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World Leadership Alliance-Club de Madrid endorsement of the Declaration on the Commemoration of The Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations

Dear Secretary General Guterres and Co-facilitators of the UN Political Declaration:

On behalf of the Members of the World Leadership Alliance-Club de Madrid, the world's largest association of democratic, former Heads of State and Government, we congratulate you and the Member States who have negotiated and agreed on the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations to be formally adopted during the high-level meeting of the UN General Assembly on Monday, 21 September 2020 on the theme, 'The Future We Want, the UN We Need: Reaffirming our Collective Commitment to Multilateralism'.

We believe this statement reflects a common standard of achievement which celebrates both the values and concepts evolved for a flourishing humanity and developed by the United Nations since ratification of the United Nations Charter and projects an important vision for taking us forward to transcend the new challenges posed by this 21st century.

At the same time we are concerned that the multilateral framework of international cooperation is exposed to political pressures and failures to uphold international law, all this at a time when multilateral cooperation is more necessary than ever in recent history.

Therefore, we appreciate that the Declaration places its focus on critical themes we value as leaders and citizens. As such, we re-affirm our commitment as an organization to the shared goals of strengthening democratic governance and the rule of law; combating inequality and social exclusion; and promoting multi-stakeholder and multilateral frameworks for global cooperation based on the respect for and observance of international law.

This anniversary, we must note, occurs at a time when a global pandemic has revealed the fault-lines of interdependence and vulnerabilities which must be our focus if we are to leave no one behind. In this regard, we are fully committed to the implementation of the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, our best hope for inclusive human development. We must emphasize, in the strongest terms, the need to strengthen international action to mitigate the alarming effects of global warming and to guide global development towards a carbon neutral world.

We wish that this future world will be characterized by greater fairness and prosperity shared by all. In the context of its flagship Shared Societies Project, the WLA-CdM, has dedicated more than a decade to articulating a vision and policy parameters which endeavour to build a world where difference is appreciated and persons and groups historically marginalized for their ethnic, religious, linguistic affiliation; sexual orientation; or condition as a girl, migrant, young person or woman, are able to fully realize their aspirations and potential for contribution.

As we have served our time in office, we further emphasize our responsibility to fulfil the promise within the United Nations of building a more just and sustainable future for the generations that will succeed us. That means, for example, a world in which digital technologies

are harnessed for the benefit of all and diverse peoples are finally able to realize their human rights, positive freedom and positive peace.

We turn to our joint priority of making these commitments reality. This will require both courage and strategy: the courage to lead beyond the formulas of great power and nation-state representation of the mid-20 century and a strategy to bring everyone on board and accommodate diverse perspectives. The task is no less daunting than the founding of the multilateral system: transforming institutions into re-purposed entities more responsive to the already direly urgent needs of the 21st century.

We remain convinced of the continuing need for a visionary and capable United Nations with both the political and economic resources to accomplish its mission. Yet we must also learn from the shortcomings of the last 75 years to respond more effectively to the myriad challenges now clearly before us.

If our global multilateral framework cannot demonstrate its effectiveness by continuing to build a sense of joint ownership of all constituents beyond Member States in addressing climate change; conflict and protracted crises; increased poverty and marginalization; massive migration; rising inequality and polarization; technology disruption; and the failure of nation-states to cooperate effectively when faced with a pandemic, our achievements to date may very well be relegated to the ebb and flow of history.

It is imperative, therefore, that we work together to implement this transformational agenda with the leadership vision and institutional impetus to do so.

We offer our full support and democratic, political leadership experience in this regard, particularly in the effective implementation of the follow-up mechanisms to the Declaration. We are convinced by and hopefully have demonstrated the benefits of putting people first and of building coalitions which respect difference and cooperate to engage and peacefully resolve the challenges faced by societies.

With our best wishes for working with you going forward, we offer our endorsement of the Declaration on the Commemoration of the Seventy-Fifth Anniversary of the United Nations, and our pledge to work towards realizing its vision.