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Letter dated 1 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In its capacity as President of the Security Council for the month of September 2020, the Niger intends to organize a summit-level debate on the theme "Maintenance of international peace and security: global governance after COVID-19", to be held on Thursday 24 September 2020 at 8.30 a.m.

In order to guide the discussions on this topic, the Niger has prepared and attached a concept note (see annex).

I should be grateful if the present letter and its annex could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Abdou **Abarry**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Annex to the letter dated 1 September 2020 from the Permanent Representative of the Niger to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: French]

Concept note for the Security Council summit-level debate to be held on 24 September 2020 on the theme "Maintenance of international peace and security: global governance after COVID-19"

I. Introduction

1.   During its presidency of the Security Council, the Republic of the Niger proposes to organize a summit-level debate on the theme "Maintenance of international peace and security: global governance after COVID-19".

2.   The debate comes at a time when the world is severely affected by the continuing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and its economic, social and political implications, and by the increase in new security challenges that pose a dangerous threat to international peace and security.

3.   From its emergence in December 2019 until the present, the COVID-19 pandemic has overwhelmed every continent, sparing no nation, large or small. With its daily death toll, it has affected the strongest economies and created psychosocial, economic and political tensions around the world. The pandemic has laid bare all the fissures and fragilities of a global system that is already being tested by multiple security challenges with which it is struggling to cope. These challenges include terrorism, transnational organized crime, the illicit arms trade, climate change and pandemics.

4.   The international community today faces questions about the effectiveness of the international system that was established in the aftermath of the Second World War in achieving the main objectives assigned to it, namely, to promote the economic and social advancement of all peoples and to maintain international peace and security.

5.   Global governance must be reformed if the international community is to survive. International governance that takes into account the evolution, realities and imperatives of today's world must be put in place.

II. Background

6.   Seventy-five years after the end of the Second World War, the world faces questions about what kind of global governance system would reflect the ideals that gave birth to the United Nations, whose Charter begins with the words "We the peoples of the United Nations". These opening words of the preamble to the Charter are a fundamental reminder that global institutions were born with the aim of serving humanity and giving nations throughout the world the opportunity to be heard and to shape a world anchored in multilateralism, because the destinies of nations are more intertwined than ever.

7.   Since its establishment in 1945, the United Nations has constantly reminded us that multilateralism is essential for the world to function properly, not only for reasons of solidarity, but also for reasons of necessity. Despite the numerous crises that have shaken stability in several regions, international peace and security have been

maintained in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter. This multilateral order has protected humanity from the sufferings of war while avoiding a major breach of the peace between nations, thus helping the world to enjoy a measure of stability.

8. However, the end of the Second World War did not mean total peace everywhere. While the conflicts at that time were between States and alliances based on ideologies and ideals, today the threat to international peace and security comes from terrorism, cybercrime, pandemics and the adverse effects of climate change, which have reshaped the concept of global security risks. These threats, in addition to countless losses of human lives, have inflicted suffering on the civilian population, in particular women and children, leading to mass movements of people in search of security, peace and better economic opportunities.

9. The COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to trigger crises and instability, particularly in countries in conflict or post-conflict situations, and to exacerbate security-related, social and economic crises, which in turn may heighten sociopolitical unrest. The COVID-19 pandemic reinforces the notion that collective action is vital, demonstrating that multilateralism is necessary in order to address global problems in a sustainable manner. While security and crisis mitigation measures have forced many of our countries to close their borders, the pandemic reminds us that no country is safe until all are safe. In the aftermath of this crisis, we owe the world a renewed commitment to true and inclusive multilateralism.

10. On the basis of resolution 2532 (2020), in which the Security Council demanded a cessation of hostilities in all situations on its agenda, and in support of the Secretary-General's call for a global ceasefire on 23 March 2020, the Council, despite its divisions, has moved beyond expressing concern to consolidate a clear political framework for addressing new types of threat to international peace and security. The Security Council has a responsibility to use the tools at its disposal to prevent phenomena that could lead to fully fledged security crises and to strengthen the basis for decision-making at this time of systemic disruption, which could be a turning point in correcting inequities in the effective participation of nations in global governance, for the collective good and the further strengthening of international peace and security.

III. Purpose of the meeting

11. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss further the need for global governance reform to strengthen convergence towards sustainable global peace and security. The pandemic has exposed the weaknesses in the current system and provides the international community with a unique opportunity to build a new global order, anchored in the ideals of economic solidarity, equity and accountability, increased regional cooperation and global governance reform, that fosters the equal participation of nations and protects the most vulnerable in our communities.

IV. Guiding questions

12. Some questions that could be addressed during the debate are as follows:

- How should the Security Council respond to the potential changes in the international security environment resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects, in particular given the uncertainty as to the precise nature of these changes?

• Is the Security Council, in its current structure, adequately equipped to maintain international peace and security in the face of these new threats?

• What new measures and mechanisms could the Security Council adopt in order to mobilize global resources more effectively and to put in place workable safeguards to deal with non-traditional security threats such as pandemics?

• How can times of crisis be used as an opportunity to reform and reinvigorate global governance and the United Nations system? How can multilateral mechanisms be put in place to facilitate the kind of cooperation that will be needed to mitigate the worst impacts of future global crises such as pandemics?

V. Format of the meeting

13. The meeting will take the form of a summit-level debate of the Security Council and will be chaired by the President of the Republic of the Niger, Mahamadou Issoufou.

VI. Keynote speakers

The Secretary-General

The Chairperson of the African Union Commission

VII. Expected outcomes

14. A statement by the President of the Security Council is expected to be issued. The Niger would also prepare a summary of the various statements and recommendations resulting from the debate.

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