Statement

by

H.E. Dr. Amal Mudallali
Permanent Representative of Lebanon
to the United Nations

at the
General Assembly

“International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace”

New York, Wednesday, April 24, 2019

Check Against Delivery
Madam President,

I wish to thank you for convening this high-level meeting to mark the very first International Day of Multilateralism and Diplomacy for Peace, a theme that Lebanon values.

It seems somewhat obvious for all of us to be taking part in this commemoration today as we know too well that preserving - the tormented - multilateral rules-based system remains key in promoting peace.

My country can testify firsthand to the importance of working together in a strengthened multilateral framework. Throughout its history, Lebanon has strived to address its challenges through constructive dialogue and inclusivity.

The contribution of the Arab countries and international partners was instrumental in putting an end to the civil war that torn the country and its fabric for 15 years. The collective cooperation to end a conflict is a testament to what can be achieved via multilateralism and diplomacy.

Again, the collective will of the world came together to help Lebanon ensure peace and security after a devastating invasion.

The contribution of the United Nations and the international community in helping stabilize the situation in the South of Lebanon with the establishment, more than forty-years ago, of a Peacekeeping mission, UNIFIL, is also a proof of their relevance. UNIFIL is today made up of personnel from more than forty countries that work every day alongside the Lebanese authorities to promote peace and stability.

Madam President,

The UN Charter, carefully drafted, provides us with a framework to help address the many challenges with preventive measures and strengthened cooperation. The UN Charter, has enshrined in law shared values such as sovereignty, territorial integrity and the peaceful settlement of disputes that all countries should hold dear.

It remains one of our most valuable assets. Adhering to its purposes and principles, complying with UN resolutions is of paramount importance.

As a small state, Madame President, we know too well that International law does not come down to some obscure theoretical concept, but is rather a means that shields us.

Madam President,

A reenergized multilateralism approach and preventive diplomacy is needed. It cannot happen without building trust with those to whom the UN should be the most relevant. It can only happen through more inclusivity, by involving even more the stakeholders, from youth, women, to the private sector and civil society, and by delivering on our purposes.

Few weeks ago, in the Security Council Chamber, the decision was made to open the curtains to enable light from outside to come in and spread in the august body of the UN.
Let us be inspired by this initiative to let more light and more transparency in this building and in our work and to showcase it to the world. The world needs to know us, to trust us. Let us truly work harder together.

Madam President,

People are more connected than ever around the world. But, looking inward, and isolationist sentiments, have never been greater. The more people know, the more scared they seem. Bonds seem to be broken or fraying everywhere. It does not have to be this way. We can do better. We can be the glue that puts us back together. The UN can lead this charge. Let diplomacy be our first response and not the last resort.

Thank you.