



PERMANENT MISSION OF ROMANIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Check against Delivery!

**STATEMENT
OF THE PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA,
H.E. MR. KLAUS WERNER IOHANNIS,
TO THE 78TH SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

(New York, 20 September 2023)



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*Mr. President of the General Assembly,
Mr. Secretary General,
Excellencies,*

The world, as we know it, is enduring profound and rapid transformations under the impact of so many challenges that humanity must face.

At the same time, against this very difficult background, we continue to defend our core values, the UN Charter and effective multilateralism! Our decisions are critical for the future of humanity. We, the leaders, are called on now to take decisive actions for the generations to come, in a spirit of solidarity and shared responsibility, and stand up for rules-based international order and for the full respect for international law!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Romania is a direct neighbour to the continued war of aggression of Russia against Ukraine and we acted, with all our energy, to bring a solid contribution to regional and international security and stability. This war demonstrated that the Black Sea needs more global attention, as it is of strategic importance for transatlantic security.

Romania also stands for more efficient multilateralism, alongside like-minded partners across the Globe, in the fight for freedom and democracy.

Since day one of the war, Romania has acted in full solidarity with the brave Ukrainian people.

We will continue to provide safe haven and protect refugees coming from our neighbour, as we did for over 6 million Ukrainians who already crossed our borders.



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We fully support the Ukrainian Peace Formula as the most suitable framework conducive to a fair, lasting, and sustainable peace. We also support the pursuit of international law and accountability, so that all those responsible for atrocities are brought to justice.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our region, the wider Black Sea area, must be protected against the effects of Russia's war against Ukraine and its hybrid war and malign interference.

Romania has been constantly arguing on the need to keep the so-called protracted or frozen conflicts in the region high on our agenda.

Romania has also been at the forefront of supporting, in a multidimensional manner, the vulnerable partners in the region. We have thus offered substantial support to our neighbour, the Republic of Moldova, the country most affected by the war, after Ukraine itself.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

While we work in the present to defend our values, we should also continue to project a sustainable future. We thus continue to actively pursue the 2030 Agenda.

Food insecurity, energy, and economic instability affect the entire world, and especially the most vulnerable in the Global South.

By terminating the Black Sea Grain Initiative and by attacking Ukrainian ports, Russia further exacerbates the global food crisis. We once again urge the Russian Federation to cease blocking the Initiative.



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As a direct neighbour of Ukraine and a responsible and solidary international actor, Romania has played an active role in the global efforts on food security. Since the beginning of the war, we have facilitated the delivery of over 25.5 million tons of Ukrainian grain. Romania will not let down our most vulnerable partners who need our support, especially those from least developed countries, including from Africa.

We also invest and bring our contribution for African institutional resilience, peacekeeping, and capacity building.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Through our Sustainable Development Strategy, we advance an efficient, transparent, and citizen-centered governance. Our second Voluntary National Review, issued this July, is proof that we are on the right track, as we already achieved 62% of our national targets for 2030.

But as we are keenly aware that globally we are lagging behind, we put trust in the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals Summit and the Summit of the Future.

We are also aware of the importance of financing for development.

Romania is committed to increase its official development assistance to 0.33% of its Gross National Income by 2030. Moreover, we will contribute to the EU's objective to allocate 0.20% of its collective Official Development Aid to the Least Developed Countries.

Distinguished audience,

The devastating effects of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss, as well as energy insecurity and disinformation are our global concerns.

Romania's efforts in combating these challenges are visible.



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For instance, we are committed to swiftly ratify and implement the Agreement on marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction.

We were also part of the core group promoting the General Assembly request for an Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States in respect of climate change.

We remain vocal in supporting climate education, a priority for Romania and for me personally. I also strongly believe that the climate and security nexus should be more prominent on the UN agenda, including in the Security Council.

We hope that the Climate Ambition Summit and the COP 28 will mobilize the political will to keep the 1.5°C target alive! We must accelerate a just energy transition and emissions reduction, while ensuring energy security.

Countering disaster risks also requires joint efforts, and the Emergency Platform initiative is a step in the right direction. Romania actively participates in international assistance missions, shares best practices, and offers training on response measures.

In our endeavours, we should use the opportunities brought by digitalization, innovation, and new technologies, as well as the strategic investments in renewables, as enablers of sustainable development.

At the same time, Romania welcomes the Secretary General's initiative for a Code of Conduct for Information Integrity on Digital Platforms.

Distinguished audience,

In the current geopolitical context, the key for an efficient multilateralism is to ensure its successful reform, which cannot be delayed any longer. An enlarged Security



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Council could include important additional voices: from the African Group, from various Small Island Developing States and even from the smallest regional group - the East European one.

As we celebrate 75 years since the adoption of the UN Declaration on Human Rights, Romania strongly advocates for strengthening the UN Human Rights system, including for its adequate funding. As a member of the Human Rights Council, we continue to be an active supporter for democracy, rule of law, non-discrimination, freedom of expression, children's and women's rights.

At the same time, the full respect and promotion of international law remain at the very core of our foreign policy. As an example, Romania is advocating for an enlarged acceptance by states of the jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice. And we count on your support for our solid candidature for the World Court!

Dear colleagues,

Next year's Summit of the Future represents an excellent opportunity to find joint global solutions.

The Pact for the Future must provide the United Nations with the tools to deliver, for us and for future generations. We must stand for our people and for the future we want.

Thank you!
