



Speech to be delivered by H.E. Mikheil Kavelashvili, President of Georgia at the 80th Session of the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2025

Madam President,
Mr. Secretary-General,
Distinguished Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I represent a country with a three-thousand-year history, the cradle of one of the world's most ancient civilizations and the brave Georgian people, filled with pride and dignity. A country that possesses a unique alphabet, an ancient language and a 17-century-long Christian tradition.

The history of Georgia is a continuous chronicle of our people's struggle for survival against invaders, through which we have miraculously managed to preserve our cultural identity, traditions and national character.

Despite centuries of continuous warfare with invaders, the cultural environment in Georgia has always been distinguished by exceptional humanism, tolerance and compassion for others.

Tolerance, openness to others, harmonious coexistence and diversity form the cornerstone of our ancient culture, which is brilliantly reflected in Georgian polyphony, in our national traditions and in the world-renowned Georgian epic, Shota Rustaveli's *The Knight in the Panther's Skin*.

Georgia is a place where, throughout history, no human has ever been oppressed or persecuted on ethnic or religious grounds. Quite the opposite, we have always been known for our profound sense of justice.

I represent the Georgian people, who know both the cost of war and the value of freedom and peace. A people who cherish their rich history and traditions, while at the same time facing with resolve the challenges that lie before our country.

Amid a rapidly-changing geopolitical landscape and unprecedented global challenges—such as ongoing conflicts, climate change, ideological polarization, cultural alienation and war-driven humanitarian crises—Georgia stands firmly as a guardian of dialogue, peace, stability and sustainable development.

Despite the many challenges surrounding us, we have managed to ensure the security of our people. The fundamental philosophy of the Government of Georgia remains to preserve peace and, no matter the cost, to spare our people from war.

For the fourth year now, a horrific, bloody war has been raging in Ukraine, bringing catastrophic consequences and immense human suffering. Drawing on the bitter experience of the 2008 War, whose wounds have not yet healed for the Georgian people, we understand better than many the pain that the Ukrainian nation endures today. Now, as before, Georgia expresses its firm and unwavering support for the Ukrainian people.

As we deeply understand the importance of peace, Georgia contributes to the transformation of the South Caucasus and strives to turn it from a zone of conflicts into a space of dialogue among civilizations and economic prosperity.

We welcome President Donald Trump's peace initiative between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as his efforts to bring the bloody war between Russia and Ukraine to an end soon.

Georgia has always supported and actively strived to establish sustainable and long-term peace in the South Caucasus, as well as to deepen trust and cooperation among its neighbors.

For centuries, our country has been a crossroads of civilizations and a space for dialogue among diverse cultures. Today, Georgia is reclaiming its historical role.

Close relations with the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia, existing agreements with the European Union, and Georgia's key position in the Middle Corridor all give our country a special significance both within the region and across the Eurasian continent.

Georgia is the shortest connecting route and a natural bridge between Europe and Asia, the West and the East. Thanks to our geographical location and pragmatic foreign policy, Georgia is emerging as a multidimensional and multifunctional regional hub, both in terms of trade and energy transit.

Georgia makes a significant contribution to the development of the Middle Corridor strategic route and does everything to ensure that the corridor becomes the safest, most reliable and most stable connecting route between East and West.

We are actively working with international investors, developing infrastructure and facilitating the creation of new energy transit routes, all of which ultimately enhance the connectivity between Asian and European markets.

Within the framework of the Middle Corridor and its development, Georgia has launched strategically significant projects aimed at increasing the volume and intensity of rail, sea and air transportation. Among them, the railway modernization project has already been completed, while work is actively underway on the deep-sea port in Anaklia, the new international airport in Tbilisi and the Black Sea submarine cable projects.

These projects, on the one hand, provide land-locked countries in Central Asia and the South Caucasus with maritime connectivity to the rest of the world; on the other hand, the projects we are implementing help diversify energy routes, thereby significantly enhancing the energy security of Europe and the South Caucasus.

To promote the development of the Middle Corridor and enhance connectivity between the two largest markets, Asia and Europe, Georgia has been hosting the Tbilisi Silk Road Forum for eight years. It is an international platform for dialogue and new opportunities, attended by up to 2000 delegates from more than 60 countries.

Our goal is to develop constructive relations based on mutual respect and shared benefit with major economies such as the United States, China, European Union and others. We are open to any dialogue and cooperation, but at the same time, we demand respect and a fair and dignified approach. What the Georgian people will never accept is being spoken to in the language of ultimatums, blackmail or intimidation.

Georgia is a faithful adherent to the fundamental principles and values of the United Nations and a dignified, responsible member of the international community, as evidenced by the considerable efforts made by the current Government of Georgia to improve the protection of human rights.

It is precisely thanks to the pragmatic and rational policies of the Government of Georgia that we have maintained peace and economic growth, significantly improving the quality of life of our citizens.

Despite numerous challenges in recent years, Georgia has demonstrated remarkable resilience to external shocks. The positive trajectory of Georgia's development is reflected in and confirmed by the international rankings and indicators of the world's most reputable organizations.

Despite 20% of Georgia's territory remaining under occupation, we continue to pursue development and progress with great energy and determination. We are entrusted with the mission that our children may live in a stronger, dignified Georgia and a peaceful world.

And now, I want to address our Abkhaz and Ossetian brothers and sisters on the other side of the occupation line. For centuries, we have written Georgia's history together—a history filled with the heroism of our ancestors, through our shared struggle for the survival of our nation and love for our homeland. We have never been a large empire imposing its rules on others. We have always been a country proud of its diversity.

Georgia is a place where civilizations have met, blended and balanced each other for centuries. Our culture is the very product of this complex and enduring synthesis.

My Abkhaz and Ossetian brothers and sisters, our cultural code has not changed. For us, diversity is not a problem; it remains an essential formula for our existence, which is why we will always meet our compatriots from the other side of the occupation line with open hearts and outstretched hands.

It is our duty, through joint efforts, to overcome artificially created obstacles, rebuild broken bridges and leave past grievances to history, as a people of exceptional patience and resilience.

I believe that one day we will live together with our children in a united, happy and developed Georgia, where nothing will stand in the way of our harmonious coexistence.

Herewith, I would like to express my gratitude to the international community for its unwavering support of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Georgia, like the entire world, is going through a pivotal moment in modern history. We live in a transitional era, where the future of the international order remains uncertain. The United Nations must ensure our planet's transition to a peaceful, stable and fair multipolar international order.

Georgia, as a responsible member of the international community, is ready to support the United Nations in becoming the inevitable alternative to war and the principal guarantor of peace. I would like to reiterate that we are prepared and open, taking into account our national interests, to engage in dialogue with all parties on issues of global and regional significance.

The current reality requires us to face difficult issues and initiate an open, pragmatic and results-oriented dialogue. I believe that only in this way can we overcome common global challenges and unlock new opportunities for the benefit of our countries, peoples and future generations.

Thank you!