



B E L A R U S

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STATEMENT

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I. In Quest of a Global Order

I begin with a simple question: what is the contemporary world's key dilemma? I believe it is that mankind fails to follow in its societal evolution the pace at which globalisation proceeds. We are constantly lagging behind. What is more, our failure to adjust fast and effectively generates an array of problems – political, economic, social.

This kind of mismatch between the technological and societal development has become a norm ever since the Industrial Revolution commenced in the late 18th century. Nevertheless, these days it represents a far more serious threat than ever before. The thing is that globalisation has been steadily accelerating its pace. Therefore, our adjustment has to take place much faster.

We need a mechanism that will enable us to address the dilemma in an agile and efficient way. It would be more appropriate to call it "a new global order".

Today, we can hardly say that we have a global order at all. The notion of "order" implies stability. We do not have it now. The old rules are not being observed. Nor have new ones been established. We permanently find ourselves stricken by various global crises. The great powers seek to provide global governance through the clubs confined in membership only to themselves. Other countries stake on regionalism. At the same time, the middle- and small-sized countries see their rights infringed at every turn.

Overall, the current geopolitical situation is characterized by the rising dynamic of multiple competition, as well as by the crisis of global governance. What is even more alarming is that all of this is taking place while the global inequality has been persistently on the rise. It is obvious that if we cannot arrive at an order by design, anarchy will come to us by default.

Let me state at once that Belarus has no clear-cut recipe on how to build a new global order. After all, such a task can hardly be solved quickly and simultaneously at all. The great Goethe once said: "Man is not born to solve the problems in the world, but to start for the searching point of the problem and then remain within the limits of what he can comprehend".

Let us try to proceed precisely with this logic in mind. We are convinced of the need to move forward, first of all, along those avenues, where it seems particularly urgent.

II. First Step – Towards the Empowered State

We should start, in our view, with empowering the state. The Industrial Revolution once made the state strong, as it did the very idea appealing.

Indeed, the history of the past two centuries has not been a narrative of military power. Rather, it has been a story of the growing power of the principle of self-determination, which is about the aspiration of nations to establish their own states, capable of standing effectively by the interests of their citizens.

No wonder, thus, that in the times of crisis and uncertainty great leaders of the past saw a solution in boosting the state's role. The US President Franklin Roosevelt, faced with the Great Depression, thought that only a strong state could address the problems of a "forgotten man".

Globalisation of the past several decades, especially its unregulated phase, clearly worked to reduce the importance of the state. We find ourselves in a paradox. On the one hand, the global processes curtailed state's power. On the other, addressing constantly rising transnational challenges sparked by globalisation requires a strong state.

What do we understand by that?

Let us start from the premise that we all live in a very diverse world. Reflecting this range of diversity, states assume very diverse forms of their internal organisation. The historical experience demonstrates that it is impossible to "reduce everyone to the same level".

We are certain that it makes sense to judge the states, let me here resort to philosophy, through the category of their "content" rather than "form". In other words, a strong state is an accountable state, both in domestic and foreign policy, regardless of its "form".

So, let us build relations with the notion of "content" rather than "form" in mind. True, why does the political internal setting of, say, Belarus or Cuba, serve as the basis for some countries to pursue the illegitimate, in terms of international law, policies of sanctions and coercion against these states? After all, it was the people of these countries who determined their "form", and they do not wish another, because their governments pursue accountable policies. By and large, people have no objections to them in terms of "content".

The call for a strong state, of course, has nothing in common with a call for dictatorship. Franklin Roosevelt said: "History proves that dictatorships do not grow out of strong and successful governments, but out of weak and helpless ones".

State's weakness is no longer a humanitarian concern. This is a problem of international security. This is a guarantee that we will fail at the global level to cope with the mismatch generated by the different paces of globalisation and societal adaptation.

III. Second Step – Towards Global Convergence

Next in line, we see the need for efforts to ensure global convergence. It is worth remarking that such attempts have often been undertaken in the past. Unfortunately, the areas of their application have originally been inappropriate.

Indeed, the convergence occurred in the context of the attempts by the "mighty of the world" to impose their own political and economic models on other countries. This was outright coercion. As a result, all such attempts have misfired.

In today's world, we need absolutely different approaches, the ones that serve the purpose of unity and stability rather than disunity and anarchy. We need social convergence.

To put it simply, we must work to create in every state a robust middle class. After all, all countries have an interest in having a sizeable national middle class. History shows that success in this undertaking provides a guarantee that a state in question enjoys domestic stability and has an interest in pursuing foreign policy oriented towards international stability.

We are convinced that the "middle" that produces a benign effect at the national level, does have the same impact internationally. If the world has a large number of middle-income countries, it is the best safeguard that it will be truly multipolar, fair and stable.

This group of states seeks neither diktat nor dominance over others. What is more, having just recently lifted themselves from the grip of poverty and domestic instability, many of these states fully realise the importance of global development and solidarity with the least developed countries.

Building on this understanding, Belarus is keen to rekindle the topic of middle-income countries at the international stage. Last May, we held a regional conference on middle-income countries in the context of sustainable development. We have witnessed immense interest to that event.

Likewise, Belarus welcomes the High-Level international conference of middle-income countries, held in June in Costa-Rica. These and other relevant events point to the need for a more purposeful work within the UN system with regard to cooperation with middle-income countries.

At the same time, a number of ongoing trends work in a way that prevent the "middle" from consolidating itself, first and foremost, in the domestic context. Unfettered globalisation that the so-called "market fundamentalists" so ardently carried out served to increase inequality in the world and hollow out the middle class. Many, in both developed and developing countries, already confront the ensuing political and economic consequences.

We pin our hopes for the better on the ongoing effort at the United Nations to design a post-2015 UN development agenda.

IV. Third Step – Towards a Comprehensive Development Agenda

Indeed, the world is fast approaching the completion by 2015 of the global agenda built around the Millennium Development Goals. The key lesson that can be drawn even at this point is that currently, as we see it, there can be no progress in any individual area if others are neglected. This is the result that everyone and everything in this world – people, economies, threats – have become extremely interconnected. For instance, one cannot succeed in tackling migration unless one addresses poverty, conflicts, environmental disasters.

This perception, in turn, points to the need to devise a comprehensive post-2015 UN development agenda. It is highly commendable that the United Nations, its Member States, as well as many other "stakeholders" have already been actively engaged in the preparatory process.

Likewise, it is gratifying that everyone sees the paradigm of sustainable development as the basis for the future agenda. This is the right course. Because, it is indeed sustainable development with its economic, social and environmental components that can best furnish a truly comprehensive coverage of global development challenges.

Belarus shares the view that Sustainable Development Goals should stand in the forefront of the next agenda. We see the need to develop such goals in as many areas as possible. What is particularly crucial is to have such goals in those areas that were not covered by the Millennium Development Goals, like, for example, migration, energy, employment.

We believe that each and every goal must be realised through appropriate thematic global partnerships that bring together states, international organisations, civil society and private sector. In this regard it is worth emulating the Global Partnership against Slavery and Trafficking in Persons that is being now successfully implemented.

We hope that a comprehensive approach to development will help us make globalisation more regulated and fairer. After all, it must work in the interests of all rather than a "few".

Drawing on a historical analogy, one can argue that the post-2015 development agenda is our own future "New Deal".

As for the United Nations, with its unquestionable legitimacy, universal membership and comprehensive scope, it is the indispensable platform, at which the international community will be able to arrive at a "concert of interests" on the "Deal" in proper manner, as well as subsequently implement it.

The greatest danger during geostrategic uncertainty is not uncertainty itself. Rather, it is an urge to act in a complex setting with the logic of yesterday, that is, with "business as usual".

We are certain that only by shaking off such an approach, will we be able to forge a global order that benefits all people on earth.