

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Sadyr Zhaparov, the President of the Kyrgyz Republic, at the General Debate of the 79<sup>th</sup> session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**(24 September, 2024, New York, USA)**

**Mr. Secretary-General,  
Mr. President,  
Distinguished heads of delegations,  
Ladies and gentlemen,**

I congratulate the countries of Africa and the distinguished Mr. Philemon Yang on his election as President of the 79th session of the UN General Assembly. Let me wish you success in this responsible position and assure you that Kyrgyzstan will provide full support to your presidency in the interests of peace and sustainable development. I also express my gratitude to the distinguished Mr. Dennis Francis for his active work as President of the 78th session.

On behalf of the Kyrgyz Republic, I reaffirm our commitment to international law, the principles and provisions of the UN Charter and express our full support for the Organization's efforts to maintain international security, address global social, economic and climate challenges, and protect human rights and freedoms.

Modern global challenges, such as the climate crisis, threats to food security and growing inequality, require the united efforts of the international community.

In this turbulent period, I call on all states to continue to support the United Nations in its core mission - to maintain peace and prevent modern risks and threats.

Now, more than ever, such support is extremely important.

I hope that under the leadership of Secretary-General Mr. Antonio Guterres and with the active support of Member States, our Organization will be able to effectively fulfill its functions and help countries address pressing global issues.

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

We live in a world that is becoming more unpredictable and complicated every year.

We are facing unprecedented challenges – a global climate catastrophe, economic inequality dividing peoples and continents, and, of course, conflicts that destroy hope for a peaceful future. In this context, we observe a troubling paradox: **global military spending is growing, while least developed and vulnerable states continue to suffer from a lack of resources for their development and survival.**

I would like to draw your attention to two conflicting realities of our time.

**The first reality is unprecedented spending on military needs.**

According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, global military spending in 2023 increased by 6.8% and reached a record level of US\$2.5 trillion per year, or 2.3% of global GDP, the highest amount in decades.

Leading powers are spending huge amounts of money on creating and developing armed forces, increasing arsenals and developing new, more destructive types of weapons.

Unfortunately, this is happening in a world where many nations and peoples still do not have access to basic services – water, medical care, education.

**We must ensure that the money that allocates to wars, destruction, death, could go to creation or to solving global challenges for all of humanity, to help countries in their fight against climate change, to prevent mass displacement and global migration.**

Military spending and armed conflicts have a devastating effect on many countries, exacerbating poverty and inequality.

Conflicts and armed clashes lead to the destruction of infrastructure, a drop in living standards and mass migration, creating a vicious circle of poverty and instability. While some countries increase their budgets for weapons, many of those who need help lose the chance for a normal life.

**The second reality is the lack of progress in supporting poor and vulnerable countries.**

We all know that economic inequality continues to rise.

World leaders have been talking for decades about the need to eliminate poverty, but there is always a lack of willpower.

Countries in Africa, South Asia and Latin America continue to face chronic underfunding, a lack of support from the international community, and systemic economic crises that cannot be solved by individual countries.

Countries at the very bottom of the economic pyramid need investment in healthcare, education, infrastructure and climate change mitigation.

However, with the rapid growth of military spending, assistance to these countries is becoming increasingly insufficient. Humanitarian and development assistance programs are often underfunded, while resources that could be directed toward social needs are spent on purchasing weapons and conducting military operations.

Inequality between states is not only persisting but intensifying.

The world faces an important choice.

We can continue increasing arms, seeking security through military power, or we can choose the path of sustainable development aimed at eradicating poverty and supporting the most vulnerable.

Resources that are directed to military needs could make a huge contribution to addressing global challenges - whether it is access to clean water, education for children in developing countries, fighting famine, or financing climate change programs.

To make progress in this direction, coordinated efforts are needed from both: rich and least developed countries.

First, developed countries should not only increase the financial assistance to least developed countries, but also make it targeted, focusing on infrastructure projects and social development.

Second, least developed countries should actively be involved in international initiatives on sustainable development and commit to the efficient use of the provided resources.

Third, the transfer of modern technologies from rich countries to poor ones is crucial, enabling the latter to develop their economies independently and reduce dependence on external assistance.

Today, we observe that geopolitical conflicts not only require increased defense spending, but, more importantly, international cooperation for their resolution.

If the global community can unite efforts to achieve an equitable resource distribution, help vulnerable states, and eliminate the causes of armed conflict, we can create a safer and more prosperous world for all.

If we begin investing not in war but in people, if instead of weapons we invest in education, healthcare, and sustainable development, we can build a prosperous world.

It is time to reconsider global security priorities.

Security is not only about having strong armies and weapons of mass destruction. True security will only be achieved with trust, equality and prosperity for all peoples.

By investing in the future of least developed countries, helping them end poverty, providing opportunities for sustainable growth, we can create a more stable and secure world.

In this context, I believe it is crucial and fair for the world community to pay greater attention to the issues of sustainable development of the Global South and to defend the interests of the "least developed countries, developing countries", "landlocked developing countries" and "small island developing states".

**Dear colleagues,**

One of the most dangerous challenges threatening the very existence of our planet is climate change, which is getting worse every day and affects almost all countries and peoples worldwide.

The accelerated melting of glaciers, the increasing frequency of natural disasters and the reduction of water resources in mountain ecosystems are deeply concerning. These negative consequences threaten the lives of local communities, contribute to rising poverty levels, deterioration of infrastructure and inflict serious damage on national economies.

Kyrgyzstan faces a triple challenge - the need to invest in development, reduce poverty and adapt to climate change to achieve carbon neutrality.

Each of these areas requires special financing, especially in the context of ensuring climate resilience for our country and vulnerable communities.

We are determined to succeed by working together with our partners.

Kyrgyzstan proposes to strengthen and globally expand the debt-for-nature mechanism, thus helping developing and least developed countries jointly combat climate change.

Kyrgyzstan supports the UN Secretary-General's position on the need to reform the international financial architecture and reduce the debt burden for developing countries.

We also propose a mechanism of swapping the external debt to climate and sustainable development projects, and we are working on creating a Climate Trust Fund that will finance environmental projects in mountainous regions.

The Kyrgyz Republic pays special attention to climate issues in the implementation of its national policy and, based on the principles of green development, sets an ambitious goal of achieving carbon neutrality by 2050.

More than 95% of our energy is produced mainly by hydropower plants, which are the main driver towards achieving the goal of zero emissions.

Our country has vast opportunities to integrate renewable energy sources into various sectors of the economy, developing electric transport infrastructure, sustainable agriculture and ecotourism.

We are taking active measures to stimulate the use of electric vehicles and improve the energy efficiency of constructions.

I would like to give just one example of our desire to build a "green" future.

We know that "smart city" projects aimed at sustainable development such as Neom in Saud Arabia, Masdar City in UAE, Western Harbor in Sweden, and Sunny Valley in China have been implemented and continue to develop successfully. The dreams of the peoples of these countries have become a reality and an example for us too.

In June 2023, on the shores of our pearl - Lake Issyk-Kul we began construction of a modern and innovative city "Asman", which means "Sky" in Kyrgyz language.

Next year, we will begin construction of another "green city" in the city of Kemin.

We strive to build a "green" city that will serve as an example for other regions of our country and will help preserve clean nature

for future generations, and which, I am confident, will become an economic, trade, cultural and tourist hub, as well as a center for innovation and new technologies.

Central Asia is becoming an important region in terms of global security and the world economy.

Kyrgyzstan, together with neighboring states, continues to work on the sustainable development of the region. Together with Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, we are building the Kambar-Ata-1 hydropower plant, which will meet the region's needs for energy and water.

We are also involved in the construction of the China-Kyrgyzstan-Uzbekistan railway, which will enhance trade and transport cooperation and connect the East and West of the continent.

### **Ladies and gentlemen,**

The future of our world depends on the path we choose. We should not increase military spending, leading to further escalation of conflicts and disasters. Instead, we must direct our efforts toward building a just, safe, and prosperous world for all.

Our choice today will determine what tomorrow will be like for future generations.

We need relief of international tensions.

The Kyrgyz Republic is ready to contribute to the efforts of the UN General Assembly and the Security Council aimed at establishing a stable world order and achieving Sustainable Development Goals and, making a meaningful contribution to the collective efforts of the international community in addressing global challenges and threats.

In this regard, we put forward our candidacy for a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2027-2028.

As a country that has never been elected to this key UN body, we count on your support in the elections to be held in June 2026 in New York.

If elected, Kyrgyzstan will continue to advocate for the improvement of the efficiency and transparency in the Council's work, as well as for expanding its membership, taking into account balanced regional representation.

It is time to address the lack of representation of African countries in the Council and correct the historical injustice that 60 UN member states, including Kyrgyzstan, have never been elected to the Security Council, while certain states have been elected multiple times.

At the Future Summit, UN Member States reaffirmed the importance of the Sustainable Development Goals and the need for their full implementation. Kyrgyzstan remains committed to the global 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and our achievements confirm our firm intention to achieve the Goals, taking into account national priorities and financial capabilities.

The UN Sustainable Development Goals are integrated into the National Development Strategy of Kyrgyzstan until 2040, which creates opportunities for sustainable economic and social development, digitalization, entrepreneurship, as well as the introduction of innovative and environmentally friendly technologies for current and future generations.

On July 22 of this year, we adopted the Law on the Protection of the Rights and Funds of Private Entrepreneurs and Foreign Investors.

This Law on the Protection of Investor Business provides for penalties for government officials involved in the following violations:

- illegal and unjustified refusal to register with the state;
- illegal and unjustified refusal to issue licenses;
- unjustified and illegal restrictions on activities;
- unjustified and illegal interference in the activities of investors and private entrepreneurs.

For the above violations of the Law, the most severe punishments are provided.

They provide for imprisonment from two to five years and confiscation of property, or large monetary fines are provided.

Next year, our country will present the National Voluntary Review on the implementation of the SDGs.

We are ready to share our experience, discuss the progress we have made, and continue moving toward our goal of becoming one of the top 30 countries in the world in SDG implementation by 2030.

As a mountainous country, Kyrgyzstan has consistently drawn global attention to the challenges of sustainable development in

mountain regions since the early 2000s. With our initiative and the broad support of mountain countries, the “Five-Year Action Plan for the Development of Mountain Regions” is being implemented from 2023 to 2027.

I call on all states to participate actively in this project.

I invite you to take part in the Second Global Mountain Summit “Bishkek+25” in 2027, where the results of the “Mountain Five-Year Plan” will be reviewed. Furthermore, we are promoting the initiative to include a permanent global dialogue on “Mountains and Climate” in the annual program of the UN Climate Change Conference.

Kyrgyzstan is actively working to preserve the snow leopard, which has become a symbol of long-term sustainable development in our region. In December 2023, the snow leopard was recognized as a national symbol of Kyrgyzstan. Together with 11 countries, we are working on protecting this unique animal. In this regard, I am honored to announce the submission of a UN General Assembly resolution to proclaim an “International Snow Leopard Day” and ask everyone to support this initiative.

The inhabitants of mountainous regions face daily challenges such as water shortages, food insecurity, poverty, and limited access to basic services.

These countries should not be left alone to face these problems. We call on the international community to take active steps to address these issues.

**Dear colleagues,**

**Ladies and gentlemen,**

In conclusion, I would like to quote from the epic “Manas” which calls for friendship, unity and solidarity: **“Бир жакадан баш, бир жеңден кол чыгарып, күч-кубатты бириктирели”** (‘Let us unite our forces, acting as one’); **“Биримдик бар жерде - тирилик бар.”** (‘When there is unity, there is prosperity’).

The modern multilateral system, designed for a simpler and more stable world, is not suited to solving the complex, interconnected, and rapidly changing challenges of today.

Only through cooperation can we build a strong and bright future.



**Thank you for your attention.**