



Speech of His Excellency the Prime Minister

**Mr. José Ulisses Correia e Silva, in the General Debate of the
78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, under
the 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 ".*

- Nova Iorque, 23 de Setembro de 2023 -

MR. PRESIDENT

MR. SECRETARY-GENERAL

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

We have engaged in this session's General Debate with a view to accelerating action on Agenda 2030 and its Sustainable Development Goals.

The theme of the General Debate must indeed mobilize nations toward peace, prosperity, progress, and sustainability for all.

Excellencies,

The world has experienced periods of intense crisis.

We have observed a resurgence of populism and extremism, as well as attacks on democracy.

There have been successive coup d'états in African countries.

In these difficult times of war in Ukraine, Cabo Verde is on the side of values and principles of freedom and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of peoples and nations.

Based on these principles and values, we condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

In these challenging times caused by instability and successive coup d'états in African countries, Cabo Verde is on the side of principles and values of constitutional liberal democracy.

Based on these principles, we condemn coup d'états as a means to achieve power.

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A recent survey conducted by Afrobarómetro shows that two thirds of Africans prefer democracy over any other form of government. But only 38% are satisfied with how democracy works in their countries.

If, on the one hand, there is a disconnect between the citizens and political power with respect to the workings of democracy, on the other hand there is an opportunity.

Citizens' preference for democracy is an opportunity for more and better democracy, good governance, more citizen empowerment, fighting corruption, fiscal and financial transparency, and policies based on results that generally impact people's lives, and create trust and hope.

Credible and trustworthy electoral and judicial systems, freedom of the press promoting pluralism, and strong institutions are fundamental for political actors'

and citizens' trust in the rules of democracy. They prevent serious crises and extreme conflicts, and strengthen democracy.

These are issues of a political nature that merit engagement and discussion with a sense of urgency by political leaders to allow stability and trust to drive peace, progress, prosperity, and sustainability.

With a spirit of collaboration and resoluteness, Cabo Verde is committed to working side by side with all Member States of the United Nations to address insecurity in the West African region and in the rest of the world.

Together, nations united can convert this challenge into an opportunity to build a safer world where peace, stability, and prosperity are accessible to all peoples.

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The world is increasingly interlinked. The COVID-19 pandemic was an intense and grave example of how no one is safe when insecurity spreads and respects no borders.

Partnership among nations is key to overcome threats to world security. And we are referring to security in a broad and global sense: (1) health security, climate and environmental security in the context of pandemics and climate change; (2) food security and security in the context of deep inequalities in access to basic items such

as water, electricity, and sanitation in the home; (3) security against drug trafficking, terrorism, piracy, human trafficking, and cybercrime.

The pandemic potential of any of these security factors is enormous and known.

Only through close collaboration, partnership, and solidarity will we be able to create an environment of global and lasting security.

We must commit to conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and post-conflict reconstruction as integral parts of the journey toward the SDGs.

Excellencies,

The challenges of achieving the SDGs have increased.

The difficult global context must not cause us to discontinue nor weaken our commitments to the Agenda 2030. On the contrary, we must accelerate reforms, investments, financing, partnerships, and international solidarity.

We must implement reforms in the international financial architecture; we must operationalize climate and environmental financing instruments; we must substantially increase Special Drawing Rights and simplify the rules for their issuance and attribution; we must provide debt relief to the least developed countries.

We must have fair and relevant representation of African countries in the community of nations, including the United Nations Security Council and international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF.

We must decisively move the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index forward and its application by the International Community as a criterion for access to low-cost and long-term financing for SIDS, and as a criterion for a greater volume of financing.

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Development is a long and demanding journey.

On this journey, the external context of countries is key and determinant.

Development partnerships and, particularly, the conditions of financing, are important.

But there is a determinant condition. Development is achievable only with a strong endogenous commitment in each country: governments, citizens, companies, and civil society organizations.

There must be a strong commitment to establishing political, institutional, economic, and social environments that stimulate citizens, companies, and civil society organization to channel their energy, skills, and resources toward personal,

organizational, and collective development. We must also have a strong commitment to good political, economic, social, and environmental governance.

Persons, Institutions, and trust are the keys to success. In Cabo Verde, this is our belief!

Excellencies,

Africa must grow more and be better integrated into the world economy in order to produce, export, create well-paid jobs, eradicate extreme poverty, and ensure happiness for our peoples.

Africa needs structural transformations in the profile of many economies based on commodities with low added value to diversify their economies, better integrate them into value chains, and increase their competitiveness.

We need transformations at the level of reducing vulnerabilities, increasing resilience, and responding to external economic, financial, energy, climate, and pandemic shocks.

We need structural transformations in connectivity, which is a major constraint upon African economic integration.

Africa needs to decisively, consistently, and effectively bet on human capital: (1) quality education for all; (2) health for all; (3) access to basic needs such as water, electricity, and sanitation in the home of each family.

Long-term transformative investments require concessional funding, predictability, scale-up effects, and adequate execution time in order to produce significant impacts.

The weight of foreign debt, the levels of sovereign risks, and the financing conditions for African countries and companies are grave matters that block the paths toward development. They require structured and consistent solutions.

We need mechanisms that create virtuous cycles. The conversion of debt into climate and environmental financing is one such mechanism.

These transformations can free up resources for investments that increase resilience, reduce exposure to external shocks, lower carbon emissions, protect biodiversity, create investment opportunities for the private sector, and create skilled job opportunities for youth.

Cabo Verde and Portugal recently signed an agreement to convert bilateral debt into climate and environmental financing to achieve these goals.

More partner contributions will increase the size of transformative investments and accelerate their impacts.

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Cabo Verde remains firm in our commitment to achieve the SDGs with integrated policies.

Our goal is to eradicate extreme poverty by 2026.

We will leave no one behind in education.

We are accelerating energy transition.

We are investing in reducing dependence on underground water sources for agriculture.

We wish to transform Cabo Verde into a Digital Nation and diversify our economy.

We embrace the United Nations Agenda 2030 as our path toward progress. Our Second Sustainable Development Plan is geared toward this commitment.

We reaffirm our firm resolve to implement the commitments to which we have just agreed during the SDG Summit, which are vital for this Decade of Action.

We are called to design intelligent actions toward international peace and security and, thus, accelerate prosperity, progress, and sustainability for all, leaving no one behind.

Thank you very much for your attention.