professors from several graduate schools. Outlining the priorities of his presidency, Mr. Lajčák highlighted the relevance of the UN and how the Organization implements its set priorities. The need to work collaboratively to achieve and sustain peace; the Sustainable Development Goals, and the need to ensure safe migration were some of the other points that the PGA raised at the University.

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák will host a Youth Dialogue on 30th May, 2018. Follow Twitter Chats #ASKPGA #youth72
Recently, the President of the United Nations General Assembly Miroslav Lajčák paid a visit to Ethiopia. He held meetings with Ethiopian Government Officials and African Union authorities. The Ethiopian Herald interviewed President Lajčák.

Would you explain the purpose of your visit and its significance for Ethiopia?

I have come to Ethiopia as the President of United Nations General Assembly. My visit has basically three objectives: First, Ethiopia is a country which is very active and a dedicated member of the United Nations. Currently, it is a non-permanent member of the Security Council.

In addition to actively participating in UN peace-keeping missions, the nation is effectively implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. I had meetings with the President of Ethiopia and other Officials to discuss Ethiopia’s commitment to implement the UN agenda. Second, Addis Ababa is the seat of the African Union and here, I had meetings with the Permanent Representatives of Africa countries and with the Chairperson of the African Union Commission. We spoke about the processes through which we can develop cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union.

Third, I am also meeting with the UN family here; the UN Office to the African Union, the UN Country Team to Ethiopia and the UN Economic Commission for Africa. All these UN presences can give me a proper picture of issues on the African continent, Ethiopia and the United Nations which can inform the intended cooperation.

What is the purpose of the General Assembly? What is your role as the President?

The UN General Assembly is the most representative organ of the United Nations. It is the only organ where all 193 members of the United Nations are present. They all are equal and have an equal voice and similar roles. This makes this organ very unique. And according to the Charter, the General Assembly deals with any issue it considers important. It is also the only organ that is unlimited in the scope of its agenda.

I travelled here to seek feedback from Member States and to inform them about what the General Assembly is undertaking and to make sure that they share their views. There are very important processes going on at the General Assembly. And one of the purposes of my visit is to discuss the priorities of the General Assembly with African and Ethiopian authorities.

Ethiopia is among the members of the UN General Assembly. How do you work with Ethiopia?

We involve every Member State. Ethiopia is the second most populated country in Africa which gives Ethiopia a special role in the Horn of Africa where there are several challenges including issues related to peace and security. Thus, we closely work with Ethiopia in order to find solutions for these challenges. Ethiopia also actively participates in the activities organized by the United Nations. For instance, we have the Sustainable Development Goals, which is the global agenda. The case of Ethiopia shows that the agenda is being implemented in Africa. Ethiopia is one of the three African countries sitting in the UN Security Council; that gives it the country a prominent role and voice.

How do you see Ethiopia’s commitment in implementing UN’s agenda?

Ethiopia has a significant contribution to the UN agenda. The country has an active role in peace and security on the continent. It is actively implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in addition to promoting good governance.

The UN is undertaking certain reforms these days. How do you explain that?

The philosophy is very simple: the world is changing. The UN needs to update itself to the current circumstances. It has to be ready to provide answers to the current global challenges. This is the philosophy behind the reforms.

The UN was established in 1945 when the global situations were very different from that of today’s. Over its 72 years of existence, it has consistently been evolving. Right now, there are several reforms going on. One, is the discussion about the reform of the Security Council to make it more representative, so that it reflects the reality of the 21st century. Second, is the revitalization of the General Assembly which means that Member States want the General Assembly to play more active and visible roles. They want to strengthen the role of the General Assembly.

Finally, there are three concrete reforms presented by the UN Secretary-General António Guterres. One aims at addressing the peace and security architecture, the second, the development system and the third, management. All the Member States decide on the final version of these reforms.

“We have to ensure that the United Nations – both the organisation and the system – is well structured to be effective in the 21st Century. We cannot fulfill our collective responsibility without doing this. And so, we must continue to push ahead on reform.”

Statement by President Lajčák at a Briefing and Interactive discussion with the Group of 77 in New York, 11 May, 2018
Biography

President of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly

H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák

On 31 May 2017, the General Assembly of the United Nations elected H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák of Slovakia as President of its seventy-second session, which spans from September 2017 to September 2018. At the time of his election, Mr. Lajčák was serving his third term as Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic, a position he held since April 2012. From April 2012 to March 2016, Mr. Lajčák also served as Deputy Prime Minister of his country.

Mr. Lajčák has dedicated his professional life to diplomatic service, representing both the Slovak Republic and the international community on posts in Brussels, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro.

He joined the foreign service of the then Czechoslovakia in 1988 and was posted in Moscow from 1991 to 1993, initially as an assistant to the Ambassador of Czechoslovakia, and from 1993, after Czechoslovakia peacefully split, in the same position at the newly formed Slovak Embassy there. Upon his return to Slovakia in 1993, Mr. Lajčák played a vital role in the transformation of his young country. He actively helped to build and shape the Slovak national foreign service as Director of the Cabinet of the Foreign Minister of the newly established Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Slovakia.

In 1994, at the age of 31, Mr. Lajčák was appointed as the Slovak Ambassador to Japan, thus becoming the youngest-ever head of a diplomatic mission of Slovakia as well as the youngest foreign ambassador serving in Japan. From 1999 to 2001, Mr. Lajčák served as the Executive Assistant to the United Nations Secretary-General’s Special Envoy for the Balkans, Eduard Kukan. Following his tenure as Slovak Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia between 2001 and 2005 Mr. Lajčák served as Political Director at the Foreign Ministry of the Slovak Republic from 2005 to 2007. A key figure in the mediation of the post-conflict crises in the Western Balkans, Mr. Lajčák negotiated, organised and supervised the referendum on the independence of Montenegro in 2006 on behalf of the European Union High Representative for Common and Security Policy, Javier Solana.

In 2007, Mr. Lajčák was appointed High Representative of the International Community and European Union Special Representative in Bosnia and Herzegovina. During his tenure, Bosnia and Herzegovina signed the landmark Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union. From 2009 to July 2010, Mr. Lajčák served as Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Slovak Republic.

From 2010 to 2012, Mr. Lajčák helped shape the newly formed diplomatic service of the European Union, the European External Action Service, as its Managing Director for Europe and Central Asia. In addition, he also served as the EU’s Chief Negotiator for the Association Agreements of the EU with Ukraine and Moldova, as well as the EU Representative for the “5+2 Talks” on the Transnistrian Settlement Process.

Mr. Lajčák is a graduate of the Moscow State Institute for International Relations and has a law degree from the Comenius University in Bratislava. He is married and has two daughters.

“I do believe we can do more to bring the UN closer to the world’s citizens.”
UNOAU in Action

**UNOAU Chief of Staff, Ms. Nathalie Ndongo-Seh welcomes H.E. Mr. Miroslav Lajčák, President of the UN General Assembly at Bole International Airport upon his arrival in Addis Ababa for a two-day official visit and to UNOAU Office.**

**UNOAU Political Affairs Section colleagues, Shadrack Mibogho, Diana Baker and Nicholas Shalita attend President Lajčák’s briefing to the AU Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC).**

**UNOAU hosted a dinner for Miroslav Lajčák in which several African Union Commissioners, Ms. Giovanie Biha, the Deputy Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, the Ambassador of Slovakia to Ethiopia, Ambassador Ranieri Sabatucci of the European Union Delegation to the African Union and the UN Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator, Ms. Ahunna Eziakonwa-Onochie.**

**SRSG Haile Menkerios briefing G20 Argentina Sherpa, Ambassador Pedro Villagra Delgado at the Economic Commission for Africa.**

**The AU High Representative on Silencing the Guns, Mr. Ramtane Lamamra briefing Mr. Haile Menkerios, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union on the initiative and areas for UNOAU collaboration.**

**UNOAU Chief of Staff, Nathalie Ndongo-Seh and Colonel Wuntadei Azeve, Head Operational of Operational Planning and Advisory Section in a meeting with Ambassador Philip Baker of Canada.**
Joseph Birungi, (top right) in a group picture with the African Union Chairperson, H.E. Moussa Faki Mahamat and the UN Special Envoy for the Great Lakes Region, Mr. Said Djinnit (center right) at the Fifth anniversary of the Peace, Security and Cooperation (PSC) Framework on the Democratic Republic of Congo and the region meeting held at the African Union Headquarters.

Mr. Haile Menkerios, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the African Union joins State Minister Hirut Zemene in a certificate handover ceremony at the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs where up and coming diplomats attended a training conducted by the UN Department of Political Affairs and UNOAU.

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Azeez Nurudeen, Head of Operational Planning and Advisory Section at AU Peace and Security Council meeting where partners commended AMISOM & Troop/Police Contributing Countries (T/PCCs) for their continued commitment to Somalia.

Mr. Nicholas Haysom, Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Sudan and South Sudan, briefs AU Peace and Security Council on the status of the Revitalization Process.

Seraphine Toe, Head of Strategic Communications and Public Information (UNOAU) welcomes and introduces President Lajčák to Mr. Tassew Woldehana (right), President of Addis Ababa University before an interactive session with graduate students and professors.

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Staff Movements

UNOAU welcomes

Sossi Tatikyan: Security Sector Reform Adviser (left)
Ibrahim Diouf: Head, Horn of Africa Liaison Team (center)
Steven Bourke: Political Affairs Officer (right)

UNOAU bid farewell to

Lt. Colonel Edward Kimosop: Military Planner (left)
Evan Bwala: Special Assistant to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General to Sudan and South Sudan (right)

Some UN General Assembly Events for May and June, 2018

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 16 May</td>
<td>Informal consultations (closed) on the Global Compact for Safe, Order land Regular Migration</td>
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<td>Informal meeting to commemorate the International Day of Living Together in Peace</td>
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<td>Informal consultations convened by the co-facilitators to lead the review of the arrangements contained in resolution 68/1 entitled “Review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council” and its annex</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, 17 May</td>
<td>Informal consultations (closed) on a political declaration for adoption at the opening of the plenary meeting of the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, 21 May</td>
<td>Fifth informal interactive multi-stakeholder hearing as part of the preparatory process for the international conference to adopt a global compact for safe, orderly and regular migration</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday, 23 May</td>
<td>High-level debate to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption</td>
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| Thursday, 24 May  | Plenary meeting  
Report of the Peacebuilding Commission [item 30]; Peacebuilding and sustaining peace [item 65]; Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund [item 111] |
| Wednesday, 30 May | Youth dialogue convened by the President of the General Assembly |
| Monday, 4 June    | Interactive civil society hearing as part of the preparatory process for the high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis, convened by the President of the General Assembly, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 72/268 |
| Tuesday, 5 June   | Plenary meeting  
1. Election of the President of the General Assembly [item 4]  
2. Election of the Vice-Presidents of the General Assembly [item 6] |
| Wednesday - Thursday, 6 - 7 June | Informal meeting (closed) of the plenary on the intergovernmental negotiations on the question of equitable representation on and increase in the membership of the Security Council and other matters related to the Council. |
| Friday, 8 June    | Plenary meeting  
Election of five non-permanent members of the Security Council [item 113 (a)] |
| Monday, 11 June   | High-level event, entitled “Financing for SDGs–Breaking the Bottlenecks of Investment, from Policy to Impact” |
| Tuesday, 12 June  | Plenary meeting  
Implementation of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the political declarations on HIV/AIDS [item 10] |

For more detailed information, visit http://www.un.org/en/ga/info/meetings/72schedule.shtml


Upcoming Events

AU PSC activities (Chair of the month: Niger)

6-9 March: AUPSC-EUPSC joint field mission to the Central African Republic;
6-7 March: Meeting of the Panel of the Wise in Windhoek, Namibia;
12 March: AUPSC briefing on the situation in Mali/Sahel, focusing on the status of operationalization of the G5 Sahel Joint Force;
13 March: AUPSC open session on the plight of Women and Children in conflict situations;
14 March: AUPSC briefing on the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

UNOAU Bulletin

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Editor in Chief: Nathalie Ndongo-Seh - Chief of Staff (CoS)

Editorial Board: Nicholas Shalita - Head of Political Affairs Section (PAS)
Hester Adriana Paneras - Head, Institutional and Operational Partnership Service (OPAS)
Azeez Nurudeen - Operational Planning and Advisory Section
Diana Baker - Political Affairs Officer
Oana Topala - Information Analyst
Larisa Hill – Programme Management Officer

Public Information Unit: Seraphine Toe - Senior Strategic Communications and Public Information Officer
Edda Zekarias - National Strategic Communications and Public Information Officer

Photos: UNOAU, President of UN General Assembly’s Office, UN Photo, UN RCO, AU, AU PSC, MoFA

Address: UNOAU Menelik II Avenue; UNECA compound Zambezi building; 5th & 6th floors;
Tel.: +251 11 544 2275; Fax: +251 11 551 1652; P. O. Box: 1357; Addis Ababa-Ethiopia