



European Council
Council of the European Union

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Speech by President António Costa at the 80th United Nations General Assembly



The world faces a crucial choice. Do we want a rules-based international order, that upholds multilateralism and the United Nations Charter? Or a chaotic world based on unilateralism, violence, and disruption?

The European Union knows where it stands. We are a project of peace, of reconciliation, of social justice. We are — and will remain — a steadfast defender of multilateralism, of the rules-based international order, and of the United Nations Charter.

The alternative to the international rules-based international order is a chaotic and violent world. As seen in Sudan, an underreported and devastating conflict with destruction of huge proportions. As seen in Gaza. As seen in Ukraine.

In Gaza. Where we witness an unimaginable suffering. Children starving. Families shattered. A humanitarian catastrophe that shocks the world's conscience. The use of starvation as a weapon of war is immoral. One that defies words.

The European Union condemns terrorism in all its forms. The horrific attacks by Hamas cannot be forgotten. We stand with Israel's right to security. Every country, every people, have the right to live in security. The hostages must be released immediately.

The Palestinian people have also the same right to security and to live in a viable state. A negotiated two-State solution is the only path to peace. Security for both peoples. Dignity for both peoples. This is the solution we seek.

The European Union has been an indispensable partner in the region. We are the largest provider of humanitarian aid to Palestinians. European funding has kept hospitals, schools, and institutions running. We have been, over the years, the largest supporter of the Palestinian Authority. Supporting them in their reform agenda and in their efforts to ensure effective control of all the territory of Palestine.

The European Union fully assumes its responsibilities. But we, alone, cannot stop this humanitarian catastrophe. Peace in the Middle East requires a collective response. We need everyone to assume their responsibilities. We must act together and demand:

The unconditional release of all hostages.

An immediate ceasefire.

Full and unimpeded humanitarian access.

An end to illegal settlements.

A renewed, credible commitment to a two-State solution.

This was the strong message from the Two-State Conference hosted on Monday by France and Saudi Arabia, to which the European Union is fully committed.

In Ukraine. A sovereign nation was brutally attacked by a permanent member of the Security Council — in clear violation of the United Nations Charter. A clear violation of sovereignty, territorial integrity, the respect of internationally recognized borders, and the right to choose its own destiny. Principles that bind all the members of the United Nations.

This aggression threatens not only Ukraine. It threatens every nation in this Assembly. If we accept Russia's invasion of Ukraine, no country will ever be safe. There is only one root cause to this war – Russia's refusal to accept Ukraine's right to choose its own destiny. For over three years, this war has claimed innocent lives, destroyed cities, and fuelled global insecurity. Our collective security is tied to Ukraine's resilience.

The European Union stands firm in supporting Ukraine. In their fight for a just and lasting peace. In their efforts to bring an end to the killing, and Russia to the negotiation table. In their future reconstruction. In providing security guarantees to prevent future attacks. In their path to full membership in the European Union.

We will continue to apply pressure on Russia to end this war. We call for meaningful negotiations, an immediate ceasefire, and a just and lasting peace. This is not Ukraine's fight alone. It is a fight for the principles we all hold dear.

L'Union européenne est déterminée à bâtir un monde fondé sur les valeurs fondamentales que nous partageons avec les Nations unies: la paix, les droits de l'homme et le développement durable.

Les droits de l'homme sont le socle de la paix et de la stabilité mondiales.

La protection sociale, le travail décent, l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes, ainsi que la lutte contre la pauvreté, ne sont pas facultatifs. Ce sont les garanties de la dignité humaine. De la stabilité sociale. Et d'une paix durable entre les nations.

L'Union européenne défend la liberté, la démocratie et les droits de l'homme. Des valeurs aujourd'hui menacées par la désinformation et l'utilisation abusive des technologies numériques.

Nous avons besoin de normes mondiales, de transparence et de mécanismes de responsabilisation, qui soient aussi dynamiques que les technologies que nous cherchons à encadrer. Pour faire en sorte que les technologies numériques donnent des moyens d'action aux citoyens - et non aux autocrates, ni aux nouveaux oligarques de la technologie.

L'Union européenne défend une approche de l'intelligence artificielle centrée sur l'humain. Nous sommes à l'avant-garde du premier cadre réglementaire global pour une intelligence artificielle responsable. Et nous appelons à un niveau d'ambition équivalent à l'échelle internationale. En nous appuyant sur nos valeurs fondamentales: la dignité, la démocratie et l'État de droit.

El cambio climático no son “fake news”. Es un hecho contrastado científicamente que afecta a nuestro presente y a nuestro futuro. La destrucción y los muertos provocados por incendios, inundaciones y huracanes no son invento: son algo muy real.

Además, invertir en la descarbonización es clave para la soberanía energética de cada país, para la innovación, y la competitividad de nuestras economías. Por eso, la Unión Europea asume plenamente los compromisos del Acuerdo de París, la reducción de las emisiones en un 55 % de aquí a 2030 y la consecución de la neutralidad climática de aquí a 2050.

Seguiremos fomentando de forma activa la protección de nuestros océanos, pulmones y salvavidas de nuestro planeta. Celebramos la ratificación del

Tratado de las Naciones Unidas sobre Alta Mar para salvaguardar la biodiversidad más allá de las jurisdicciones nacionales.

El desarrollo sostenible también significa construir alianzas, no dependencias. Estamos a la cabeza de la lucha contra el cambio climático. A través del programa Global Gateway, la Unión Europea está movilizando 300 mil millones de euros de aquí hasta 2027 en inversiones sostenibles y de conectividad en todo el mundo. Una contribución decisiva para alcanzar los objetivos del desarrollo sostenible.

Además, la Unión Europea, junto con sus Estados miembros, representa el 42 % de la ayuda mundial al desarrollo. Somos los principales donantes de la Organización Mundial de la Salud, de UNICEF y del Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Desarrollo. Lideramos, y seguiremos liderando, la solidaridad global, incluso en estos momentos de grandes restricciones financieras que afectan al sistema de Naciones Unidas.

Por último, debemos avanzar en la reforma de la arquitectura financiera internacional en la gestión de la deuda. Para que sea más justa, más inclusiva y adaptada a los desafíos actuales. Para que nos pueda ayudar también a cerrar la brecha de la financiación para el desarrollo siguiendo el camino marcado por el “Compromiso de Sevilla”.

The European Union is a global partner. The European Union and its Member States are staunch political supporters and the largest collective donors to the United Nations, as the pillar of the multilateral system. We are working closely with other regional partners. That is why we are building stronger trade and industrial partnerships across the globe.

We are advancing deals with Mercosur, Mexico, India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Not just to boost trade, but to increase global predictability and resilience. A trade and investment agenda based on fairness, sustainability, digital innovation, labour rights, and climate alignment. Because trade deals - not tariffs - deliver real benefits for all countries, companies, and citizens.

In a multipolar and fragmented world, we are building a powerful global network of partnerships. With Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, the United States and Canada, the Arab world, Asia, and the Pacific, as well as with our European neighbours.

In today's multipolar world, there is no Global South or Global North. Both are plural. The European Union will continue to work with all partners in a spirit of global solidarity and meaningful partnership. Because multipolarity needs an effective multilateralist system.

A rules-based international order under the United Nations Charter. This commitment stems from our own history. Europe rebuilt itself from the ashes of World War Two through peace, through reconciliation, and through integration. We know these principles work - because they worked for us.

At a time when international cooperation is being tested, the value of reliable partnerships has never been greater. The European Union is a reliable and predictable partner, and stands firmly with the United Nations. We will defend its principles. Support the reforms of the UN Secretary General, António Guterres. Work to make the United Nations more inclusive, more representative, and more effective. With the UN80 reform initiative and the implementation of the Pact for the Future.

At a time when multilateralism is under threat, let me leave you with one simple promise:

You can count on the European Union.

Count on us to stand for peace.

For multilateralism.

For justice.

For human dignity.

For sustainability.

The time has come to choose, clearly:

Peace over war.

Law over force.

Accountability over impunity.

Solidarity over division.

Sustainability over crisis.

Justice over inequality.

The European Union has no doubts about where we stand and you cannot have any doubt about where we are.

Thank you very much.

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