

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

**THE SECRETARY-GENERAL**  
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**ADDRESS TO THE GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

**New York, 20 September 2022, 9:00 a.m.**

Mr. President, Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

Our world is in big trouble.

Divides are growing deeper.

Inequalities are growing wider.

Challenges are spreading farther.

But as we come together in a world  
teeming with turmoil, an image of  
promise and hope comes to my mind.

This ship is the Brave Commander. It  
sailed the Black Sea with the UN flag  
flying high and proud.

On the one hand, what you see is a vessel like any other plying the seas.

But look closer.

At its essence, this ship is a symbol of what the world can accomplish when we act together.

It is loaded with Ukrainian grain destined for the people of the Horn of Africa, millions of whom are on the edge of famine.

It navigated through a war zone – guided by the very parties to the conflict – as part of an unprecedented comprehensive initiative to get more food and fertilizer out of Ukraine and Russia.

To bring desperately needed relief to those in need.

To calm commodity markets, secure future harvests, and lower prices for consumers everywhere.

Ukraine and the Russian Federation – with the support of Türkiye – came together to make it happen – despite the enormous complexities, the naysayers, and even the hell of war.

Some might call it a miracle on the sea.

In truth, it is multilateral diplomacy in action.

The Black Sea Grain Initiative has opened the pathway for the safe navigation of dozens of ships filled with much needed food supplies.

But each ship is also carrying one of today's rarest commodities: Hope.

Excellencies,

We need hope .... and more.

We need action.

To ease the global food crisis, we now must urgently address the global fertilizer market crunch.

This year, the world has enough food; the problem is distribution.

But if the fertilizer market is not stabilized, next year's problem might be food supply itself.

We already have reports of farmers in West Africa and beyond cultivating fewer crops because of the price and availability of fertilizers.

It is essential to continue removing all remaining obstacles to the export of Russian fertilizers and their ingredients, including ammonia. These products are not subject to sanctions – and we will keep up our efforts to eliminate indirect effects.

Another major concern is the impact of high gas prices on the production of nitrogen fertilizers. This must also be addressed seriously.

Without action now, the global fertilizer shortage will quickly morph into a global food shortage.

Excellencies,

We need action across the board.

Let's have no illusions.

We are in rough seas.

A winter of global discontent is on the horizon.

A cost-of-living crisis is raging.

Trust is crumbling.

Inequalities are exploding.

Our planet is burning.

People are hurting – with the most vulnerable suffering the most.

The United Nations Charter and the ideals it represents are in jeopardy.

We have a duty to act.

And yet we are gridlocked in colossal global dysfunction.



The international community is not ready or willing to tackle the big dramatic challenges of our age.

These crises threaten the very future of humanity and the fate of our planet.

Crises like the war in Ukraine and the multiplication of conflicts around the globe.

Crises like the climate emergency and biodiversity loss.

Crises like the dire financial situation of developing countries and the fate of the Sustainable Development Goals.

And crises like the lack of guardrails around promising new technologies to heal disease, connect people and expand opportunity.

In just the time since I became Secretary-General, a tool has been developed to edit genes.

Neurotechnology – connecting technology with the human nervous system – has progressed from idea to proof of concept.

Cryptocurrencies and other blockchain technologies are widespread.

But across a host of new technologies, there is a forest of red flags.

Social media platforms based on a business model that monetizes outrage, anger and negativity are causing untold damage to communities and societies.

Hate speech, misinformation and abuse – targeted especially at women and vulnerable groups – are proliferating.

Our data is being bought and sold to influence our behaviour – while spyware and surveillance are out of control – all, with no regard for privacy.

Artificial intelligence is compromising the integrity of information systems, the media, and indeed democracy itself.

Quantum computing could destroy cybersecurity and increase the risk of malfunctions to complex systems.

We don't have the beginnings of a global architecture to deal with any of this.

Excellencies,

Progress on all these issues and more is being held hostage to geopolitical tensions.

Our world is in peril – and paralyzed.

Geopolitical divides are:

Undermining the work of the Security Council.

Undermining international law

Undermining trust and people's faith in democratic institutions.

Undermining all forms of international cooperation.

We cannot go on like this.

Even the various groupings set up outside the multilateral system by some members of the international community have fallen into the trap of geopolitical divides, like the G-20.

At one stage, international relations seemed to be moving toward a G-2 world; now we risk ending up with G-nothing.

No cooperation. No dialogue. No collective problem solving.

But the reality is that we live in a world where the logic of cooperation and dialogue is the only path forward.

No power or group alone can call the shots.

No major global challenge can be solved by a coalition of the willing.

We need a coalition of the world.

Excellences,

Aujourd'hui, je voudrais présenter trois domaines dans lesquels cette coalition mondiale doit de toute urgence surmonter ses divisions et agir de concert.

Il s'agit, en premier lieu, de la mission fondamentale des Nations Unies : instaurer et maintenir la paix.

Une grande partie de la planète continue d'avoir les yeux rivés sur l'invasion russe en Ukraine.

La guerre a déclenché une destruction et des violations massives des droits humains et du droit humanitaire international. Les dernières informations sur la découverte de sites funéraires à Izyum sont extrêmement perturbantes.

Des milliers de civils ont été tués. Des millions de personnes ont été déplacées. Des milliards d'individus dans le monde sont touchés.

Nous voyons surgir la menace de divisions dangereuses entre l'Ouest et le Sud.



Les risques pour la paix et la sécurité mondiales sont immenses.

Nous devons continuer à œuvrer pour la paix, dans le respect de la Charte des Nations Unies et du droit international.

Dans le même temps, les conflits et les crises humanitaires se propagent, souvent loin des projecteurs.

Le déficit de financement de notre Appel humanitaire mondial s'élève à 32 milliards de dollars – le plus important jamais enregistré.

Hélas, on ne compte plus les crises.

En Afghanistan, l'économie est en ruine, plus de la moitié de la population est en proie à des niveaux de faim extrêmes, tandis que les droits humains, et en particulier les droits des femmes et des filles, sont bafoués.

En République démocratique du Congo, les groupes armés de l'est terrorisent les civils et attisent les tensions régionales.

Dans la Corne de l'Afrique, une sécheresse sans précédent menace la vie et les moyens de subsistance de 22 millions de personnes.

En Éthiopie, les combats ont repris, soulignant l'urgence pour les parties de cesser les hostilités et de revenir à la table des négociations.

À Haïti, les gangs détruisent les fondements mêmes de la société.

En Libye, les divisions continuent de mettre le pays en péril.

En Irak, les tensions actuelles compromettent la stabilité.

En Israël et en Palestine, les cycles de violence sous l'occupation se poursuivent et les perspectives de paix fondées sur une solution à deux États ne cessent de s'éloigner.

Au Myanmar, l'effroyable situation humanitaire et des droits humains ainsi que les conditions de sécurité s'aggravent de jour en jour.

Au Sahel, l'insécurité et les activités terroristes atteignent des niveaux alarmants tandis que les besoins humanitaires ne cessent de croître.

En Syrie, la violence et les difficultés règnent toujours.

Et la liste est encore longue.

Pendant ce temps, les menaces de recours aux armes nucléaires et les risques pesant sur la sécurité des centrales nucléaires ne font qu'ajouter à l'instabilité planétaire.

Les parties à la Conférence d'examen du Traité sur la non-prolifération des armes nucléaires n'ont pas réussi à trouver de consensus, et l'accord sur le nucléaire avec l'Iran semble encore lointain.

Il y a toutefois quelques lueurs d'espoir.

Au Yémen, la trêve nationale est fragile mais elle tient toujours. En Colombie, le processus de paix prend racine.

Partout, nous avons besoin d'une action beaucoup plus concertée, ancrée dans le respect du droit international et la protection des droits humains.

Dans un monde qui se déchire, nous devons créer des mécanismes de dialogue pour apaiser les divisions.

C'est pourquoi j'ai esquissé les éléments d'un Nouvel Agenda pour la paix dans mon rapport sur « Notre Programme commun ».

Nous sommes résolus à tirer le meilleur de tous les outils diplomatiques de règlement pacifique des différends qui s'offrent à nous, comme le prévoit la Charte des Nations Unies : négociations, enquêtes, médiation, conciliation, arbitrage et règlement judiciaire.

Excelencias,

El liderazgo y la participación de las mujeres debe estar en primer plano.

Y también debemos priorizar la prevención y la consolidación de la paz.

Esto significa reforzar la previsión estratégica, anticiparse a los focos de violencia que puedan estallar y hacer frente a las nuevas amenazas que suponen la ciberguerra y las armas autónomas letales.

Significa asimismo ampliar el papel de los grupos regionales, reforzar el mantenimiento de la paz, intensificar el desarme y la no proliferación, prevenir y combatir el terrorismo, y garantizar la rendición de cuentas.

Y significa reconocer que los derechos humanos son piedras de toque de la prevención.

Mi Llamamiento a la acción en materia de derechos humanos destaca la centralidad de los derechos humanos, así como la de los refugiados y el derecho humanitario.

En todo lo que hacemos, debemos reconocer que los derechos humanos son el camino para resolver tensiones, poner fin a los conflictos y forjar una paz duradera.

Excellencies,

There is another battle we must end – our suicidal war against nature.

The climate crisis is the defining issue of our time.



It must be the first priority of every government and multilateral organization.

And yet climate action is being put on the back burner – despite overwhelming public support around the world.

Global greenhouse gas emissions need to be slashed by 45 percent by 2030 to have any hope of reaching net zero by 2050.

And yet emissions are going up at record levels – on course to a 14 percent increase this decade.

We have a rendezvous with climate disaster.

I recently saw it with my own eyes in Pakistan – where one-third of the country is submerged by a monsoon on steroids.

We see it everywhere.

Planet earth is a victim of scorched earth policies.

The past year has brought us Europe's worst heatwave since the Middle Ages.

Megadrought in China, the United States and beyond.

Famine stalking the Horn of Africa.

One million species at risk of extinction.

No region is untouched.

And we ain't seen nothing yet.

The hottest summers of today may be the coolest summers of tomorrow.

Once-in-a-lifetime climate shocks may soon become once a year events.

And with every climate disaster, we know that women and girls are the most affected.

The climate crisis is a case study in moral and economic injustice.

The G20 emits 80 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions.

But the poorest and most vulnerable – those who contributed least to this crisis – are bearing its most brutal impacts.

Meanwhile, the fossil fuel industry is feasting on hundreds of billions of dollars in subsidies and windfall profits while household budgets shrink and our planet burns.

Excellencies,

Let's tell it like it is.

Our world is addicted to fossil fuels. It's time for an intervention.

We need to hold fossil fuel companies and their enablers to account.

That includes the banks, private equity, asset managers and other financial institutions that continue to invest and underwrite carbon pollution.

And it includes the massive public relations machine raking in billions to shield the fossil fuel industry from scrutiny.

Just as they did for the tobacco industry decades before, lobbyists and spin doctors have spewed harmful misinformation.

Fossil fuel interests need to spend less time averting a PR disaster – and more time averting a planetary one.

Of course, fossil fuels cannot be shut down overnight.

A just transition means leaving no person or country behind.

But it is high time to put fossil fuel producers, investors and enablers on notice.

Polluters must pay.

Today, I am calling on all developed economies to tax the windfall profits of fossil fuel companies.

Those funds should be re-directed in two ways: to countries suffering loss and damage caused by the climate crisis; and to people struggling with rising food and energy prices.

As we head to the COP 27 UN Climate Conference in Egypt, I appeal to all leaders to realize the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Lift your climate ambition. Listen to your people's calls for change. Invest in solutions that lead to sustainable economic growth.

Let me point to three.

First, renewable energy.

It generates three times more jobs, is already cheaper than fossil fuels and is the pathway to energy security, stable prices and new industries.

Developing countries need help to make this shift, including through international coalitions to support just energy transitions in key emerging economies.

Second, helping countries adapt to worsening climate shocks.

Resilience-building in developing countries is a smart investment – in reliable supply chains, regional stability and orderly migration.



Last year in Glasgow, developed countries agreed to double adaptation funding by 2025. This must be delivered in full, as a starting point.

At minimum, adaptation must make up half of all climate finance.

Multilateral Development Banks must step up and deliver. Major economies are their shareholders and must make it happen.

Third, addressing loss and damage from disasters.

It is high time to move beyond endless discussions. Vulnerable countries need meaningful action.

Loss and damage are happening now, hurting people and economies now, and must be addressed now -- starting at COP 27.

This is a fundamental question of climate justice, international solidarity and trust.

At the same time, we must make sure that every person, community and nation has access to effective early warning systems within the next five years.

We also must address the biodiversity crisis by making the December UN Biodiversity Conference a success.

The world must agree on a post-2020 global biodiversity framework – one that sets ambitious targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, provides adequate financing and eliminates harmful subsidies that destroy ecosystems on which we all depend.

I also urge you to intensify efforts to finalize an international legally binding agreement to conserve and sustainably use marine biological diversity. We must protect the ocean now and for the future.

Excellencies,

The climate crisis is coming on top of other heavy weather.

A once-in-a-generation global cost-of-living crisis is unfolding, turbocharged by the war in Ukraine.

Some 94 countries – home to 1.6 billion people – many in Africa – face a perfect storm: economic and social fallout from the pandemic, soaring food and energy prices, crushing debt burdens, spiraling inflation, and a lack of access to finance.

These cascading crises are feeding on each other, compounding inequalities, creating devastating hardship, delaying the energy transition, and threatening global financial meltdown.

Social unrest is inevitable – with conflict not far behind.

It doesn't have to be this way.

A world without extreme poverty, want or hunger is not an impossible dream. It is within reach.

That is the world envisaged by the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.

But it is not the world we have chosen.

Because of our decisions, sustainable development everywhere is at risk.

The SDGs are issuing an SOS.

Even the most fundamental goals – on poverty, hunger and education – are going into reverse.

More people are poor. More people are hungry. More people are being denied health care and education.

Gender equality is going backwards and women's lives are getting worse, from poverty, to choices around sexual and reproductive health, to their personal security.

Excellencies,

Developing countries are getting hit from all sides.

We need concerted action.

Today, I am calling for the launch of an SDG Stimulus – led by the G-20 – to massively boost sustainable development for developing countries.

The upcoming G20 Summit in Bali is the place to start.

This SDG stimulus has four components:

First, Multilateral Development Banks – the World Bank and regional counterparts – must increase concessional funding to developing countries linked to investments in the Sustainable Development Goals.

The banks themselves need more finance, immediately.

They then need to lift their borrowing conditions and increase their appetite for risk, so the funds reach all countries in need.



Developing countries, particularly Small Island Developing States, face too many obstacles in accessing the finance they need to invest in their people and their future.

Second, debt relief.

The Debt Service Suspension Initiative should be extended – and enhanced.

We also need an effective mechanism of debt relief for developing countries – including middle-income countries – in debt distress.

Creditors should consider debt reduction mechanisms such as debt-climate adaptation swaps.

These could have saved lives and livelihoods in Pakistan, which is drowning not only in floodwater, but in debt.

Lending criteria should go beyond Gross Domestic Product and include all the dimensions of vulnerability that affect developing countries.

Third, an expansion of liquidity.

I urge the International Monetary Fund and major central banks to expand their liquidity facilities and currency lines immediately and significantly.

Special Drawing Rights play an important role in enabling developing countries to invest in recovery and the SDGs.

But they were distributed according to existing quotas, benefitting those who need them least. We have been waiting for redistribution for 19 months; the amounts we hear about are minimal.

A new allocation of Special Drawing Rights must be handled differently based on justice and solidarity with developing countries.

Fourth, I call on governments to empower specialized funds like Gavi, the Global Fund and the Green Climate Fund.

G20 economies should underwrite an expansion of these funds as additional financing for the SDGs.

Excellencies,

Let me be clear: the SDG Stimulus I am proposing is only an interim measure.

Today's global financial system was created by rich countries to serve their interests. It expands and entrenches inequalities. It requires deep structural reform.

My report on Our Common Agenda proposes a New Global Deal to rebalance power and resources between developed and developing countries.

African countries, in particular, are under-represented in global institutions.

I hope Member States will seize the opportunity to turn these ideas into concrete solutions, including at the Summit of the Future in 2024.

Excellencies,

The divergence between developed and developing countries – between North and South – between the privileged and the rest – is becoming more dangerous by the day.

It is at the root of the geopolitical tensions and lack of trust that poison every area of global cooperation, from vaccines to sanctions to trade.

But by acting as one, we can nurture fragile shoots of hope.

The hope found in climate and peace activists around the world calling out for change and demanding better of their leaders.

The hope found in young people, working every day for a better, more peaceful future.

The hope found in the women and girls of the world, leading and fighting for those still being denied their basic human rights.

The hope found throughout civil society seeking ways to build more just and equal communities and countries.

The hope found in science and academia, racing to stay ahead of deadly diseases and end the COVID-19 pandemic.

The hope found in humanitarian heroes rushing to deliver lifesaving aid around the globe.

The United Nations stands with them all.

We know lofty ideals must be made real in people's lives.

So let's develop common solutions to common problems — grounded in goodwill, trust, and the rights shared by every human being.

Let's work as one, as a coalition of the world, as united nations.

Thank you.

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