Madam President,

Thank you for convening this High-Level meeting.

As this is my first intervention since the barbaric terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka, allow me to convey our deepest condolences to the Government and People of Sri Lanka and all affected countries.

Portugal aligns itself with the EU statement. We deem crucial to preserve and strengthen the multilateral system, the irreplaceable role of the United Nations and its capacity to advance a comprehensive and cross-cutting concept of peace.

No country can address all threats on its own. Only by building bridges and broadening dialogue can we seriously reach and engage in meaningful solutions.

Disinvesting in the role of international organizations runs the risk of repeating the mistakes of the 20th century.

Allow me to briefly highlight, Madam President, three examples of Portugal’s clear commitment to multilateralism:
1) Currently we are engaged in 6 UN operations: Mali, Darfur, Colombia, South Sudan, Haiti and Central African Republic. In the later, we have a Quick Reaction Force embodying our strong commitment to the effort of stabilizing the country and the region;

2) During the last negotiation on the scale of assessments for UN peacekeeping operations, Portugal decided to voluntarily relinquish the discount which we would be entitled to.

3) We are committed to a horizontal implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. One specific example is goal 14, where we are actively involved (along with Kenya, the Special Envoy of the Secretary General on the Oceans, Peter Thomson, and the UN Secretariat) in the preparations for the “Second UN Oceans Conference” in 2020.

Furthermore, I would like to enhance the role of inclusive participation of civil society. Diplomacy for Peace concerns all stakeholders and civil society is essential for Member States to design and implement policies and they must be fully included in these processes.

Madam President,

I would like to conclude by quoting His Excellency the President of the Portuguese Republic in his speech at the General Debate of the 73rd UN General Assembly: “Portugal believes that multilateral action, political dialogue and diplomatic wisdom are the only possible route to harmonious coexistence between nations and peoples”.