Your Excellencies,

I begin by thanking H.E. Mr Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union; H.E. Ms Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs; and Professor Timothy Snyder for their comprehensive briefings.

Thanks also to the Chair, H.E. Mr Urmas Reinsalu, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, for convening this timely session.
Mr President,

The opening line of the Charter of the United Nations reads, “We the people”. This is a reminder that fundamentally, our work is about the collective strive to serve humanity and putting people at the centre. People come to the United Nations with the belief that it has the power to shift the destiny of nations. The United Nations, since its creation in 1945, has consistently reminded us, that multilateralism matters, not only out of solidarity, but of necessity and of survival.

Your Excellencies,

Despite the many crises that continue to shake stability and peace in many regions, we were able to maintain, on a global scale, international peace and security in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter. What has held the world stable is a decision taken by our predecessors, that a state of war is not desirable.

As it has been rightly said by former German President Horst Kohler: “The founding of the United Nations was the result of political will, courageous vision and thorough pragmatism. It is thanks to that vision, the will to negotiate and the negotiating skills of those who hammered out the Charter of the UN in San Francisco in 1945, that the UN has survived to this day, in spite of all its inherent paradoxes, that it has weathered the stormiest of seas, and that it has developed from an organization founded by a few dozen victorious nations, to a genuinely global organisation that embraces all states.”

The multilateral order that emerged out of World War II, this human tragedy with the United Nations at its core, has helped the world to enjoy stability and avoid major breakouts of hostilities between nations.

However, the end of World War II, 75 years ago, has not been synonymous with total peace everywhere. In fact, if conflicts at that time were between states and alliances organized around ideologies and ideals, nowadays the threat to international peace and security comes from terrorism, cybercrime, pandemics, and the adverse effects of climate change, that have reshaped the notion of global risks.
These threats, in addition to the countless losses of human lives, have inflicted suffering onto the civilian population, especially women and children, causing massive movements of people looking for safety, peace, and better economic opportunities. The Sahel region, already fragilized by years of insecurity and humanitarian crises, is now jointly responding to many of these threats. The intersection of these crises has left many in a direly precarious situation, which has worsened the humanitarian situation.

Your Excellencies,

Today, more than ever, collective action is vital, especially in light of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While security and crisis mitigation measures have forced many of our countries to close down borders, the pandemic reminds us that no one is safe until everyone is safe. We owe the world a renewed commitment to multilateralism in the aftermath of this crisis.

As the President of the Republic of Niger, H.E. Issoufou Mahamadou stated in his address to the 74th United Nations General Assembly, “Multilateralism has so far progressed in the aftermath of bloody conflicts, as was the case of the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) and the Treaty of Vienna (1814), which created a new European order after the 30 Years’ War and the Napoleonic wars.” The same applies to the establishment of the League of Nations after the World War I and of our organization, the United Nations, after World War II.

The current global pandemic has uncovered the blind and neglected spots in the current system and presents us with an opportunity to create a new world order, rooted in the ideals of economic solidarity, fairness and accountability, greater regional cooperation, and governance reforms that favour and uplift the most vulnerable in our communities.

Your Excellencies,

As we take stock of the state of the world, 75 years after the end of World War II, let us remember on this symbolic occasion, that more than one million African soldiers fought for the then-colonial powers.
Their role is rarely acknowledged, yet their contribution has had a profound impact on the geopolitical environment that emerged out of World War II, including the intensification of the struggles for independence which would usher in a new world.

We live in a world, where young people still face serious discrimination, that limits their role in decision-making and, as the latest report of the Secretary-General states, they also face many challenges which limit their full participation, including inequalities in access to education and severe human rights violations.

Women disproportionately suffer from the effects of climate change and the consequences of ongoing conflicts, which further amplify existing inequalities. This, we believe, is one of the challenges to our future. The best and most sustainable conflict resolution mechanism is the involvement of women and youth in the crafting of inclusive national policies.

At this trying time, we have to raise our ambitions to the level of the founding fathers of the United Nations.

In closing, I would like to quote Dag Hammarskjöld who said “When trying to change the world, we must take it as it is. Those are lost, who dare not face the basic facts of international interdependence. Those are lost who permit defeats to scare them back to a starting point of narrow nationalism. Those who are lost, who are so scared by a defeat, as to despair about the future. For all those, the dark prophecies may be justified. But, not for those who do not permit themselves to be scared, not for the organisation which is the instrument at their disposal in the fight, an instrument which may be wrecked, but, if that happens, would have to be, and certainly would be, re-created again and again.”

I would like to reiterate the strong commitment of Niger to the values of multilateralism and respect for the Charter of the United Nations, which we strongly believe remains the most suitable arena to resolve disputes and effectively address issues of global concern, including the threat to international peace and security.

I thank you for your kind attention.