



REPUBLIC OF ANGOLA

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Angola to the United Nations

STATEMENT BY

His Excellency
João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço
President of the Republic of Angola

at

The 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

Leaving No One Behind: Acting in a Position to
Promote Peace, Sustainable Development and Human
Dignity for Present and Future Generations

New York, September 24, 2024

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Leaving No One Behind: Acting in a Position to Promote Peace,
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Generations

-Your Excellency Philémon Yang

President of the 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly,

-His Excellency António Guterres,

Secretary-General of the United Nations,

-Different Heads of State and Government,

-Heads of Delegation,

-Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with a very particular sense of honor that I address you and all the participants in this 79th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, which is taking place within a very worrying international context, where tensions in international relations are worsening due to the multiplicity of conflicts of different natures and intensities in various parts of our planet.

It is understandable, of course, that in an environment of such instability and insecurity, it is much more challenging to achieve the major Sustainable Development Goals and others set by this organization, so that we can achieve all the goals we have set ourselves.

Allow me to extend a special greeting to His Excellency Philémon Yang on his election as President of the 79th Session of the General Assembly, which assumes special significance for the entire African continent and for your country, the Republic of Cameroon, where the duties you have performed there with dedication and proven efficiency, place you in a position to successfully guide the work of this Session.

Allow me to offer you my warmest wishes for success in these functions, in the conviction that your commitment will make an important contribution to strengthening the role of our organization as a decisive and irreplaceable actor in global governance.

I also congratulate the outgoing President, His Excellency Dennis Francis, to whom I extend a word of great appreciation for the way he carried out his tasks and for the achievements he made during his term of office.

I would also like to praise and commend the great dedication of António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, to our common cause of building a world of peace, security, harmony and concord, development and equal opportunities for all.

We value your work all the more because it is being carried out in a complex world environment, full of challenges and threats that you have been able to deal with pragmatically, responsibly and with great wisdom and courage.

Excellencies,

Since the creation of the United Nations, after the end of the Second World War, the peoples of our planet have longed for peaceful coexistence at a global level, believing that any episodes that could jeopardize harmony, peace and universal security would be the object of careful attention and preventive measures taken within the framework of our organization, so that they would not degenerate into conflicts and wars that would bring back to life the distressing moments experienced during the period from 1939 to 1945.

Almost eight decades on, the objective observation we can make today is that not only has this perspective not been realized, but we seem to be moving away from the founding purposes of the United Nations.

Faced with this reality, we need to consider where we have failed and what collective measures we should take to make the United Nations' intervention more active in the search for solutions that contribute to conflict prevention, the strengthening of world peace and security, the strengthening of trade and international cooperation, to ensure the prosperity of nations and the well-being of the peoples of our planet.

Today we are witnessing an attempt to undermine, ignore or even replace the role and importance of the United Nations in resolving the major issues that afflict humanity, particularly those that have to do with universal peace and security.

In this context, there is no more appropriate stage than this Magna Assembly to reverse this reality and assume the urgent need to reform this institution, placing special emphasis on adapting the Security Council to the realities of the contemporary world.

Its current format and composition still reflect the reality of the post-war period, far outstripped by the time and development of other regions of the planet, many of them colonized countries that are now independent members of the United Nations.

The reform of the United Nations Security Council and of the international financial institutions that emerged from Breton Woods is urgent and necessary in order to give a voice to the countries of the global south, namely Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and the Indian sub-continent.

The imperative of multilateralism must prevail as the only framework truly capable of safeguarding the common interests of all humanity, within which we must reaffirm our resolute commitment to diplomacy, inclusive dialogue and the use of peaceful means to resolve conflicts.

It is in this spirit that the Republic of Angola is deeply committed to the process of finding solutions to conflicts in Africa, noting that the greatest effort at the moment is focused on the conflict developing in the east of the Democratic Republic of Congo, without neglecting those taking place in Sudan and the Sahel region.

As part of the Luanda process, a ceasefire was reached in the east of the DRC, which came into force on August 4 this year.

In order to consolidate the gains made, a proposal for a peace agreement has been put on the table by the Republic of Angola, involving the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republic of Rwanda, the terms of which are being discussed by the parties at ministerial level, with the prospect of them reaching an understanding with each other that will justify the convene of a summit meeting to seal the signing of the definitive peace agreement and the re-establishment of relations between the DRC and Rwanda.

We are very seriously concerned about the situation in Sudan, where a violent war is raging with humanitarian consequences of dramatic proportions in the face of a certain apathy on the part of the international community, which must seek to converge its efforts and act in coordination with the African Union in order to promote and achieve lasting peace.

We are putting to the benefit of peace in Africa the experience gained by Angola in resolving its internal conflict, which after several decades was definitively resolved through an inclusive dialogue between the warring parties.

We have learned from our own conflict that there is no peace without dialogue and no peace without concessions on both sides. This is a path that cannot be neglected in the context of all efforts to resolve the serious security crises facing the world today.

Russia's war against Ukraine has seriously and profoundly shaken stability and security in Europe, with strong repercussions for the rest of the world in terms of economic stability and food and energy security.

We have witnessed a continuous escalation of this conflict, which has been escalating in a disturbing way, with devastating effects on the internal situation of the contending countries, through the use of increasingly lethal weapons, without any prospect of a solution to this intricate problem.

Although increasingly sophisticated military and other means are being deployed in the theater of operations, no military victory is in sight in this war, which has a tendency to spread to the rest of Europe, unless a negotiated solution is found, based on respect for the principles of the United Nations, which safeguard the sovereignty of states and the indivisibility and territorial integrity of countries.

Non-compliance with the principles of the United Nations Charter is at the root of many of the problems and tensions that proliferate all over our planet, where particular geopolitical interests and ambitions, contrary to the values defended by the international community, often affect the security and stability of entire regions of our planet.

In the Middle East, we witnessed and condemned the killing and kidnapping of defenseless Israeli civilians on October 7 last year.

As a result, although Israel has the right to protect its territory, to guarantee the safety of its citizens and to try to rescue hostages whose whereabouts are still uncertain, because it has the responsibilities of a state, it should do everything it can to prevent the genocide that the world is witnessing live in the Gaza Strip and the attacks by settlers and the expansion of settlements in the West Bank.

In this conflict, the main victims are defenceless and vulnerable human beings, namely children, women, the elderly and the sick, killed indiscriminately not only by aviation and artillery bombs, but also because they are prevented by the force of arms from accessing and enjoying the most basic rights, access to food, drinking water, medicines, housing and medical and medication assistance, by the destruction of the main school, hospital, housing, energy and other infrastructures.

We are witnessing the deaths in alarming numbers of journalists from international networks, United Nations officials and workers from international humanitarian organizations, which is unacceptable and reprehensible.

It can no longer be allowed that in just 11 months, in a small territory with no escape, nearly 43,000 people are killed and that the perpetrators are not held accountable by the international community.

The international community cannot remain indifferent to this situation that threatens the existence of the Palestinian people, who have the same right to live in peace and security in the territory of their ancestors as the Jewish people do.

We are concerned about the escalation of this conflict to other countries, because it threatens peace and security throughout the Middle East and opens up the dangerous possibility of the direct involvement of the major world powers and thus the internationalization of the conflict with all the possible consequences on a global scale.

This is a fact that once again highlights the role of the United Nations, its decisions and resolutions, which, if strictly and rigorously observed, will resolve the impasse surrounding the creation of the State of Palestine, the only way to put a definitive end to the problem that the Middle East has been facing for decades.

I would like to take this opportunity to call once again for an end to the embargo against Cuba and the sanctions against Zimbabwe, the current President-in-Office of our regional economic community, SADC, because they are unfair and inhumane, because they increase the suffering of their peoples and greatly hinder the economic and social development of those countries.

Excellencies,

As part of the collective effort undertaken by the nations of our planet to consolidate peace, African countries have sought to make an increasingly effective contribution to United Nations missions aimed at stabilizing countries and regions in conflict.

Often, these peace operations are not carried out as often and as effectively as they should be due to the financial constraints of the countries willing to take part.

Fortunately, this constraint seems to have finally been overcome at the Security Council level, which represents a decisive step in strengthening the operationality and effectiveness of the peace and stability missions led by the African Union, which now has a more appropriate funding mechanism for its operations.

I warmly welcome these developments, especially since Africa wants to be increasingly present not only in the approach, but also in the decision-making and resolution processes regarding the world's major issues.

Excellencies

We want to be part of the construction of a new international financial architecture, in which closer cooperation between states is needed, with a view to effectively combating the illicit flow of capital and recovering assets, which is often incomprehensibly hampered by the countries that hold the funds under their control.

It is important to note that the resources that come from asset recovery have a direct effect on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and therefore on improving the general living conditions of the population.

Angola has made important progress in the fight against corruption, with concrete cases of citizens tried and convicted who have seen their assets recovered in favor of the state, by virtue of the sentences handed down in court and confirmed by the competent court of appeal.

As far as asset recovery is concerned, we have had two success stories, in which we can count on a very responsible attitude and respect for our sovereignty on the part of the UK authorities, who returned to Angola 2.5 billion US dollars that were in a bank in London, and it is only fair to publicly acknowledge this from this world stage.

Unfortunately, not all the countries that agreed to receive these corrupt assets without questioning their origins at the time now respect the mandatory sentences handed down by our courts.

Some of these countries even arrogate to themselves the right to question the credibility of our courts, almost wanting to review the judgments issued by them, as if they were extra-territorial appellate bodies. These assets are the property of our states, which have already been impoverished during the colonial period.

We will therefore continue to fight with all our might for the recovery of the assets embezzled from the public purse, which are sorely needed for the construction of school, hospital, energy and water, and road infrastructures, among others.

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen.

The Republic of Angola advocates the urgent implementation of reforms that lead to a fairer representation of African countries within the main international financial institutions, in order to defend decision-making and policy-making that impacts on the daily lives of the populations of the countries they target.

We are firmly committed to "leaving no one behind, acting in a position to promote peace, sustainable development and human dignity for present and future generations."

Around this motto of the 79th Session, we must mobilize efforts, capacities and all the resources at our disposal to promote policies, measures and programs that make it possible to achieve the intentions it contains.

Excellencies,

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Republic of Angola is making a great effort to put the country on the road to progress and development, on the basis of policies that establish priorities contained in the National Development Plan, which has as its main axes the diversification of the economy, the reduction of public debt, the mobilization of domestic revenue, the optimization of public spending in the priority areas of health and education and the implementation of specific social protection programmes.

The tasks we have set ourselves in the areas I have mentioned are complex, require time and sufficiently skilled human resources to carry them out successfully, but despite this framework, we are making encouraging progress, the benefits of which will be felt over time.

The construction of water transfer systems for areas heavily affected by drought in southern Angola, where poverty and misery are making way for the prospect of prosperity and a more dignified life for the people, who can now count on having enough water available to transform arid areas into areas for agricultural production and animal husbandry, without the previous risks that jeopardized human and animal survival.

As part of the Angolan government's actions to improve the national social framework and create factors that boost the development of industry and agriculture, we have embarked on the path of electrifying the country in all its latitudes, we have invested in clean energy production with the construction of large hydroelectric dams and photovoltaic parks, making 67% of the country's energy matrix already from clean sources and with a tendency for the thermal power stations still in operation to be phased out in the next three years.

In terms of clean energy production, in addition to the more than 6,500 Megawatts we produce today, we are building the Caculo Cabaça hydroelectric dam, which will produce more than 2,000 Megawatts, and we will soon begin construction of the country's largest photovoltaic park, with funding of 1.5 billion US dollars from the American EXIMBANK, to supply off-grid power to a considerable number of towns in the provinces of Huíla, Cunene, Namibe and Cuando Cubango.

With these additional energy production projects underway, our main focus at the moment is on public investment or public-private partnerships to build high- and medium-voltage transmission lines to the east and south of the country, with a view to interconnecting with the SADC network to the east via Zambia and to the south via Namibia.

We currently have a considerable supply of electricity production, which lacks transport and distribution networks to take it to potential beneficiaries in all parts of the country and also to the countries of southern Africa, which need this resource for their development.

Interested investors now have the opportunity to sell electricity produced in Angola to customers in the mining areas of the DRC and Zambia, as well as to SADC countries in general, with South Africa being the largest industrial and domestic consumer.

Angola is developing a series of initiatives that are part of the effort to ensure the implementation of the international climate agenda, highlighting measures aimed at mitigating and adapting to climate change, always taking care to exploit our fossil resources responsibly in order to guarantee the development and well-being of our populations.

It is important to highlight the great public investment that Angola has been making in the health sector throughout the country, with the rapid construction of well-equipped hospital infrastructures at all three levels of care and with an ambitious program for training and recruiting health professionals for our national health system.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Nowadays, one of the main priorities for the African continent is development based on promoting and intensifying trade, for which it is essential to build infrastructures that guarantee connectivity between African countries, the mobility of economic operators and encourage free trade between them, within the framework of the African Continental Free Trade Area.

With this in mind, the Republic of Angola has established partnerships at international level to ensure the operation of the Benguela Railway and the Lobito mineral and commercial ports as part of the major transnational transport and logistics project of the Lobito Corridor, which will ensure the faster, safer and more competitively priced transport of minerals, agricultural and industrial products produced in the Republic of Zambia, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola across the Atlantic Ocean to the rest of the world.

This is a catalyzing project that will change the economic landscape in Angola and southern Africa, allowing for the emergence of a number of ventures along the Lobito Corridor, with a direct impact on the economies of the southern sub-region of Africa and others on our continent.

Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

The Republic of Angola is a hospitable country, open to the world and always available to act as a proactive partner to help increase global cooperation, in favor of development and the implementation of joint and complementary actions that help meet the permanent challenges of combating international terrorism and other threats to peace, world security and sustainable development.

With the improvement in the business environment in recent years, we are open to tourism and direct private investment in practically every branch of our economy that is of interest to investors.

Welcome to Angola.

Thank you very much for your attention.