



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

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NEW YORK, NY 10017

**Address By**

**The Honourable Dato Erywan Pehin Yusof,  
Minister of Foreign Affairs II of Brunei Darussalam**

**At the General Debate of  
the 78<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**23 September 2023, New York**

Theme:

***"Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity:  
Accelerating action on the 2030 Agenda and its sustainable  
development goals towards peace, prosperity, progress and  
sustainability for all "***

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**Bismillahirrahmanirrahim,**

**In The Name Of Allah, The Most Gracious, The Most Merciful.**

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

**Assalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh,**

**Peace Be Upon You All.**

At the outset, I am honoured to convey the warm greetings of His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah Mu'izzaddin Waddaulah, Sultan and Yang Di-Pertuan of Brunei Darussalam, to this year's esteemed Assembly.

My congratulations to His Excellency Dennis Francis, on assuming the Presidency of this session, and I wish him a successful tenure.

I thank His Excellency Csaba Kőrösi, for his leadership as President of the 77<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly.

I also sincerely appreciate His Excellency Secretary-General António Guterres' continuous hard work and valuable contributions to serving the international community during these challenging times in our pursuit for global peace, prosperity, and development.

Mr. President,

As we have approached the midway point of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, this is an opportune time for reflection on our shared vision for a sustainable world and to undertake recalibrations in areas where more work is needed.

In July this year, Brunei Darussalam presented its second Voluntary National Review Report highlighting our progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

We have made significant strides and are on track across several goals, in line with our National Vision - *Wawasan Brunei 2035* - which aims to create a dynamic and sustainable economy with a high quality of life for all citizens.

However, like many other countries, we too, faced challenges, and for us, this was mainly in the area of reliable data collection. It has hindered monitoring and evaluating accurately the progress towards achieving the SDGs.

Nonetheless, our country is actively working towards addressing this issue, including by working together more closely through our regional mechanisms, namely ASEAN.

For example, ASEAN recently signed an agreement to officially launch the ASEAN Centre for Climate Change in Brunei Darussalam.

It will facilitate and assist in collecting data towards addressing the challenges of climate action and serve as a regional hub and research facility that aims to enhance capacity in our efforts to mitigate and combat climate change.

This Centre will be operational by the end of the year, and we would welcome any support from interested Member States or international organisations to this regional effort.

Mr. President,

The United Nations has always been and continues to play a central role in fostering collaboration, mobilising resources, and coordinating international efforts to bring, peace, development and prosperity to all Member States.

As we move towards a new global order in a multipolar world, small states like Brunei Darussalam recognise and appreciate the importance of the UN in maintaining international peace and security, through a rules-based order.

We will continue to uphold the very principles this organisation was founded on, almost 8 decades ago, in particular respect for the sovereign equality, territorial integrity and political independence of all States.

Therefore, Brunei Darussalam is ready to forge a new global consensus that preserves these values while addressing emerging issues and resolving existing challenges.

We look forward to next year's Summit of the Future, and the continued discussions between Member States on the future of global cooperation, including the Secretary-General's proposed vision under "Our Common Agenda".

Mr. President,

This year's theme, "Rebuilding trust and reigniting global solidarity", builds upon the Secretary-General's vision for the future of multilateralism which better responds and delivers for the people and the planet and to get the world back on track with the SDGs.

Nevertheless, in our increasingly interconnected modern world, trust and solidarity can only be achieved with tolerance and respect.

This is why, it has been distressing to witness the increase in acts of intolerance and disrespect, particularly, acts of religious hatred directed at the Islamic Faith.

Such deliberate actions, like the burning of the Holy Qur'an, the very centre of the Islamic Faith, provokes disharmony, erodes trust, undermines efforts towards sustainable peace, and threatens unity.

Brunei Darussalam joins the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation, the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and those Member States that have called for increased action against religious hatred, especially Islamophobia and anti-Islam sentiments.

Justifying religious hatred, even under the pretext of freedom of expression, is unacceptable. Our pursuit for peace will only be worthwhile if we address the root causes of such acts, especially those promoting discord, intolerance and hatred.

Mr. President,

No nation represents our collective failure more evidently than the State of Palestine. It has continuously been denied of its fundamental freedoms safeguarded under the UN Charter.

The 75th Anniversary of the Na'kba earlier this year served as a reminder of how long and intolerable it has been for the Palestinian people to be deprived of their rights to self-rule, self-determination, and peace.

For most, they have spent their entire lives under occupation.

The aggressive policies and practices of the Occupying Power have victimised every Palestinian man, woman, and child, denying them all their fundamental and basic human rights and, even, their ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

Brunei Darussalam strongly condemns actions that blatantly violate the rights and dignity of the Palestinian people. We stand firmly in solidarity with them, to truly ensure that **“NO ONE IS LEFT BEHIND”**.

The UN must strengthen global solidarity in upholding its commitment to the two-state solution as the viable path towards a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East. We reiterate our call for an independent State of Palestine based on pre-1967 borders with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Mr. President,

After experiencing a global health crisis with far-reaching consequences, we are at a crossroads that will determine our future.

One was hoping that we would have emerged more united in our shared resolve.

Unfortunately, the reality we see is quite different.

We find ourselves amidst humanitarian crises and global mistrust of international institutions and between states, that threaten our collective progress.

Therefore, to ensure a better future for generations to come, it is crucial that we refuse to accept actions that divide us or conflicts that oppress us. Above all, Mr. President, we must not let mistrust overpower our unity.

Thank you.

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