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**Statement**

by

**H.E. Inga Rhonda King**

Permanent Representative

**High-Level Arria Formula Meeting: 75 Years from the End of the Second  
World War on European Soil - Lessons Learned for Preventing Future  
Atrocities, Responsibility of the Security Council**

Security Council

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Check against delivery

Thank you Mr. President,

Let me begin by commending the Permanent Mission of Estonia for convening this very useful and timely discussion. The Second World War was indeed a critical turning point for *all of humanity*. The immense human suffering brought about by the war and its accompanying societal impacts, such as disease and famine, would remain forever etched in our collective memory. We must also remain ever mindful of the important lessons fomented through this catastrophic experience.

The structural changes ushered in at the end of World War II precipitated a new dawn for human civilization. For the past 75 years, *our* United Nations has been the most credible attempt at securing a peaceful and prosperous future for all countries and peoples. To be sure, the current system is far from perfect. Our battles against poverty, hunger, and the vast inequalities of an unbalanced global political economy persist. However, we have enjoyed a relatively stable multilateral system, that has safeguarded against a recurrence of global interstate warfare.

In the decades that followed the Second World War, our international community has endured many challenges and upheavals, including Cold War rivalries, the 1973 Oil Crisis, 9/11, and the 2008 global financial crisis, *just to name a few*. At each occasion, our saving grace was the unity and solidarity of the international community as we worked collectively to address the most pressing challenges of the day. Similarly, today's urgent challenges of COVID-19, the ever-growing Climate Crisis, the threat of terrorism and violent extremism, and the refugee crisis all demand a firm recommitment to the rules-based system of multilateral cooperation that has presided over our international community for the last 75 years.

While we continue to grapple with the many-sided complexities and associated risks of modern globalization, we cannot resort to nationalistic isolationism, xenophobic tribalism, or populist narratives that promote an erosion of liberal norms in favour of protectionism. The re-emergence of these tendencies, both on the European continent and elsewhere in our international system, represent a systemic risk that we can ill afford.

Excellencies,

The time has passed for us to emerge unscathed from the COVID-19 pandemic. The overlapping health, socioeconomic, political *and* security dimensions of this crisis will yield repercussions for generations to come. Yet, within every crisis there is opportunity for change and renewal. COVID-19 should be an awakening for us all - if we are to successfully navigate the challenges of the 21st Century, further improvements to our multilateral system *are needed*.

We cannot expect to use outmoded tools to address contemporary realities, and we must not depend solely on those with war-making expertise to provide security and justice for the rest of us. Going forward, an even greater emphasis on tackling the root causes of insecurity is required if we are to achieve lasting peace *and prosperity for all*. We must dare to imagine, like our forebears did 75 years ago, a new dawn for human civilization. One in which the interests of the vulnerable are not sacrificed upon the altar of geopolitical expediency, and where the rights and freedoms of all nations and peoples, whether large or small, rich or poor, powerful or weak, are equally respected. A new future is possible. Let us grasp it.

Thank you.