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National Statement by

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at the

General Debate of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly

September 23, 2021

Chairman, Excellences, dear Colleagues,

Good evening to all of you.

First of all, let me start with congratulating my friend and colleague, Abdulla Shahid for taking over the Presidency of the General Assembly. I wish him good luck, he is going to lead the organization through tough times, but I would like to ensure him of Hungary's support, our support to the Office of the President of the General Assembly.

Dear Colleagues, it is great to meet again in person. It is great that the General Assembly takes place not in a virtual format. This is the essence of diplomacy: we meet each other, we talk to each other and we do our best in order to overcome our challenges.

And these last one and a half years were full of challenges, troubles, and a lot of problems. Now the situation has improved a bit, but we do have to be aware that the crisis is not over yet. The pandemic has created a very uncertain situation, and I have to commend the fantastic achievement of the research community of the globe, which was able to find the answer within one and a half years.

And the answer to this global challenge is vaccination. Or, to put it more directly: vaccination is the only and exclusive answer, because only vaccination can protect us. We have to express our appreciation, gratitude and respect to all those doctors, researchers, and volunteers who have taken part in those projects at the end of which the vaccine has been created.

The pandemic is an attack on the entire globe, an attack on all nations and all citizens. And, since the attack is global, the defense has to be global as well. This

means that we have to enable ourselves to be able to give vaccine to everybody. And this is the matter of capacity.

In order to be able to complete a successful protection action, we have to make sure that vaccine is going to be produced in the most possible locations of the world. And the most vaccines possible must be produced.

Vaccine is a tool to save the lives of people. It is not an ideological and not a political question. Because saving lives of the people must not be either an ideological or a political issue.

That is why we urge the regulators, the international, regional and national authorities to carry out purely professional, fact-based procedures when they authorize different types of vaccines. And we urge them to leave political aspects totally and absolutely out of consideration.

Mr. Chair, Dear Colleagues,

It has also become obvious that the pandemic does not only constitute a health-care-related crisis, but an economic one as well.

The pandemic does, unfortunately, have serious economic consequences. During the last one and a half years, a hundred and fourteen million people have lost their jobs. The global flow of direct investments has been decreased by 42% and there was a 5.3 backsliding when it comes to the volume of global trade. All these phenomena ended up in a new order of the global economy.

Now, the most important duty of ours is to save jobs, as many as just possible, to replace at least the lost jobs, and to create new ones in the meantime. We have to ensure that people make a living from work and not from social aid. Social aid puts people in a defenseless position, it makes people vulnerable, and brings States into

indebtedness. To the contrary, work brings dignity and a predictable future. People who work create value and create an economic performance. And here, after one and a half years of the pandemic, we have to think especially about the families, families who raise children. Because these families have borne a double burden: the parents had to go to work in order to keep their country running, and they had to look after their kids whose schools and kindergartens were closed. So, in Hungary, we made a decision that in case the growth of our national economy reaches 5.5 percent at the end of the year, we will pay back the personal income tax to those families who raise children, which they paid in the entire year of 2021.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to draw your attention to another consequence of COVID as well. A big part of our life has been pushed to the digital space. Parents who could not go to work, they had to work from home, children took part in digital education. And these two have created a vulnerable and unexperienced group of users of the digital space.

And this kind of group is a perfect target, a perfect target for cyber-crime. That is why we urge to put together a strict international regulation which can protect our children and our families from spreading extremist ideologies on the Internet, of sexual propaganda and of cyberbullying.

We do have to be aware that if we are not able to tackle the challenges coming from COVID, then we will have to face even more serious challenges in the future. If we are not able to ensure the vaccination for everybody on the spot, if we are not able to tackle the economic challenges, then, there will be further massive migratory waves launched.

The pandemic and migration together construct a vicious circle. The more serious the health-care related and economy-related impacts of the COVID are, the more people will hit the road and the more people will migrate. And the more people are involved in the migratory flows, the more accelerated virus will spread. So nowadays, migration does not only constitute the already well-known cultural, civilizational or security-related risks but a very serious health-care risks as well.

And this is one of the many reasons why we have to speak about Afghanistan here again. Unfortunately, we do have to admit that there was a big failure of the international community after 20 years in Afghanistan. Once, and when I say once, I mean once later, we do have to analyze what kind of mistakes were committed and what kind of bad decisions were made in this regard. But now, now, the main duty is to mitigate the damage.

We have to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a safe place for terrorist organizations again. We have to prevent additional migratory flows stemming from Afghanistan, because such migratory flows will mean a direct security threat on both the neighborhood of Afghanistan and the entire European continent. We have to strengthen the global fight against terror, and here, the United Nations should play an important role. But the United Nations will not be able to play an important role as long as the finances of the United Nations Office for Counter-Terrorism are not part of the regular budget.

Dear Colleagues,

In Europe, everybody remembers what happened in 2015. After the responsible statements of some political leaders, millions of migrants hit the road towards Europe. And the impacts and the consequences are clear. Many terrorists have taken advantage of the chance to hide among migrants. Parallel societies have been

created in some European countries. The programs for social integration have failed. Some parts of big European capitals became no-go zones. And wars were launched among gangs. A loud minority started to oppress the silent majority.

And no wonder that the European leaders now say that they do not want to commit the same mistakes which were committed back in 2015. However, they make the same kind of decisions and the same kind of statements. When Afghans are being encouraged by them to leave their homeland, this leaves the position of the neighboring countries - who know the situation there the best – totally, totally out of consideration.

What do these neighboring countries say? They say that the challenges in Afghanistan must be solved in Afghanistan. And this approach of the neighboring countries should definitely be followed.

Dear Colleagues,

Hungary has already fulfilled its moral duty. We have evacuated everybody, all Afghans who have helped and assisted our troops during their stay in Afghanistan in the framework of the international mission. Around 400 Afghans, including their family members, are now in Hungary, and we will definitely take care of them. But here, there is the full stop at the end of the sentence.

We will not receive anyone else. We will protect our border, we will withstand the pressure, and we will continue to stick to our own right to make our own decision on whom we allow to enter the territory of our country, and with whom we are ready to live together.

Back in 2015, we have rejected the obligatory quota of the distribution of the migrants to be introduced - and we will do the same now. We will reject any kind of quota system of distribution in any framework.

After 2015, everybody has to understand that the migratory flows constitute a significant risk, and on many occasions, they are dangerous. I remember 2018, when we debated about the Global Compact of Migration here. There were five countries, including my country, voting against. At that time, the Global Compact of Migration described migration as if it had only positive aspects, and as if it only brought benefits.

Now, three years later, I think everybody admits that this approach has totally failed. And, instead of encouraging people to leave their homes, instead of encouraging people to hit the road, instead of encouraging people to take advantage of help of smugglers, whose activities can sometimes be only hardly differentiated from the activities of so-called NGO-s, and instead of encouraging people to put their lives at risk, we do have to bring help where it is needed. And we have to create circumstances which make it possible for everybody to stay where he or she has been living before.

This approach is being reflected in a development program of the Hungarian government called Hungary Helps. With this program, we helped Christian communities who suffer from persecution. With the help of 70 million dollars of programs, we have ensured for 250.000 Christians in the Middle-East, in Africa and Asia either to return to their homes or to stay there. If we had brought them to Europe, we would have contributed to the fulfillment of the goals of the terrorist organizations, and the goal of which is to eliminate these Christian communities. We have rebuilt their churches, their houses, we covered operational costs of their

hospitals, we have rebuilt their schools and helped them to stay where their communities have been living for centuries.

Finally, Dear Chair and Dear Colleagues,

COVID has brought a lot of hardships and suffering in the last one and a half years, but it definitely did bring one opportunity. It has shown how interdependent we are. The successful protective measures taken by one country helping the others, have to be protected as well. So COVID brought hope of a better cooperation among nations of the world, a world which is unfortunately nowadays full of tensions.

We have to do our best to overcome these tensions. But we will not be able to do so without a more pragmatic, more effective, and more respect-based cooperation between East and West. And based on historic experience, we, Central Europeans, are pretty much aware of the significance of that.

Dear Colleagues, Dear Chair, thank you very much for your kind attention.