



**STATEMENT BY
H.E. MR. DANNY FAURE
PRESIDENT
OF THE
REPUBLIC OF SEYCHELLES
AT THE
GENERAL DEBATE
DURING THE 73RD SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Your Excellency, President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly,
Your Excellency, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Distinguished Heads of State and Government,
Esteemed delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour for me to address the 73rd session of the General Assembly the same year we mark 100 years since the great Nelson Mandela's birth, a true son and leader of not just Africa, but the world. Madiba's legacy of democracy, equality, and peace are more relevant than ever amidst today's growing uncertainties.

Madame President,

On behalf of the People of the Republic of Seychelles, it is a privilege to congratulate you on your election as President of the 73rd Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I wish you the very best as you discharge your important responsibilities.

I would also like to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Miroslav Lajčák, for his successful leadership of the General Assembly in its 72nd Session.

I would also like to pay tribute to the statesmen and giants of history who have walked these halls, without whom our organisation would not be what it is today – a symbol of unity and cooperation across all the nations in the world.

As we celebrate the anniversary of this great organisation, let us pause and reflect on the true purpose that lies at the heart of the United Nations. We must renew our commitment to not only the Charter, but the founding principles, which must always guide us in our deliberations and actions.

These values of cooperation are critical to the continued peace and prosperity of all our nations, and all our peoples. We cannot let these values come under threat.

As a collective, we must continue to embrace multilateralism, which has underpinned the values of our organisation for nearly three quarters of a century.

Seychelles continues to embrace the multilateral system that is the UN, and we fully support the evolution and progress that will come out of the UN reform. This reform stresses the need for a more coordinated approach among the UN country teams to successfully deliver the 2030 Agenda and related Sustainable Development Goals.

We give utmost importance to multilateral cooperation and in this spirit the Government of Seychelles and the UN country team on the 30th of August this year, signed the first Strategic Partnership Framework 2019-2023 which defines collective support from 18 UN agencies.

Madame President,

The challenges we face in the international system remain a poignant reminder of an evolving world to which we must adapt to secure lasting peace and prosperity. Without targeted approaches that touch the lives of our most vulnerable people, and fully embracing the promise of the SDGs, we run the risk of leaving some behind.

Strong institutions are essential to a vibrant democracy, where there is transparency and accountability to the people. My mandate as President of the Republic of Seychelles has been highlighted by, in part, my desire to ensure that our institutions not only serve the people but grant them the necessary recourse should they feel the need. Only through the strengthening of institutions and by binding ourselves to international law and norms can our people truly have accountable governments.

I call on the advanced economies to support the strengthening of institutions in developing nations, not through handouts, but through the sharing of expertise and best practices for the benefit of all.

Only through the strengthening of institutions can we assure respect for human rights, rule of law, and independent judiciaries, which will in turn ensure the future favours a vibrant democratic order.

Madame President,

Speaking from the standpoint of an islander, I cannot disassociate the concept of a lasting peace and prosperity from the perils of climate change. Climate change has become an existential threat not only to the lives of people in island states, but the world as a whole.

As islanders, we live this stark reality every day. We see its effects in our eroding coastlines and unpredictable weather patterns. We see its effects on our coral reefs and rising sea levels.

I recognise the need for development as a driving force to lift our people out of poverty, but we need to remain aware of its consequences on our planet and our future. Through our neglect, we risk our children inheriting a planet beyond their capacity to repair. Should we not uphold our commitments made, from Paris to the Fiji COP23 in Bonn last year, we will reach an inescapable crisis. I believe in the power of our collective efforts to shape a future of which we can all be proud.

In this context, I would like to draw your attention to the theme of our 73rd session, "*Making the United Nations relevant to all people: Global leadership and shared responsibility for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies.*" The words 'sustainable societies' has particular resonance for Small Island Developing States.

For our United Nations to be a truly inclusive and keep up with the challenges of an ever-changing world, Seychelles aligns itself firmly with the African Union position calling for a long overdue and comprehensive reform of the Security Council. This includes the equitable representation of Africa which comprises, after all, more than a quarter of the members of the United Nations.

Sustainability has always been and will continue to be at the heart of the development efforts of Seychelles. As a nation, we have shown the world our commitment to this process. Seychelles, alongside its fellow Small Island Developing States, has been actively engaged in this discourse to ensure that our concerns and needs are adequately addressed.

Our nation was forged by the ocean. We are acutely aware of the challenges that poses with the threat of climate change. However, the ocean also presents a myriad of untapped opportunities.

At the beginning of this year, Seychelles pioneered a Blue Economy Strategic Policy Framework and Roadmap, to multiply the economic potential of our territorial waters whilst also protecting it for generations to come. For us, the Blue Economy is the next frontier of development. It is about ocean-based sustainable development focusing on economic diversification, shared prosperity, food security, and healthy and productive oceans.

It is encouraging to note that other like-minded states are developing this concept regardless of their geography.

Seychelles is shifting from a dependence on bilateral aid donors to developing innovative sources of financing for our emerging Blue Economy. We are trying to leverage the wealth of the ocean that surrounds us and engage in exciting new partnerships. Nevertheless, we recognise this will not be enough to meet our all sustainable development and climate action obligations under the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, and the SAMOA Pathway for SIDS.

This is why Seychelles is one of those Small Island Developing States that continues to advocate for a SIDS-specific vulnerability and resilience index, which would take into account the unique vulnerabilities and specificities of Small Island Developing States and better reflect the realities that we face. The agenda of Small Island Developing States is inextricably linked to that of humanity's.

Madame President,

The United Nations was born of the horrors of a destructive world war. It was charged with upholding the idea that, as a collective, our differences could be resolved through dialogue and international diplomacy.

Together, we continue to demonstrate the success and unrelenting power of diplomacy, and in the case of the smaller states like ours, we have also proven that might is not right. In this unique forum, we have equal representation.

Seychelles remains committed to the ideals of the United Nations and will remain an active voice within this organisation. Today, we are presented with a unique opportunity to transform our world through our collective efforts, and create lasting partnerships.

We have a unique opportunity to sculpt a future for our children they can be proud to inherit. Let us be on the right side of history and live up to the ideals upon which this organisation was born.

Thank you.