



**PERMANENT MISSION OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Address By

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**At the General Debate of
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**Theme:
"Focusing on people: striving for peace and a decent life for all
on a sustainable planet"**

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Mr. President,
Secretary-General,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have the great honour to convey the warm greetings of His Majesty the Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam to this august body.

And to His Excellency Miroslav Lajčák, our congratulations on assuming the Presidency of this session. We wish him much success in the coming year.

Also, our thanks to His Excellency Peter Thomson who has presided the Assembly with utmost dedication for the past year.

I also wish to send my warm wishes to our Secretary-General, His Excellency Antonio Guterres and praise him for his vision to strengthen our organisation.

Mr. President,

Two years ago, Brunei Darussalam proudly joined everyone to embark on an extended journey to achieve a global set of ambitious goals for sustainable development.

For us, that moment was meaningful. It signified our organisation's relentless pursuit to bring development and prosperity to all countries, regardless of their size and status in the world. It also showed us what unity can accomplish, despite our differences.

Our theme here has indeed summed up to who it is for: *our people*. It is therefore important that we fulfill our promise to them. A promise of a future where their hopes and dreams for a better livelihood can be realised. This will require our long-term commitment and significant investment.

In Brunei Darussalam, this means more than just building infrastructure or providing basic needs. It also means raising decent people. People who care for their society and are committed to their country's development and future. This calls for an inclusive approach, with a priority to focus on youth development.

In today's increasingly competitive environment, Brunei Darussalam firmly believes that quality education is the key to building a new generation of highly-skilled, innovative and confident young people.

Mr. President,

According to the ILO, it is estimated that over 291 million people around the world are unemployed this year. Therefore, creating job opportunities, especially for our young people, will be crucial in raising their standard of living.

In Brunei Darussalam, we are continuing our efforts to diversify our economy and advocate free trade bilaterally and regionally with an aim to achieve a dynamic and sustainable economy.

While pursuing economic progress, we should be mindful of the correlation between human activities and climate change. This is where the Paris Agreement can galvanise our collective action to give a cleaner, healthier, safe and sustainable planet for our future generations.

Brunei Darussalam will continue to do what it can to contribute positively towards this. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions, our efforts rest on promoting efficiency in energy consumption and gradually deploying renewable energies.

At the same time, conserving our forests is a high priority and this complements well with our multilateral efforts, including the 'Heart of Borneo' initiative and recently, the 'Queen's Commonwealth Canopy'.

All in all, it is about educating our people to care for and protect our planet. Strengthening global efforts in this area is indeed important.

Mr. President,

Regional and international peace and security are crucial for human and economic developments to thrive. This is the basic foundation for ASEAN's success as it celebrates its 50th anniversary this year.

So, for the continued progress of Southeast Asia and the region at large, it is the responsibility of all concerned to ensure a stable, safe and secure environment, one that is free from conflict, war or threat of war.

We also strive for stronger engagement through confidence building, preventive diplomacy and conflict resolution through peaceful means. It is through these efforts and close cooperation among ourselves and with our external partners that ASEAN hopes to further contribute towards global peace and development.

Mr. President,

ASEAN's achievements over the past 50 years in ensuring regional peace and security have enabled Brunei Darussalam to pursue its development objectives in a peaceful and harmonious environment. We are pleased that our country has consistently achieved very high-ranking in UNDP's Human Development Index.

As the well-being of our people continues to be central to the nation, we therefore are mindful of the negative impact of security threats, in particular on our work to ensure a sustainable world.

Like many others, we are concerned with the constant threats of terrorism and violent extremism. Sadly, in various parts of the world, the casualties resulting from terrorist attacks continue to shock us all. We condemn such horrendous acts and convey our deepest sympathy as well as condolences to the families of the victims. We wish to reiterate that terrorism should not be linked to any particular race, religion, nationality or ethnicity.

To address these threats, it is important to examine the root causes of terrorism comprehensively such as poverty, marginalisation and alienation, notably among youth. It is our hope that by focusing on education, youth development, creating job opportunities, advocating the responsible use of social media, and promoting dialogue among different faiths and civilisations will greatly help in our effort to bring about positive change.

Equally important is to instil in our people's hearts and minds the values of peace, harmony, moderation and mutual respect. It is through these values that we may be able to create societies that are resilient to destructive ideologies. Working closely with youth, religious leaders and local communities, will be essential to help realise this. Hence, we welcome all efforts of the international community to prevent and eradicate terrorism and violent extremism in all their forms and manifestations.

Mr. President,

Also of great concern are pandemic diseases and natural disasters. On this note, I would also like to join others in expressing our condolences and sympathies to the families of the victims of the recent natural disasters that affected Mexico, Sierra Leone, the United States and countries in the Caribbean and South Asia.

Given their destructive effects on any country's development and well-being, Brunei Darussalam values the work of all relevant agencies, including those under the UN, WHO and ASEAN. They provide us with avenues to gain expertise and knowledge on how to deal with the challenges posed by these threats.

Mr. President,

In our pursuit to leave no one behind, we should not forget the plight of those suffering from war, conflict and occupation.

Like everyone, the Palestinians also have hopes and dreams to be educators, doctors, engineers, artists, athletes and innovators, which are all for the good of humanity. However, for half a century, foreign occupation has tremendously hindered many of them from achieving their full human potential to contribute more towards global development.

Peace, freedom, justice and self-determination are Palestine's fundamental rights. As the legitimate and truly representative organisation on the planet, the UN has a moral and legal obligation to enforce these rights and ensure accountability for actions that contravene international law. We continue to count on the UN as well as all relevant parties concerned to find a comprehensive and lasting peace and stability in the region.

We have to press on with all efforts in translating the growing international recognition of the State of Palestine into positive changes on the ground, so that the Palestinians can pursue sustainable development in their own homeland.

Mr. President,

Brunei Darussalam looks up to the UN to address pressing issues around the world. It is important for the UN to enhance its working relationship with its network of partners, including regional organisations such as the OIC, Commonwealth and ASEAN. To better reflect the needs and realities of the 21st century, the world needs a stronger, more effective and efficient UN.

As such, we support our Secretary-General's ideas to reform the UN and re-position our organisation to focus more on conflict prevention measures, including mediation. We believe such endeavour will greatly help the UN optimise its work and resources, and above all, save lives, safeguard people's dignity, and promote peace and security around the world.

We want a UN that is fit for its purposes and principles as enshrined in the UN Charter. Ultimately, it is the responsibility of all member states to ensure that the United Nations truly live up to its name.

As we strive for a better future together, we hope for a successful United Nations. A successful United Nations means humanity benefits. When humanity benefits, we all win.

Thank you.