

Russian lawyer Natalia Veselnitskaya, under scrutiny in Trump Tower meeting, charged in Kremlin-connected obstruction case

The Russian lawyer that met with President Donald Trump's son, son-in-law and campaign chairman in June, 2016 at Trump Tower has been charged by federal prosecutors in [New York](#) in a separate case that highlights the attorney's apparent ties to the Kremlin.

Natalia V. Veselnitskaya, 43, is charged with obstruction of justice for allegedly submitting a "intentionally misleading declaration" that sought to exonerate her client, a wealthy Russian businessman, in a civil forfeiture case in Manhattan.

The document she allegedly submitted in court included the findings of a supposedly independent Russian government investigation – when in fact, according to prosecutors, Veselnitskaya "concealed from the Court that she, as a member of the defense team ... had participated in drafting those supposed exculpatory investigative findings in secret cooperation with a senior Russian prosecutor."

"Emails from an account used by Veselnitskaya reveal that she sent multiple drafts of the document to the personal email account of a Russian prosecutor in the Prosecutor General's Office," the indictment states.

In the obstruction of justice case, Veselnitskaya acted as the lawyer for Denis Katsyv, a key figure in an earlier, money-laundering U.S. indictment. The son of a former Moscow regional transport minister, he was sole owner of Prevezon Holdings, which was named in the indictment alleging that some proceeds from the tax fraud scheme were laundered through the purchase of New York City real estate. The case was settled in 2017 with Prevezon agreeing to pay \$5.9 million in fines.

It was not immediately clear whether Veselnitskaya has retained a defense attorney. Federal prosecutors in New York said they were not aware of any.

defense attorney retained by Veselnitskaya, and ABC News requests for comment from her Russian office were not immediately returned.

The case is unrelated to the now-infamous [2016 meeting](#), in which Donald Trump Jr., his brother-in-law Jared Kushner and then-campaign chairman Paul Manafort. Trump Jr. initially suggested that the meeting was primarily about international adoption issues, when in fact subsequent emails revealed that the younger Trump met with the Russian attorney in the hopes of receiving information that he thought would be helpful to his father's presidential campaign.

In the Trump Tower meeting, Veselnitskaya sought to discuss U.S. sanctions against Russia, a policy staunchly opposed by Putin's government, and the Kremlin's response prohibiting Americans from adopting Russian children. Trump's team of aides in the meeting appeared to be baffled by her focus on this, instead of the promised dirt on Clinton, according to testimony released by the Senate Judiciary Committee about the meeting.

Veselnitskaya is based in Moscow at the law firm Camerton Consulting. In the past four years, she has lobbied against the Magnitsky Act, passed by Congress in 2012 to impose sanctions on certain Russian officials accused of human rights abuses, and waged a public relations campaign against a key person who backed the law.

The Magnitsky Act was enacted in response to the death of a Russian lawyer and auditor, Sergei Magnitsky. It has become a major issue for the Russian government, which is critical of the law.

Magnitsky helped uncover the fraud in the Katsyv case, for which Veselnitskaya now stands charged with obstruction of justice. At the time, Magnitsky had been representing a victim in the scheme in 2007 and 2008, Magnitsky uncovered an alleged vast corruption scheme involving about \$230 million, according to a federal indictment by the U.S. Southern District of New York in 2013. The alleged tax fraud scheme came at the expense of an investment firm, Hermitage Capital, owned by an American investor, Bill Browder, according to a U.S. indictment.

After Magnitsky discovered the alleged fraud, he was arrested and held for almost a year in pretrial detention in Moscow, where he eventually died at age 37, the U.S. indictment filed at the time alleges. A Russian government spokesperson said at the time that he died of heart failure, but a Russian human rights council found that his detention was unlawful and that he was beaten by guards with rubber batons on the last day of his life and then denied medical care.

Eastern Front

Description

The Eastern Front or Eastern Theater of World War I was a theater of operations that encompassed at its greatest extent the entire frontier between the Russian Empire and Romania on one side and the Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bulgaria, the Ottoman Empire and the German Empire on the other. [Wikipedia](#)

Location: [Central and Eastern Europe](#)

Dates: Aug 17, 1914 – Mar 3, 1919

Western Front

World War I

Description

The Western Front was the main theatre of war during the First World War. Following the outbreak of war in August 1914, the German Army opened the Western Front by invading Luxembourg and Belgium, then gaining military control of important industrial regions in France.

Location: [Belgium](#), north-eastern [France](#), [Alsace-Lorraine](#), [Luxembourg](#), western [Germany](#)

Period: 1914 – 1918

Result: End of World War I (Allied victory)

Battle of Raphia

Description

The Battle of Raphia, also known as the Battle of Gaza, was a battle fought on 22 June 217 BC near modern Rafah between the forces of Ptolemy IV Philopator, king and pharaoh of Ptolemaic Egypt and Antiochus III the Great of the Seleucid Empire during the Syrian Wars. [Wikipedia](#)

Date: June 22, 217 BC

Result: Ptolemaic victory

Location: [Rafah](#), near Gaza

Battle of Panium

Description

The Battle of Panium was fought in 200 BC near Paneas between Seleucid and Ptolemaic forces as part of the Fifth Syrian War. The Seleucids were led by Antiochus III the Great, while the Ptolemaic army was led by Scopas of Aetolia. [Wikipedia](#)

Result: Decisive Seleucid victory

End date: 198 BC

Location: [Banias](#)

At Liberty University, students and faculty have faith in the president to help ‘create generations of rightwing Christians’

- **Three** times a week, 15,000 students stream into the Vines Center, a huge silver-domed building on the campus of Liberty University for “convocation”, an intoxicating mix of prayer, political rally and entertainment. Thousands more watch a live stream of the event.

The star attraction has twice been [Donald Trump](#), in 2012 and 2016. His first appearance was as a successful businessman and reality TV star, the second as the man campaigning to be the Republican party’s candidate for president. Last year, he made a third appearance at Liberty, to address the university’s graduation ceremony. By then, he was one of the most divisive leaders in the country’s history.

But not at Liberty. The Christian university which dominates the town of Lynchburg, Virginia, has become almost synonymous with Trump. It sits at the heart of the alliance between the president and conservative evangelical Christians – an alliance forged in part by Jerry Falwell Jr, Liberty’s president, Lynchburg’s most prominent citizen and Trump’s close associate.

Falwell was instrumental in delivering [81% of white Christian evangelical voters](#) for Trump in 2016. Ahead of next month’s midterm elections, that support appears to be holding up, although there has been some erosion among evangelical women. A [survey published in early October by the Public Religion Research Institute](#) found that 72% of white evangelical Protestants had a favourable opinion of the president.

In Liberty’s coffee bars, random conversations with a dozen or so students found they all backed Falwell’s full-throated support for Trump. But not everyone in the town in the foothills of the Blue Ridge mountains is happy. A minority at the university, along with a few churches in town, are deeply concerned. Some speak of a “toxic Christianity”.

Liberty University campus in Lynchburg, Virginia. Photograph: Matt Eich/The Guardian

Falwell endorsed Trump’s candidacy two weeks after his January 2016 appearance at Liberty’s convocation, a move which triggered the resignation of a member of the university’s board of trustees, Mark DeMoss.

Later, Falwell dismissed the furore around the candidate’s comments, saying: “We’re never going to have a perfect candidate unless Jesus Christ is on the ballot.” He has defended some of the president’s most egregious remarks and tweets since taking office.

He recently sent 300 Liberty students to Washington to demonstrate in support of Brett Kavanaugh’s nomination to the supreme court. The next day, he tweeted: “Conservatives & Christians need to stop electing ‘nice guys’. They might make great Christian leaders but the US needs street fighters like [@realDonaldTrump](#) at every level of government b/c the liberal fascists Dems are playing for keeps & many Repub leaders are a bunch of wimps Falwell told the Guardian that Trump was a “good moral person, a strong leader, a tough leader – and that’s what this country needs”, and that [support among white evangelicals was solid in the run-up to the midterms](#). “The sentiment is there, it’s going to come down to turnout,” he said in an interview.

According to Bill Leonard, professor of church history at Wake Forest University, North Carolina, the context to white evangelicals hitching their wagon to Trump is “panic at the precipitous decline of Christianity” in US society.

Polls show a drop in the proportion of white evangelicals from a peak in the 1990s of around 27% of the population to between [17%](#) and [13%](#) now, alongside a significant rise in religious pluralism and those – particularly young people – who say they have no religion.

Changing attitudes and legislation on abortion, divorce, gender equality and LGBT rights were “powerful indicators of the loss of Protestant privilege and a prelude to white evangelicals moving in such large numbers to supporting Trump”, said Leonard.

Crucially, they wanted a president who would [nominate conservativesupreme court justices](#). “Presidents come and go, but appointments to the supreme court are for life. With the right nominees, you could change the supreme court majority for half a century. [Evangelicals] tell themselves that Trump is the vehicle God has chosen to drive the conservative evangelical agenda.”

Brett Kavanaugh's confirmation to US supreme court gives Trump a major victory

Leonard suggested that one of the “primary goals” in the establishment of Liberty University by Jerry Falwell Sr, the founder of the Moral Majority, and its massive expansion under his son’s leadership, was “to create generations of rightwing Christians who would run for public office for everything from dog-catcher to US president”.

Under Jerry Falwell Jr, Liberty has become one of the biggest, and certainly the most influential, Christian educational institutions in the US. As well as 15,000 students on campus, an additional 90,000 or so are enrolled in online courses. The university employs almost 7,000 people full-time, with a further 12,000 jobs in the Lynchburg area connected to it.

Faculty members are vetted at interview for their conservative theological views. Classes start with prayers, the campus is dry, dorms are strictly segregated, students are subject to a curfew, and there is an informal dress code.

Linked to the university is the Thomas Road Baptist church, run by Jerry Falwell’s brother, Jonathan, a mega-church with a membership of up to 20,000 and a full-time staff of 125. After a Sunday morning service recently, Pastor Matt Wilmington explained the church’s outlook.

“We are biblicist, that is what anchors our belief. It is a worldview, not something compartmentalised, not something that we do on Sundays. Our worldview drives everything,” he said.

“We encourage people to live out their faith by voting according to their conscience – not just as a citizen but as a disciple of Jesus. People in the congregation generally support that. It’s not always about the individual candidate, it’s about voting for an agenda.”

That agenda focuses on traditional “family values”, gender roles and opposition to abortion; support for the state of Israel; and a strong nationalism.

A Liberty faculty member who attended the Sunday morning service at Thomas Road said the majority of the university’s staff and students agreed that Trump was their best hope of implementing their agenda. “I would say 65% vocally agree, 30% don’t talk about politics, and 5% disagree,” said the professor, who asked for his name to be withheld.

“As long as Trump does things that are consistent with conservative Christian ideals, he’s a good guy. I don’t think he’s a nice guy, but as long as he goes along with my worldview, I’ll support him.”

Christian leader Jerry Falwell urges Trump support: 'He’s a moral person'

Karen Swallow Prior, a professor of English at Liberty, who did not vote for Trump in 2016, insisted that “no one imposes views” on staff and students at the university. She understood the evangelical enthusiasm for the president, while not sharing it. “Evangelical Trump supporters fall into two categories: those that voted for him holding their noses because of his personal behaviour, and those who are really enthusiastic,” she said.

The former group may find the midterm Senate race in Virginia especially uncomfortable, Prior added. The Republican candidate, Corey Stewart – who has [past associations with white supremacists and antisemites](#), rails against illegal immigration and defends Confederate monuments – “makes Trump look wise and mature”.

All the Liberty students the Guardian spoke to on campus expressed support for Trump, although few articulated reasons other than his “strength” and ability “to get things done”.

But according to one student who spoke at length to the Guardian in a downtown cafe, beneath the surface there is unease. “People are quick to put one stamp on Liberty, but there are a lot of students who are embarrassed by Falwell,” said Jack Panyard, who is in his final year of journalism studies.

“A good chunk of students are unhappy with the public face of Liberty, but the ones that support Falwell speak louder and are promoted by the university.”

Panyard, 21, has direct experience of the consequences of dissent. Since enrolling at the university, he devoted almost all his free time to working on the campus newspaper, the Liberty Champion. But following Falwell’s endorsement of Trump, faculty members intervened several times to spike or change articles considered critical of the president.

Jack Panyard is a senior journalism major at Liberty University. Photograph: Matt Eich/The Guardian

Earlier this year, Panyard wrote a story about Liberty’s involvement with the production of [a feature film, The Trump Prophecy](#), which told the story of a firefighter who claimed to receive a message from God in 2011 that Trump would become US president.

Panyard’s article mentioned that some students had doubts about the movie’s premise. When those reservations were removed in pre-publication vetting of the article, Panyard took his byline off the story. Another article, about university policy towards female students who became pregnant, was spiked.

So he was surprised and delighted to be chosen as editor-in-chief of the Liberty Champion for the current academic year. But within a few weeks, there was a U-turn; Panyard was told a “restructuring” of the Champion’s staff meant his services were no longer required in any capacity.

“Falwell will not put up with people who disagree with him. I was a victim of that culture,” Panyard told the Guardian. “The Champion was my world, I practically lived in that office. Now it’s run by

people who are compliant, those with the same political agenda. Yes-men. Anyone who's going to raise a ruckus will quickly be ejected.

“Falwell has the right, he owns the paper. The question is not can he or can't he, it's should he or shouldn't he. We're a Christian university, we're called to pursue the truth. If the university is obstructing that, then it's an issue.”

A 'hidden secret'

Elsewhere in Lynchburg, there is also concern about the pressure on Liberty students to conform to Falwell's views. Cyd Cowgill, the pastor of First Christian church, a progressive, inclusive church a few miles from campus, said there were about 20 Liberty students in her congregation of about 200. “But they keep quiet about it. They won't post anything on social media about coming to our church.”

Students were given a list of churches they were encouraged to attend, she said. “First Christian, which flies a rainbow flag in our front yard, won't be on it.”

The few liberal churches in Lynchburg were a “hidden secret” in the town, she said. “We feel a very keen responsibility to represent something different in the way we preach and the way we present Christianity. But the Trump phenomenon is so strong, it's hard not to feel puny in the face of that.”

Cyd Cowgill, pastor of First Christian church, a progressive church a few miles from Liberty University. Photograph: Matt Eich/The Guardian

Falwell was seen as the public face of Liberty and the Thomas Road Baptist church. “We need to come out of hiding and say there is an alternative to a toxic Christianity which is full of vitriol and hate. Christianity is loving and inclusive and compassionate. Toxic Christianity is anti-Christianity to me. It's not what Jesus represents.”

Back on campus, Falwell made time in his schedule to meet the Guardian in his office overlooking the campus. Casually dressed in a pink polo shirt, he was affable, voluble and proud of his achievements at Liberty. The university had gone from “the brink of disaster to become the most prosperous university in the US”, he said, with \$1.7bn in endowments, and gross assets of \$3bn.

He dismissed the idea of “toxic Christianity” as an invention of a losing side. “More than 80% of evangelicals supported Trump [in 2016], which means there are a few that didn't. They're liberals, and they come up with stuff like ‘toxic Christianity’.

“You don't have to be a conservative to come here. You don't have to be a Christian. But people come here knowing what Liberty's about, and the vast majority are conservative and Christian.”

Since its foundation in 1971, Liberty University's mission has been “training champions for Christ”. Almost half a century on, it also appears to be training champions for Trump.

Panyard said he was now focused on finishing his degree. Did he regret coming to Liberty? “No, the experience has helped me grow, it's made me stronger. I don't regret coming here, but I do regret what's happening to this school in pursuit of a political agenda.”

U.N. General Assembly Updates: Trump Speaks Out on Globalization

By The New York Times

- Sept. 25, 2018
-
- President Trump, whose apocalyptic speech in his United Nations debut last year riveted much of the world's attention, spoke again on the world's most important diplomatic stage on Tuesday, at the organization's New York headquarters.

Mr. Trump has alienated allies and sidled up to adversaries, all while [he pursues an America First agenda](#). Unlike in 2017, however, when Mr. Trump threatened to annihilate North Korea and its leader, Kim Jong-un, he touted his budding friendship with Mr. Kim -even though there has been little progress in their underlying dispute over North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles.

Trump attacks Iran and claims great successes at home and abroad — drawing some laughter

Mr. Trump boasted of what he called impressive accomplishments in the United States and around the world.

“In less than two years, my administration has accomplished more than almost any administration in the history of our country,” he said, setting off murmurs of laughter by world leaders in the cavernous hall.

“I did not expect that reaction,” he said.

“The United States is stronger, safer and a richer country than it was when I assumed office less than two years ago,” Mr. Trump told the General Assembly, in his second address as president. “We are standing up for America and the American people. We are also standing up for the world.”

He said that under his administration the United States had started building a wall

along the border with Mexico, defeated the Islamic State and eased the crisis with North Korea through dialogue with the leader of the nuclear-armed state.

“We have engaged with North Korea to replace the specter of conflict with a bold and new push for peace,” Mr. Trump said, speaking about his Singapore summit meeting with Mr. Kim.

to thank Chairman Kim for his courage and for the steps he has taken though much work remains to be done.”

Mr. Trump said that sanctions against North Korea would stay in place until denuclearization occurs, but called the moment “far greater” than people would understand.

Mr. Trump denounced Iran's leaders, calling them a "corrupt dictatorship" responsible for "death and destruction" and said his reimposition of nuclear sanctions had severely weakened the Iranian government.

"They do not respect their neighbors or borders or the sovereign rights of nations," he said.

He also called for the "restoration of democracy in Venezuela," and that he was adding economic sanctions on President Nicolás Maduro's "inner circle" and close advisers.

Trump rails against high oil prices, globalism and the International Criminal Court

In a list of complaints about globalism, which he portrayed as a threat to American sovereignty, Mr. Trump rejected the legitimacy of the International Criminal Court, echoing recent statements by [top aides like John R. Bolton](#), his national security adviser.

"As far as America is concerned," Mr. Trump said, the court — which prosecutes war crimes and crimes against humanity — has "no legitimacy and no authority."

We "reject the ideology of globalism," he said.

He also spoke of renegotiating "bad and broken trade deals," and said that "many nations agree that the trade system is in dire need" of change. He said the United States had "racked up \$13 billion in trade deficits" in the last two decades.

"But those days are over," he said. "We will no longer tolerate such abuse."

While Mr. Trump touted America's energy independence, he assailed the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries — which includes Saudi Arabia, a strong United States ally — for rising oil prices.

OPEC nations are "ripping off the rest of the world," he said. "I don't like it. Nobody should like it."

"We want them to stop raising prices, we want them to start lowering prices," he said in reference to the OPEC cartel. "We are not going to put up with it, these horrible prices, much longer."

Warning against international reliance on a single supplier of energy, Mr. Trump applauded some European nations, singling out Poland, for moving to establish pipelines with the Baltics to break a dependence on Russian oil — in one of his few mentions of Russia.

But as he has done before, he attacked Germany for what he called its energy dependence.

"Germany will become totally dependent on Russian energy if it does not immediately change course," Mr. Trump said.

Iran's president offers mirror image of world according to Trump

Mr. Rouhani, who has all but ruled out a meeting with Mr. Trump, offered a portrait of his country that is law-abiding, respectful and first in the fight against terrorism — diametrically opposite the description presented a few hours earlier by the American president.

Mr. Rouhani denounced the Trump administration not only for repudiating the nuclear agreement, but also for threatening through the use of sanctions to punish any country that seeks to do business with Iran.

“The economic war that the United States has initiated under the rubric of new sanctions not only targets the Iranian people, but entails harmful repercussions for people of other countries,” Mr. Rouhani said. He also made clear that he thought Mr. Trump’s offer to talk with Iran’s leaders was disingenuous at best.

“It is ironic that the United States government does not even conceal its plan for overthrowing the same government it invites to talks,” Mr. Rouhani said.

Trump aides warn Iran and Europe: We’re serious on sanctions

In a clear sign of irritation, the Trump administration warned the United States’ chief European partners on Tuesday of unhappiness over their move to bypass its reimposed sanctions on Iran. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the national security adviser, John R. Bolton, told a conference in New York that the European plan to create a way for Iran to conduct international financial transactions was a big mistake.

“We do not intend to allow our sanctions to be evaded by Europe or anybody else,” Mr. Bolton said at the conference, which was organized by United Against Nuclear Iran, a group that has criticized the 2015 nuclear deal reached under the Obama administration.

Mr. Pompeo said on his [Twitter account](#) that the United States, which withdrew from the agreement in May, was “disturbed & deeply disappointed to hear the remaining parties in the deal announce they are setting up a special payment system to bypass U.S. sanctions. This is one of most counterproductive measures imaginable for regional & global peace & security. “

Mr. Bolton, who has made no secret of his antipathy for Iran’s leaders, also directed some of his strongest ire at them. “If you cross us or our allies or our partners, you harm our citizens,” he said. “If you continue to lie and cheat, yes there will indeed be hell to pay.”

Erdogan shakes hands with Trump and takes aim at U.S.

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey, who spoke directly after President Trump addressed the assembly, took aim at some United States policies, without specifically mentioning the Trump administration.

Mr. Erdogan assailed Mr. Trump’s Iran sanctions, support for a Kurdish-led coalition fighting the Islamic State in Syria and the legal protections afforded to Fethullah Gulen, the Turkish cleric-in-exile in Pennsylvania. Mr. Erdogan has described Mr. Gulen and his organization as the instigator of the failed 2016 coup in Turkey.

“Where does the head, the mastermind of that terrorist organization reside?” Mr. Erdogan said. “In the United States of America. And from there they export terror.”

Despite Mr. Erdogan’s criticism of the United States, he and Mr. Trump seemed to be friendly when they met on the sidelines of the assembly. It was the first time the two had met in person since Mr. Trump announced sanctions against Turkey this summer, [raising tensions between the two nations](#).

The sanctions, which have contributed to a sharp downturn in Turkey's once-mighty economy, came after Turkey refused to release an American pastor, Andrew Brunson, who was arrested in a widespread crackdown after the failed coup.

Mr. Erdogan's communications director shared photos on Twitter of the Turkish leader shaking hands with Mr. Trump.

Moral Majority Description

The Moral Majority was a prominent American political organization associated with the Christian right and Republican Party. It was founded in 1979 by Baptist minister Jerry Falwell and associates, and dissolved in the late 1980s.

Founded: 1979

Founders: [Pat Robertson](#), [Jerry Falwell](#), [Tim LaHaye](#), [Paul Weyrich](#)

Mor-al Ma-jor-i-ty *Noun*

1. a political action group formed in the 1970s to further a conservative and religious agenda, including the allowance of prayer in schools and strict laws against abortion.

the majority of people, regarded as favoring firm moral standards.

plural noun: **moral majority**

"smokers are often made to feel like social outcasts by the moral majority"

Address to the General Assembly

António Guterres

Our world is suffering from a bad case of "Trust Deficit Disorder".

People are feeling troubled and insecure.

Trust is at a breaking point. Trust in national institutions. Trust among states. Trust in the rules-based global order.

Within countries, people are losing faith in political establishments, polarization is on the rise and populism is on the march.

Among countries, cooperation is less certain and more difficult. Divisions in our Security Council are stark.

Trust in global governance is also fragile, as 21st-century challenges outpace 20th-century institutions and mindsets.

We have never had a true system of global governance, much less a fully democratic one.

Still, across many decades, we established solid foundations for international cooperation.

We came together as united nations to build institutions, norms and rules to advance our shared interests.

We raised standards of living for millions. We forged peace in troubled lands and – indeed – we avoided a third world war.

But none of this can be taken for granted.

Today, world order is increasingly chaotic. Power relations are less clear.

Universal values are being eroded.

Democratic principles are under siege, and the rule of law is being undermined.

Impunity is on the rise, as leaders and states push the boundaries, both at home and in the international arena.

We face a set of paradoxes.

The world is more connected, yet societies are becoming more fragmented.

Challenges are growing outward, while many people are turning inward.

Multilateralism is under fire precisely when we need it most.

So, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is true that we are moving in the direction of a multipolar world.

But multipolarity will not, in itself, guarantee peace or solve global problems.

A century ago, Europe was multipolar. A balance of power was deemed sufficient to keep rivals in check.

It was not. Without strong multilateral frameworks for European-wide cooperation and problem-solving, the result was a grievous world war.

Today, with shifts in the balance of power, the risk of confrontation may increase.

In assessing the Peloponnesian War in ancient Greece, Thucydides said, and I quote, “It was the rise of Athens and the fear that this instilled in Sparta that made war inevitable.”

This is what the political scientist Graham Allison calls the “Thucydides Trap”.

But in his book “Destined for War”, and reviewing many examples of rivalry in the past, he concluded that

conflict is never inevitable.

Indeed, with leadership committed to strategic cooperation and to managing competing interests, we can avoid war and steer the world onto a safer path.

Individual leaders have the duty to advance the well-being of their people.

But it runs deeper. Together, as guardians of the common good, we also have a duty to promote and support a reformed, reinvigorated and strengthened multilateral system.

We need commitment to a rules-based order, with the United Nations at its centre and with the different institutions and treaties that bring the Charter to life.

And we need to show the added value of international cooperation by delivering peace, defending human rights and driving economic and social progress for women and men everywhere.

That is why I am so committed to reform, and to making the United Nations more effective in responding to the needs and aspirations of “we the peoples”.

In the face of massive, existential threats to people and planet -- but equally at a time of compelling opportunities for shared prosperity -- there is no way forward but collective, common-sense action for the common good.

This is how we can rebuild trust.

Excellencies,

In my address last year, I highlighted seven challenges. One year on, they remain sadly unresolved.

There is outrage at our inability to end the wars in Syria, Yemen and elsewhere.

The Rohingya people remain exiled, traumatized and in misery, still yearning for safety and justice.

Palestinians and Israelis are still locked in endless conflict, with the two-state solution more and more distant.

The threat of terror looms, fed by the root causes of radicalization and violent extremism. And terrorism is ever more interlinked with international organized crime and the trafficking of people, drugs, arms and corruption.

The nuclear peril has not eased, with non-proliferation at serious risk. Nuclear-armed States are modernizing their arsenals. A new arms race could be triggered, and the threshold for their use lowered.

We have seen outrageous uses of chemical weapons, in full impunity despite their ban, and protections against dangerous biological weapons are weak.

Inequality is undermining faith in the social contract and is a clear obstacle to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Tensions over trade are on the rise.

Migrants and refugees continue to face discrimination and demagoguery in the context of clearly insufficient international cooperation.

And in this year marking the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the human rights agenda is losing ground and authoritarianism is on the rise.

As the politics of pessimism spreads, we must guard against self-fulfilling prophecies.

Those who see their neighbours as dangerous may cause a threat where there was none.

Those who close their borders to regular migration only fuel the work of traffickers.

And those who ignore human rights in combatting terrorism tend to breed the very extremism they are trying to end.

It is our common duty to reverse these trends and resolve these challenges.

We need to move ahead based on facts, not fear — on reason, not illusion.

Prevention must be at the centre of all we do.

This session of the General Assembly is a real opportunity for progress.

To mention just one example, I welcome the strong show of support for my Action for Peacekeeping Initiative — which has been endorsed by 148 states and organizations. It aims to help our missions succeed in today's protracted and volatile contexts.

But today I want to concentrate on two epochal challenges which, since last year, have taken on surpassing urgency: climate change and the new risks associated with advances in technology.

Let me take them each in turn.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, the direct existential threat of climate change.

We have reached a pivotal moment.

If we do not change course in the next two years, we risk runaway climate change.

Climate change is moving faster than we are — and its speed has provoked a sonic boom SOS across our world.

According to the World Meteorological Organization, the past two decades included 18 of the warmest years since record-keeping began in 1850.

This year, for the first time, thick permanent sea ice north of Greenland began to break up.

The concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is the highest in 3 million years — and rising.

Making matters worse, we — as a community of world leaders — are not doing enough. We must listen to the earth's best scientists. We must see what is happening before our eyes.

We need greater ambition and a greater sense of urgency.

We must guarantee the implementation of the Paris Agreement.

It has immense potential to set us on the right course, but its targets -- which represent the bare minimum to avoid the worst impacts of climate change -- are far from being met.

I am concerned that recent negotiations in Bangkok towards implementation guidelines ended without sufficient progress.

The next Conference of Parties, COP24 in Poland in December, will be a key moment. It must be a success. As I said recently, we cannot allow Katowice to remind us of the divisions among Member States that paralyzed Copenhagen.

The good news is: technology is on our side.

Clean energy is more affordable and competitive than ever.

If we pursue the right path, climate action could add \$26 trillion to the global economy by 2030.

Green economy policies could create 24 million new jobs.

More and more companies and investors are finding that green business is good business.

Far from being a fundamental threat to the economy, climate action is generating new industries, new markets, more jobs and less dependency on fossil fuels.

The real danger is not the threat to one's economy that comes from acting. It is, instead, the risk to one's economy by failing to act.

Governments need to be courageous and smart.

That means ending trillions of dollars in subsidies for fossil fuels.

It means establishing an adequate price for carbon.

It means stopping investments in unsustainable infrastructure that lock in bad practices for decades to come.

Our future is at stake. Nothing is immune -- climate change affects everything -- and everything can be undermined. Keeping our planet's warming to well below 2 degrees is essential for global prosperity and the security of nations.

That is why, next September, I will convene a Climate Summit to mobilize action and finance. We will bring together countries and cities, the real economy and real politics, business, finance and civil society, to focus on the heart of the problem.

The Summit will take place one year before countries have to enhance their national climate pledges under the Paris Agreement.

Only a significantly higher level of ambition will do -- and the Summit will be an opportunity for leaders and partners to showcase their ambition.

For this to be possible, we must act today.

The world needs you to be climate champions.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me now turn to new technologies and what we can do to uphold their promise but to keep their perils at bay.

And there is great promise. Scientific progress has helped to cure deadly diseases, to feed growing populations, to drive economic growth and to connect businesses, communities, families and friends across the world.

Rapidly developing fields such as artificial intelligence, blockchain and biotechnology have the potential to turbocharge progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

Artificial Intelligence is connecting people across languages, and supporting doctors in making better diagnoses. Driverless vehicles will revolutionize transportation.

But there are also risks and serious dangers.

Technological advances may disrupt labour markets as traditional jobs change or disappear, even as the number of young job-seekers continues to grow. Re-training will be needed at previously unimaginable scales. Education must adapt, from the earliest grades. And the very nature of work will change. Governments may have to consider stronger social safety nets and eventually universal basic income.

At the same time, technology is being misused by terrorists and for sexual exploitation and abuse.

Organized criminal networks lurk on the dark web, profiting from encryption and near-anonymous cryptocurrency payments to traffic in people and illegal goods.

Some reports estimate that cybercrime is now putting US\$1.5 trillion in the pockets of cybercriminals annually.

Malicious acts in cyberspace – such as disinformation campaigns -- are polarizing communities and diminishing trust among States.

And more and more people are getting their information from news or social media feeds that echo their views, reinforce tribalism and assure people that they are right and the other side is wrong.

The digital revolution is also being used to discriminate against women and reinforce our male-dominated culture.

Indeed, there is a deep gender gap in access to digital technologies, widening the digital divide.

We must dismantle obstacles and create opportunities for women, ensure equality and change on-line and toxic corporate cultures. The technology sector must open up and become more diverse – not least for its own benefit.

With technology outracing institutions, cooperation between countries and among stakeholders will be crucial, including Member States, the private sector, research centres, civil society and academia.

There are many mutually beneficial solutions for digital challenges. We need urgently to find the way to apply

them.

At the United Nations, we are harnessing technologies in support of the Sustainable Development Goals. We are creating innovation labs, including in my office. And in July, I established a High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, that met yesterday, and that is a dialogue platform for all key actors.

Excellencies,

The impacts of new technologies on warfare are a direct threat to our common responsibility to guarantee peace and security.

The weaponization of artificial intelligence is a growing concern.

The prospect of weapons that can select and attack a target on their own raises multiple alarms – and could trigger new arms races.

Diminished oversight of weapons has implications for our efforts to contain threats, to prevent escalation and to adhere to international humanitarian and human rights law.

Let's call it as it is. The prospect of machines with the discretion and power to take human life is morally repugnant.

Heaven forbid, any new war could very well include a massive cyberattack not only targeting military capacities, but also critical civilian infrastructure.

I am encouraged by the ten possible guiding principles elaborated in Geneva last month by the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems.

More work on these issues, aimed at building trust between and within nations, will be needed if we are to ensure the responsible use of new technologies.

I urge you to use the United Nations as a platform to draw global attention to these crucial matters and to nurture a digital future that is safe and beneficial for all.

Excellencies,

Despite the chaos and confusion in our world, I see winds of hope blowing around the globe.

Just days ago, I witnessed the signing of a historic peace agreement between Ethiopia and Eritrea in Saudi Arabia.

Soon after, the presidents of Djibouti and Eritrea met in Jeddah to launch a peace process.

Eritrea and Somalia have established diplomatic relations.

And in the same region, in the context of a summit of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development – IGAD - the two rival leaders in South Sudan have finally signed a peace agreement.

I am hopeful that these efforts will continue to be consolidated so that the people of the Horn of Africa can

finally turn the page on war and conflict.

The courageous initiative of the Singapore Summit between the leaders of the United States and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, along with the recent meeting of the two Korean leaders in Pyongyang, offers hope for the possibility of a full and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in a context of regional security.

In my recent visit to Colombia, I was impressed by the peoples' strong commitment to peace, now reaffirmed by President Duque.

In Central Asia, I personally witnessed strengthened cooperation among states after Uzbekistan went through a peaceful political transition.

Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia have taken a major step towards resolving their differences.

Our peacekeeping mission in Liberia ended a decade-and-a-half of work this year following the country's first peaceful democratic transition, adding to peacekeeping successes elsewhere in West Africa.

The approval of a compact on refugees and another on migration represents signs of hope, even if there is still a long way to go to reconcile full respect for the rights of people on the move with the legitimate interests of states.

Hundreds of millions of people have been lifted out of extreme poverty across the world over the past three decades, and we averted looming famine in the four countries impacted in the past two years.

Armenia's young people were at the heart of that country's peaceful political transition earlier this year – showing the potential of youth to use their voice to advance democracy.

And the drive for gender equality is gaining ground, amid a growing awareness of pervasive discrimination against women and girls, from violence, harassment and exploitation to unequal pay and exclusion from decision-making.

The United Nations must lead the way in pursuit of gender equality. For the first time in United Nations history, there is full parity in our Senior Management Group and among Resident Coordinators leading country teams around the world. We are firmly committed to equality and empowerment everywhere.

Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

As our Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, once reminded us:

“We share a common destiny. We can master it only if we face it together. And that, my friends, is why we have the United Nations”.

Our future rests on solidarity.

We must repair broken trust.

We must reinvigorate our multilateral project.

And we must uphold dignity for one and for all.

Thank you very much.

“Solidarity, Compassion and Action” on World Refugee Day

The appeal by U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres comes in a video message for World Refugee Day, observed this Wednesday, 20 June.

by Antonio Guterres

Jun 19 2018

With more than 68 million people worldwide displaced due to conflict or persecution — roughly equivalent to the population of Thailand— the head of the United Nations has called for unity and solidarity as a first step to support them.

What would you do if you were forced to leave your home?

Today, more than 68 million people around the world are refugees or internally displaced as a result of conflict or persecution.

That is equivalent to the population of the world’s 20th largest country.

Last year, someone was displaced every two seconds.

Mostly, in poorer countries.

On World Refugee Day, we must all think about what more we can we do to help.

The answer begins with unity and solidarity.

I am deeply concerned to see more and more situations where refugees are not receiving the protection they need and to which they are entitled.

We need to re-establish the integrity of the international refugee protection regime.

In today’s world, no community or country providing safe refuge to people fleeing war or persecution should be alone and unsupported.

We stand together, or we fail.

This year, a Global Compact on Refugees will be presented to the UN General Assembly.

It offers a way forward and recognizes the contributions that refugees make to the societies hosting them.

As long as there are wars and persecution, there will be refugees.

On World Refugee Day, I ask you to remember them.

Their story is one of resilience, perseverance and courage.

Ours must be of solidarity, compassion and action.

Thank you.

French President Emmanuel Macron Defends Multilateralism And Paris Agreement on Climate Change

United Nations: French President Emmanuel Macron on Tuesday, as much anticipated, strongly defended multilateralism and the Paris Agreement on climate change at the ongoing General Debate of the 73rd UN General Assembly.

“I do not accept the erosion of multilateralism and don’t accept our history unravelling,” Macron said. “Our children are watching.”

The French President urged “dialogue and multilateralism” to resolve the world’s crises in his speech, Xinhua news agency reported.

Unilateralism will not work to resolve the Palestinian-Israeli conflict as well, he said, while touching upon some of the hot issues across the world.

“What can resolve the crisis between Israel and Palestine? Not unilateral initiatives, nor trampling on the legitimate rights of the Palestinian people to legitimate peace,” he noted.

Without multilateralism, Macron said, global wars would return. He cautioned that “nationalism always leads to defeat.”

When talking about the Paris Agreement on climate change, the president said: “We will no longer sign commercial agreements with powers that do not respect the Paris accord.”

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GLOBALISM * MULTILATERALISM * BILATERALISM * UNILATERALISM

Globalism, at its core, seeks to describe and **explain** nothing more than a world which is characterized by networks of connections that span multi-continental distances. It attempts to understand all the inter-connections of the modern world — and to highlight patterns that underlie (and **explain**) them.

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Multilateralism is when at least three governments participate in a particular issue or to try to solve a problem. **Multilateralism** is an example of cooperation among world governments and used in contrast with unilateralism. Unilateralism is when a state acts without regard to the support or interests of other states.

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Bilateralism is the conduct of political, economic, or cultural relations between two sovereign states. ... Economic agreements, such as free trade agreements (FTA) or foreign direct investment (FDI), signed by two states, are a common example of **bilateralism**.

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Unilateralism is any doctrine or agenda that supports one-sided action. ...**Unilateralism** is a neologism which is already in common use; it was coined to be an antonym for **multilateralism**, which is the doctrine which asserts the benefits of participation from as many parties as possible.

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