

STATEMENT

**by the Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan**

R.O. Meredov

**at the Plenary meeting of the 79th session
of the United Nations General Assembly**

(September 27, 2024, New York)

Your Excellency,

Mr. President of the General Assembly

Distinguished heads and members of delegations,

First of all, allow me to congratulate you on the beginning of the 79th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

I congratulate Mr. Philemon Yang on his election as the President of the General Assembly and wish him every success.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Ambassador Dennis Francis for his effective leadership of the General Assembly during the 78th session.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Strategic partnership with the United Nations and cooperation with member states are the main principle of Turkmenistan in addressing the pressing global issues and challenges.

The key condition and major criterion in this work for Turkmenistan is adherence to the UN Charter, international legal norms, and recognized, beneficial models of relations based on equality, sovereignty and mutual respect among all participants in international affairs.

In this logic, Turkmenistan supports the global mission of the United Nations as a conductor of the collective mandate and the balance of interests of member states.

This position was reaffirmed at the meetings of the UN Secretary-General with the President of Turkmenistan and the National Leader of the Turkmen people during his visit to Turkmenistan this summer.

For the 79th session, Turkmenistan has decided to follow *four priorities*, which are:

- peace and security;
- sustainable development;
- climate change;
- humanitarian issues.

All of these areas are closely interconnected. It means, that their implementation must be comprehensive, based on unified principles and approaches.

In this context, Turkmenistan advocates for equal, fair, and balanced approach that would ensure the UN pays same attention to all key areas of the international agenda.

In matters of ensuring *peace and security*, Turkmenistan's efforts at the current session will be aimed at strengthening peace and trust, enhancing the role of preventive diplomacy mechanisms, and furthering peacebuilding processes in line with the "New Agenda for Peace."

When it comes to *Global security*, Turkmenistan especially promoting model of neutrality within the UN, which capable to provide the world community with practical tools to resolve existing and prevent potential conflicts and contradictions.

Next year we will celebrate 30th anniversary of the UN General Assembly resolution on international recognition of neutral status of Turkmenistan.

Over the past years, our neutrality has demonstrated its alignment with the high ideals, basic principles and goals of the United Nations. The unanimous adoption in 2015 of the corresponding resolution of the General Assembly has demonstrated that neutrality became a heritage of the entire world community.

During the 79th session, our country will be promoting further support of the political and legal foundations of neutrality and their application across a broad range of UN activities.

Preventive diplomacy holds an important place here.

We are convinced that the time has come to reflect on the significance of neutrality for global politics and its potential in the current strategic landscape.

In this regard, Turkmenistan puts forward the initiative *to provide neutral countries the status of priority partnership with the UN in its peacekeeping efforts*. We are confident that this will serve as an effective impetus for the international community to more actively utilize the tools of neutrality and preventive diplomacy.

One of the essential aspects of the UN's security agenda - is the practical implementation of the General Assembly Resolution declaring 2025 as the “International Year of Peace and Trust.”

Naturally, as the country that initiated the Resolution, Turkmenistan will take on the leading role in organizing relevant events next year. At the same time, we rely on the support of all member states, the UN Secretariat, and its leadership to ensure that the “International Year of Peace and Trust” becomes a manifestation of the goodwill of the international community, its desire for peace and harmony, overcoming differences, conflicts and rejection of dividing lines.

In the *regional dimension*, the most important aspect of ensuring security is cooperation in the Afghan direction and support for the people of Afghanistan in their aspirations to begin peaceful, constructive work to rebuild the economy and social sphere and solve humanitarian problems.

In this context, I would like to highlight major infrastructure projects in Afghanistan being implemented by our country together with international partners. Among them is the construction of the strategic Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline. Just two weeks ago, we began a new stage of construction of the pipeline on Afghan territory.

Other significant projects include the construction of power transmission and fiber-optic communication lines along the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan route, as well as a new railway from Turkmenistan towards Afghan direction.

Turkmenistan's humanitarian aid to the Afghan people will continue, including the free construction of social facilities there and the education of Afghan students in our country's educational institutions. Thus, Turkmenistan in practice confirms its strong position of solidarity with the people of Afghanistan.

In addressing the *global climate agenda*, Turkmenistan will be focusing on protection of the environment in Central Asia and Caspian Sea region.

In this regard, our country advocates for more active and extensive UN involvement in saving the Aral Sea.

Turkmenistan initiated the adoption of two recent UN General Assembly Resolutions on cooperation between the UN and the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea. Furthermore in 2023, ESCÁP adopted a Resolution on the modalities for creating UN Special Program for the Aral Sea Basin.

Among other specific problems of Central Asia, which have much broader consequences and impact, we highlight desertification and the reduction of water resources. All of this requires more active cooperation with the UN and presence of its resident offices in the region on a permanent basis.

Turkmenistan is ready to work on this.

As a concrete step, in cooperation with the UN, our country is promoting the establishment of specialized structure – *the Regional Center for Climate-Related Technologies*.

Another topic has gone far beyond regional borders is the *Caspian issue*. In this regard, we especially emphasize that preserving the Caspian Sea as unique natural complex - are not just the internal affairs of the littoral states, but a global-scale problem and challenge. The approaches to solving them should be appropriate.

Therefore, Turkmenistan appeals to the UN, its relevant agencies, such as UNEP and UNDP, financial institutions, environmental funds, primarily Global Environmental Facility, Green Climate Fund and other structures, urging them to move towards systematic and targeted cooperation with the Caspian states to combat the sea's shallowing, destruction of its ecological balance, reduction of bio-diversity, and other ecological and climate issues affecting the Caspian Sea.

The President of Turkmenistan at the last session of the UN General Assembly proposed the Caspian Environmental Initiative. We are ready to start the active dialogue on this topic and hope for the full support of the General Assembly.

In matters of *Sustainable Development*, we propose moving forward with a number of specific initiatives from Turkmenistan.

In particular, we are talking about developing a *Global Framework Program for the transition to a circular economy*.

Other initiatives include the creation of a

- *Global Atlas of Sustainable Transport Connectivity*;
- and *Alliance for Global Energy Security and Sustainable Development*.

In cooperation with the UN we are ready to begin developing algorithms for joint work on these proposals.

Turkmenistan will continue to work with the UN to overcome the consequences of *humanitarian crises*, address population issues, protect motherhood and children, and safeguard the rights of persons with disabilities, refugees, and stateless persons, among other topics.

I would like to note that our country has done significant work in reducing and preventing statelessness. Currently more than 32 thousand people, including refugees and stateless persons, have been granted Turkmen citizenship. It is mean, that this year, we have fulfilled five-year National Action Plan to eliminate statelessness.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Next year, the entire world will celebrate the 80th anniversary of the United Nations.

We are approaching a milestone where responsibility, foresight, and realism must guide all our thoughts and actions. It is time to reflect on the path traveled, assess the experience, correct mistakes and shortcomings, and together move forward in improving the work of our Organization and its institutions.

One thing must remain unshakable – it is commitment to the values, principles and goals of the UN, because they have proven their viability and alignment with the fundamental long-term interests of humanity. Around this fact, now more than ever, it is necessary to combine all responsible forces.

Turkmenistan believes in the UN and its huge creative potential. For our country, the United Nations has always been and remains the unique international organization with universal legal status.

The voice of the United Nations must remain strong in ensuring global peace and security, sustainable development, and solving humanitarian problems.

Turkmenistan will continue to contribute its efforts in addressing the global challenges for the future of the world through realization of its priorities.

Thank you for your attention.