



**PERMANENT MISSION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

STATEMENT

by

H.E. Mr. Denis BECIROVIC

Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina

at

**the General Debate of the 79th Session
of the United Nations General Assembly**

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

New York

25 September 2024

PERMANENT MISSION OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA TO THE UNITED NATIONS
211 E 43 STREET, SUITE 1701, NEW YORK, NY 10017-TEL (212)751-9015-FAX(212)751-90

Dear President of the United Nations General Assembly, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen!

It is a special honor for me to address the 79th session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly, as the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Allow me, Mr. President, to wish you every success in the complex and challenging times of today. Also, I congratulate former President Mr. Dennis Francis for successfully presiding over the 78th UN General Assembly session.

Esteemed President,

it is a great honor to serve the invincible state of Bosnia and Herzegovina, one of the oldest countries of Europe.

We are proud that Bosnia has been mentioned in historical sources for 1075 years now. For centuries, my country has demonstrated resilience, courage and strength of unity in diversity. Bosnia and Herzegovina was not created in Dayton in 1995, but rather the Dayton Peace Agreement confirmed the continuity of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina. These are unquestionable historical and legal facts.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has made great progress, since the end of the war in 1995.

We rebuilt the country destroyed by the war. We united the defense system, the judiciary, the tax system and numerous other institutions.

Today, Bosnia and Herzegovina is at the doorstep of the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Bosnia and Herzegovina is actively working to become a NATO and the EU member. These are our strategic foreign policy goals, which were unanimously defined by the state authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The entire world is facing numerous challenges and threats.

Unfortunately, we live in a world of injustice, insecurity and intolerance.

Never in history has a human had more power and at the same time felt as insecure as he does today.

In the past two years, we faced new difficult challenges, especially security-related ones. The strengthening of authoritarian populism, the aggression against Ukraine and the suffering of Gaza have brought humanity into a deep crisis full of uncertainty and fear.

The world is seriously threatened by poverty, disease, natural disasters, wars and injustice.

It is estimated that one person dies of hunger every four seconds. The fact that millions of children in the world live in extreme poverty is particularly sad.

A reasonable question arises: why have we allowed an incomparably greater investment in weapons than in eradicating poverty? It's time for everyone to realize that human lives are more important than guns. Otherwise, I fear that we are collectively headed for a global catastrophe.

Regarding climate change, Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully aware of the global situation and is determined to contribute to global efforts.

We are committed to the transition to renewable energy sources and reduction of harmful gas emissions.

Terrorism is a serious threat. Countering this threat requires joint and dedicated efforts.

The world must have a consensus on fight against terrorism. Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to show a determined commitment to the fight against terrorism.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We cannot solve the problems of modern humanity, without addressing the causes.

The course of history is not something we can stop. However, we can influence its flow. Therefore, I suggest we now focus on:

- preserving the role of the UN as the global center of coordination and cooperation;
- the importance of the UN Charter reaffirming;
- strengthening the multilateral system, in accordance with international law;
- intensifying the UN reform process;
- common work to strengthen the credibility of the UN;

- effective implementation of the Agenda 2030 and its sustainable development goals;
- rebuilding trust and cooperation among nations on key global issues;
- giving a chance to mutual trust, inclusiveness and a democratic vision of leadership;
- and strengthening preventive diplomacy in times of geopolitical fragmentation of the world.

Together we should open the space for creative global cooperation instead of geopolitics of rivalry and conflict in the 21st century.

Conflicts and destruction are not in our civilization's core.

We should be building a culture of dialogue, cooperation and peace. Peace and stability have no alternative.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Humanity is once again facing severe moral and political crisis. UN's response to Ukraine and Gaza was inadequate as it was during the aggression in Bosnia and Herzegovina from 1992 to 1995.

The Russian aggression on Ukraine is a flagrant example of violation of the UN Charter and international law. That is why we reiterate, our firm condemnation of Russian aggression and the support to the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The suffering and hardship of Palestinian children and civilians is terrifying. Gaza is an utter defeat of collective humanity in the 21st century.

All human lives are equally valuable. Civilized people must fight for the human rights of all, regardless of their racial, religious, ethnic or other affiliation.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is the only European country where genocide was committed after the Second World War.

This was ruled by the highest courts of the UN. Judgments on genocide committed against Bosniaks have legal, historical, civilizational and moral significance.

Unfortunately, the ideology, politics and media that fostered the genocide are once again threatening Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I would like to especially thank the UN General Assembly for adopting the resolution on May 23rd for establishing July 11 as the International Day of Reflection and Commemoration of the 1995 Genocide in Srebrenica.

The adopted Resolution is a highly moral and civilized act and is just as important for the UN as it is for Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Let's preserve the truth about the genocides in Srebrenica and Rwanda for the sake of the past, present and most importantly, the future.

Despite all the injustices, Bosnia and Herzegovina remains firmly committed to regional cooperation, as that is one of our main strategic foreign policy goals.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a peaceful country, committed to strengthening regional cooperation. That is why we actively participate in numerous regional initiatives.

For the peaceful future of the Western Balkans, it's crucial that all countries acknowledge there is to be no changes of state's borders. Those who try to do differently risk a dangerous destabilization of the region with unforeseeable consequences.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Here, at the podium of the UN General Assembly, I want to publicly warn the global audience that, once again, the leadership of Republic of Serbia is threatening the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The greater-state aspirations of Serbia towards the territories of other countries in the region are the essential reason why Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Western Balkans are exposed to new dangers.

One evidence of this is the destructive Declaration by the so-called All-Serb Assembly, adopted in Belgrade on June 8 this year.

It is not just a declarative act, but a dangerous greater-state program document that threatens the Dayton Peace Agreement and the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The content of this Declaration directly contradicts:

- the democratic and civilized world established procedures,
- international and national law,

- the fundamental principles of the European Union,
- and the principles that are the foundation of relations between the UN members.

This Declaration is a threat to regional peace, and to the independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Finally, as the Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I want to emphasize that I am proud of my heroic and dignified homeland, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

My country achieved a civilizational and moral victory in the previous decades, despite genocide, the crimes against humanity and activities of joint criminal enterprises.

People in my country want peace and cooperation.

We stand for humanity and solidarity.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is a global story of hope, courage and unity.

We will protect Bosnia and Herzegovina and its unity in diversity!

In this way, we also contribute to global unity.

Thank you for your attention.