



REPUBLIC OF GUINEA-BISSAU

STATEMENT OF

H.E. Mr. UMARO SISSOCO EMBALÓ
PRESIDENT OF GUINEA-BISSAU

AT

THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE
78TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(September 21st 2023)

Mr. President,

Mr. Secretary-General,
Excellencies,
Honorable Heads of State and Government,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

From this podium at the United Nations, firstly I would like to offer our most heartfelt condolences to the governments of the Kingdom of Morocco and Lybia, and to express our feelings of fraternal solidarity with the peoples of these two countries, who are our friends and brothers and sisters.

I would like to congratulate Mr. Dennis Francis from Trinidad & Tobago for his election as President of the 78th Session of the United Nations General Assembly. I wish much success during his term. I would also like to congratulate your predecessor, Mr. Csaba Körösi from Hungary, for the results achieved during his presidency.

I also congratulate Secretary-General António Guterres for his performance in promoting peace and development in the world.

Mr. President,

The distinguished speakers who preceded me on this podium presented important analyses and observations on current challenges and the international scenario. Therefore, I will focus on concrete actions that, in my view, are expected from us — the United Nations.

For Guinea-Bissau, the best response to the challenges that confront the international community includes strengthening multilateralism and international cooperation. In our view, multilateralism is an indispensable instrument and a moral imperative if we wish to build, together, a solidary world and well-being for all.

To this end, we welcome the choice and significance of the theme for this Session of the General Assembly, which stresses the importance of global trust and solidarity, prosperity, progress, and sustainability for all.

Mr. President,
Excellencies,

We are expected to take coordinated actions to implement our decisions, such as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the African Union's "Agenda 2063: The Africa We Want," to ensure development financing, and to collectively protect and improve our planet.

To this end, we must comply with the Paris and COP27 agreements, including the Loss and Damage Fund for vulnerable countries, particularly island nations such as my country, Guinea-Bissau.

Mr. President,

We must introduce the changes required in the international peace and security architecture and in the world financial system to enable them to respond to the current international scenario.

Security Council reform, which has long been deemed as necessary, must consider the position of the African Union in order to ensure a realistic and fairer representation, consistently with the increasingly preponderant role of Africa in building and maintaining balance in the world.

Mr. President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Since I became President of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau in 2020, we have focused on dialogue, peace-building, political stability, as well as social and economic development in our country and in the West Africa sub-region and beyond. These principles also guided us during our term as President of the Conference of Heads of State and Government of ECOWAS, which we accepted with determination and a heightened sense of responsibility, and which ended last July.

To this end, we wish to reiterate our great concern with the recurrence of coup d'états and steps back in Democracy and the Rule of Law in some countries in our sub-region, in flagrant violation of the populations' freedom of choice as expressed through ballot boxes.

Mr. President,

Ladies and gentlemen

Despite the harmful effects of the prolonged embargo imposed on the people of Cuba, our sister nation has always supported and continues to support the countries of Africa. We reiterate our appeal for an end to this unjust and irrational embargo, which is an obstacle to the fulfillment of the legitimate aspirations of the Cuban people. The same is true for our brothers and sisters in Venezuela, whom we must also not forget and to whom we must show our solidarity.

Mr. President,

As you know, it has been a year since I took the office of President of the African Leaders Malaria Alliance. As Heads of State and Government, we continue, in Africa, to give priority to the struggle against malaria. As a result of this effort, more than 1.5 billion cases of malaria were avoided and 10.5 million lives were saved in Africa since 2000.

I call on Africa and the international community to take action. If we wish to achieve our global goals for 2030, of ending malaria epidemics and achieving universal health coverage, we must act now.

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

This year, the people of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau celebrates 50 years of existence as an independent and sovereign State. Thus, as an emissary of the Bissau-Guinean nation, I am thankful for the extraordinary aid provided by the former Soviet Union, the Republic of Guinea, Cuba, Algeria, and Morocco and other countries to our struggle for liberation, as well as the United Nations in its historic visit to our liberated regions, confirming the existence of effective political, administrative, and military control.

The people of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, on this solemn occasion of 50 years of independence, will strengthen our determination and energy to consolidate national

unity and mobilize even more, as enshrined in the National Anthem of Guinea-Bissau, “to build peace and progress in our everlasting homeland.”

Mr. President,

At this historic juncture in the history of the Republic of Guinea-Bissau, and before I finish my remarks, I wish to reaffirm, on behalf of our government and the Bissau-Guinean people, from this podium and before the world, our engagement and continuous availability to continue to work with the UN and to cooperate with all friendly governments and peoples, for world peace and development, and to protect our planet.

Thank you very much!