

18 January 2017

71st session of the General Assembly

**Closing Remarks by H.E. Peter Thomson,
High-Level Meeting : ‘Building the Community of Common Destiny of Mankind’**

H.E. President Xi Jinping,
Secretary-General António Guterres,
Director-General Michael Moeller,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First and foremost, thank you President Xi for your inspirational statement.

China has long been a faithful partner of the United Nations, and a steadfast proponent of peace, diplomacy, and the multilateral system.

As a permanent member of the Security Council, as one of the largest financial contributors to the UN, and as a high-ranking contributor to UN peacekeeping, China’s engagement and investment in the United Nations have been fundamental to the credibility and functioning of our organization.

President Xi, your statement here today sends a clear message to the world of China’s deep commitment to multilateral diplomacy.

Your reflections on the common challenges facing humanity, the interconnected nature of our destinies, and of the need for the community of nations to work together to find global solutions to global challenges, could not be more timely.

With war and conflict, terrorism and violent extremism, inequality and poverty, and the impacts of climate change affecting so much of our world, your concept of a ‘community of common destiny of mankind’ provides an inspirational vision for humanity.

Only by countries working together, in partnership, and based on mutual understanding and shared responsibility, will we be able to maintain international peace, achieve inclusive and sustainable development, protect our natural environment, and combat climate change.

Your firm message in Davos yesterday of commitment to growing an open global economy, is fully in harmony with Sustainable Development Goal 17’s call for the promotion of a universal, rules-based, non-discriminatory, open and equitable global trading system. I am confident that this determination will also lead to significant increases in the exports of developing countries, in particular for those of the least developed countries.

President Xi, you have previously said that “if you want to walk fast, walk alone; but if you want to walk far, walk together”.

These are prescient words as we pause to consider the scale of the challenges now facing mankind in securing a sustainable future on this planet. We must stay true to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement.

And on this last point, allow me to once again thank China for its historic decision to ratify the Paris Agreement last year.

These agreements provide a universal masterplan for people, planet and prosperity. But for their transformative commitments to be realized, all nations and people must work together to ensure that each and every Sustainable Development Goal is attained for each and every person, in each and every corner of our world.

That is why, as President of the General Assembly, I made the primary objective of the 71st Session, to be a universal push for meaningful progress in the implementation of each of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with China in our collective efforts to achieve a sustainable future for all, and to making the world a better place for our children and grandchildren.

In closing, President Xi, I want to wish you a Happy Chinese New Year of the Rooster (Ji Nian Kuai Le), and to thank you once again for China’s strong commitment to the values, purposes and principles of the United Nations.

I thank you.